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## Spartanburg outfit to feed first family and all their friends

**CHRIS WINSTON, Business Editor**

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The 16 employees at Spartanburg Meat Processing have toiled in relative obscurity since the company relocated from Vermont three years ago.

That will change today.

Spartanburg Meat Processing, with a 16,000-square-foot facility off North Blackstock Road, is one of a dozen food vendors across the state preparing food for 10,000 to 15,000 guests at tonight's inauguration barbecue in Columbia.

Approximately 1,500 pounds of the company's ribs were shipped Tuesday in 56 boxes to serve at the event. Cherokee County caterers David and Tammy West will heat the ribs, which were cooked prior to shipping.

John McAleer, the company's president, said the order was a "piece of cake." He said he was looking forward to a good reaction to the ribs.

"When you're new in an area, it's nice to be known," said McAleer, who began working in the beef industry in 1969.

JoAnne LaBounty, the company's vice president and sole shareholder, said she called Mark Sanford's office as soon as she heard about a barbecue replacing the traditional formal ball.

"We wanted to see what we could do. Most of the vendors are selling their food, but we are donating our ribs," said LaBounty, who estimated the contribution was worth approximately \$3,000.

But you don't have to travel to Columbia to get a taste of the

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### PHOTOS BY SALLIE TURNER

JoAnne LaBounty, above, vice president of Spartanburg Meat Processing of Spartanburg, explains how ribs are cooked. The company has sent about 1,500 pounds of ribs to Columbia for Gov.-elect Mark Sanford's inaugural barbecue today. Below, Percell Woodruff packs up ribs so they will keep their flavor.

100,000 pounds of pork ribs (spare, back and riblets) the company produces each week.

The company has been producing ribs for hotels, grocery stores and restaurants (including Greer-based Ryan's and Western Sizzler) across the country for years.

Beginning today, customers can order the ribs online.

LaBounty said allowing for Web orders will save employees time.

"We've been getting about seven calls a day from people wondering where they can get them," LaBounty said.

LaBounty said the business was hurt following the economic downturn after the terrorist attacks of Sept. 11. But, she said business has been recovering in recent months. The company plans to expand this year, doubling its production space to 30,000 square feet and its production to approximately 200,000 pounds per week.

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