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Smithfield Foods Celebrates 90-Year American Heritage

SMITHFIELD, Va., Sept. 16, 2026 (GLOBE NEWSWIRE) -- Smithfield Foods, Inc. (Nasdaq: SFD), an American food company and an industry leader in value-added packaged meats and fresh pork, today celebrated its 90th year in business on the site where the company began in 1936.



Over the past 90 years, Smithfield Foods has grown from a small, local ham-curing business to a leading fresh pork and packaged meats company and one of the 1,000 largest publicly traded companies in the United States.

Smithfield's legacy began on Sept. 16, 1936, when Joseph W. Luter Sr. and Joseph W. Luter Jr. founded the Smithfield Packing Company on Commerce Street in [Smithfield, Virginia](#), where the company's headquarters remain today.

The company started out with one brand, Smithfield[®], and acquired [new brands](#) beginning in the 1980s to build its broad portfolio of packaged meats products. Beginning with Gwaltney – a company its founders first worked for in Smithfield, Virginia, – the company expanded its family of brands to include Patrick Cudahy[®], Esskay[®], John Morrell[®], Curly's[®], Kretschmar[®], Farmland Foods[®], Carando[®] Cook's[®], Armour[®], Eckrich[®], Margherita[®] and Farmer John[®]. In January 2026, Smithfield [announced an agreement](#) to acquire all of the shares of Nathan's Famous[®], a brand the company has produced under exclusive license since 2014.

Today, Smithfield Foods employs 32,000 people in the U.S. and partners with thousands of American farmers to produce packaged meats, fresh pork and value-added products at 38 processing facilities across the country, with 10,000 independent farms in 30 states supplying its U.S. operations. Smithfield serves 100% of the top 10 ranked national grocery retailers, 70% of the top 50 ranked national foodservice chains and all of the top foodservice distributors in the U.S.

The company held its 90th anniversary celebration on Sept. 16 at its headquarters in Smithfield. The event brought together employees, community partners, elected officials and special guests to recognize the people and brands shaping Smithfield's success and celebrate the innovations defining its future.

Shane Smith, president and CEO of Smithfield Foods, said, "As we stand here on the site where it all began 90 years ago, we honor Smithfield's unique American heritage and the long-standing values that have guided us along the way. With a strong cornerstone laid by our visionary founders, we are poised for continued leadership, innovation and profitable growth."

Virginia state Senator Emily Jordan and Delegate Otto Wachsmann presented resolutions adopted by the [Senate of Virginia](#) and [Virginia House of Delegates](#) commemorating Smithfield's 90-year presence in the Commonwealth of Virginia.

"This 90th anniversary is a remarkable milestone for a community partner that has been woven into the fabric of our town for generations," said Sen. Jordan. "From roots grown in Smithfield to a global pork-producing leader, I congratulate Smithfield Foods on this historic moment and wish them many more years of success ahead."

"I congratulate Smithfield Foods on celebrating 90 years of producing good food responsibly, and their contributions both economically and philanthropically – not just in the Smithfield community, but also in Virginia, our nation and globally," said Del. Wachsmann. "Here's to an amazing 90 years, and another 90 years and beyond."

Smithfield Mayor Michael Smith presented remarks at the event recognizing Smithfield's long-standing presence in its namesake town.

“Smithfield Town Council, town staff and I want to congratulate you for staying the course for 90 years in business,” said Smith. “We take pride as Smithfield residents knowing that the name Smithfield is on food packages globally. Thank you for addressing food insecurity in local communities and recognizing the needs of others. The town celebrates this milestone and many more to come.”

A four-part history of Smithfield Foods from 1936 to 2026 is available on the company’s [Doing Good](#) website, beginning with [Part I: Ninety Years of Taste That’s Timeless](#). Historical overviews and facts about some of Smithfield’s leading brands are also available [here](#).

About Smithfield Foods

Smithfield Foods (Nasdaq: SFD) is an American food company with a leading position in packaged meats and fresh pork products. With a diverse brand portfolio and strong relationships with U.S. farmers and customers, we responsibly meet demand for quality protein around the world.

Contact:

Ray Atkinson
Smithfield Foods, Inc.
(757) 576-1383
ratkinson@smithfield.com

A photo accompanying this announcement is available at <https://www.globenewswire.com/NewsRoom/AttachmentNg/420936c2-7e57-4b71-acb2-1340bad578d8>



Smithfield Foods 90th Anniversary



Shane Smith, president and CEO of Smithfield Foods, accepts resolutions from Virginia state Sen. Emily Jordan and Del. Otto Wachsmann commemorating Smithfield Foods' 90th anniversary.

Source: Smithfield Foods, Inc.