Titan Tire discloses more plans for Tenn. plant

The Associated Press

The new owner of the closed Goodyear plant in Union City, Tenn. said Tuesday that it bought the factory and its assets for $9 million.

Titan Tire Corp. posted a statement on its website Tuesday saying that it has not yet decided how it plans to use the 2.1 million-square-foot plant located on 480 acres of land other than to warehouse farm and off-road tires.

Titan agrees it will not produce radial passenger or SUV tires at the factory and Goodyear will have until June 2012 to remove the equipment it wants to keep. The decision on whether Titan will keep the rest of the equipment in Union City or move it will not be made until mid-2012, the company said.

The 43-year-old Goodyear plant was Obion County's largest employer until it closed in July, putting 1,800 employees from West Tennessee and western Kentucky out of work.

Local officials expressed hope that Titan's purchase will restore some of the lost jobs, but the company has not said how many people it will employ.

Titan said it will keep the value of equipment Goodyear wants scrapped. The plant's mixing capacity could allow an additional $1 billion in future sales and increase Titan's output of farm and off-road tires, once a final decision on what to do with the plant is made, the company said.

"This transaction happened fast so we have a lot of work to do to see what gives Titan the largest savings," said Maurice Taylor, chairman and CEO of Quincy, Ill.-based Titan International.

Titan International is the holding company for Titan Tire Corp. and other subsidiaries that supply wheels, tires and assemblies for off-highway equipment used in agricultural and construction projects.

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