

The Millis Transfer trucking company in Black River Falls has been purchased by an Iowa-based competitor.

Representatives from Heartland Express, headquartered in North Liberty, Iowa, announced the \$150 million deal in a press release Monday.

“We expect Millis to contribute to our ongoing success immediately, and with opportunities for further improvement, get even better over the long term,” Michael Gerdin, Heartland’s president and CEO, wrote in a statement. “Millis has an outstanding fleet of equipment, and we look forward to utilizing their fleet and professional drivers to serve our combined group of customers.”

The companies gave no indication that operations at Millis will be affected by the deal and did not immediately disclose how many people work there. According to Gerdin, the Millis family management team will remain with the business in their current roles.

Executives Dave, Steve and Dan Millis wrote in a statement that the companies are a natural fit.

“From the first time we met with Mike Gerdin and some of his executives we knew that this was the right decision for our drivers, employees and family,” they wrote. “We are very excited to continue providing the high quality of service that our customers have come to expect. We believe the current culture that was started by our father, Bill Millis, 35 years ago and still exists today, will complement Heartland.

“We look forward to contributing and growing their business through our combined networks and customer relationships.”

Founded in 1936 as a small beer distributor, Millis Transfer has grown into one of the largest and most successful trucking companies in the Upper Midwest.

The company, known for its maroon and white trailers, has maintenance facilities all over the United States: Black River Falls and Richfield, Wisconsin; Weedsport, New York; Eden, North Carolina; Albany and Cartersville, Georgia; Burleson, Texas; and Trenton, Ohio.

It also runs a school for prospective truck drivers, the Millis Training Institute, which has locations in Wisconsin, North Carolina, Georgia, Texas and Ohio.

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