

### Beatrice Plant Closing

(KTNC)--Store Kraft Manufacturing Company in Beatrice, a nearly 100-year-old maker of store fixtures and cabinets, is closing. Employees reportedly were sent home on Monday. About 100 people work at the plant in north Beatrice.

Executive Director for Gage Area Growth Enterprise, Glennis McClure, says a Nebraska Labor Department official notified her about the closing on Monday.

The company has not made a formal statement and attempts to reach company officers have been unsuccessful so far. One source said the company was in the process of negotiations with a potential buyer, but that apparently fell through.

The City of Beatrice agreed last May to loan Store Kraft Manufacturing \$250,000 to help retain employees. The agreement was a line of credit to help the company weather a seasonal slowdown. At the time, the company was employing 140 workers, which included 23 temporary employees.

Store Kraft had been in business for 94 years. The company has been embroiled in a legal dispute with a Texas company made up for former Store Kraft officers, over allegedly misappropriated trade secrets. The dispute involved Store Kraft's new subsidiary, 5-Stat, which planned to manufacture and market touch-screen shopping units for retail businesses.

Nebraska Radio Network