

WHAT
HAPPENED

Blue Plate Foods was founded in Gretna in 1929.

Blue Plate mayonnaise is still found on the grocery shelves in New Orleans, but the local favorite has not been made in New Orleans for more than 15 years.



Blue Plate Foods was started as a subsidiary of Wesson-Snowdrift in 1929 in a warehouse in Gretna. In 1943, production was moved across the river into a modern, three-story concrete building at the corner of Jefferson Davis Parkway and Earhart Boulevard. Blue Plate was delivered by small trucks throughout the southeast. The factory also made margarine, preserves and salad dressings.

In 1974, Blue Plate was bought by the Wm. B. Reily and Company — which opened in New Orleans in 1902 as a coffee roasting company and in 1903 began selling Luzianne tea. The company bought CDM Coffee from Blue Plate foods in 1968 and bought the entire company six years later.

Reily also owns the Standard Coffee Service, one of the nation's largest coffee delivery services, and has a controlling interest in Abita Springs Water Co.

Production of Blue Plate was moved to an automated plant Knoxville, Tennessee, in 1999, and the factory building and its glowing blue sign, now listed on the National Register of Historic Places, was turned into apartments.



A 1930 label for Blue Plate mayonnaise.



A billboard for Blue Plate peanut butter in 1945.



The iconic art moderne Blue Plate building on Jefferson Davis Parkway in 1950.