

ASHLAND INC.
Form 8-K
May 08, 2015

UNITED STATES
SECURITIES AND EXCHANGE COMMISSION
Washington, D. C. 20549

FORM 8-K

CURRENT REPORT

Pursuant to Section 13 or 15(d) of
the Securities Exchange Act of 1934

Date of report (Date of earliest event reported): May 8, 2015
ASHLAND INC.
(Exact name of registrant as specified in its charter)

Kentucky
(State or other jurisdiction of incorporation)

1-32532
(Commission File Number)

20-0865835
(I.R.S. Employer Identification No.)

50 E. RiverCenter Boulevard
P.O. Box 391
Covington, Kentucky 41012-0391
Registrant's telephone number, including area code (859) 815-3333

Check the appropriate box below if the Form 8-K filing is intended to simultaneously satisfy the filing obligation of the registrant under any of the following provisions:

- Written communications pursuant to Rule 425 under the Securities Act (17 CFR 230.425)
- Soliciting material pursuant to Rule 14a-12 under the Exchange Act (17 CFR 240.14a-12)
- Pre-commencement communications pursuant to Rule 14d-2(b) under the Exchange Act (17 CFR 240.14d-2(b))
- Pre-commencement communications pursuant to Rule 13e-4(c) under the Exchange Act (17 CFR 240.13e-4(c))

Item 8.01. Other Events.

On May 8, 2015, Ashland Inc. (“Ashland” or the “Company”) began informing certain former employees who are participants in the Ashland Hercules Pension Plan or the Ashland Chemical Hourly Plan (the “Pension Plan”) that the Company is offering such participants the option of receiving a lump sum payment of their vested retirement benefit or a reduced annuity now, in lieu of receiving monthly annuity payments deferred until retirement eligibility or when the participant may choose to initiate payment. The voluntary offer is being made to approximately 21,000 terminated, vested participants in the Pension Plan (the “Eligible Participants”). The majority of Eligible Participants will be receiving more information about this offer in June 2015.

Eligible Participants are generally former employees whose employment terminated with the Company on or before January 31, 2015, and who will not have commenced benefit payments as of May 1, 2015. Eligible Participants will have from late June 2015 to early August 2015 to notify the Company of their decision. The Pension Plan fiduciaries expect to make the lump sum payments to Eligible Participants who elect such payments in September 2015.

The Company expects to record a non-cash adjustment to income in the fourth quarter of fiscal 2015 for settling the obligations. The actual amount of such charge will depend upon the number of Eligible Participants electing the lump sum payment option, the actual return on plan assets, the discount rate and various actuarial assumptions.

Forward-Looking Statements

This Current Report on Form 8-K contains forward-looking statements within the meaning of Section 27A of the Securities Act of 1933 and Section 21E of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934. Ashland has identified some of these forward-looking statements with words such as “anticipates,” “believes,” “expects,” “estimates,” “is likely,” “predicts,” “projects,” “may,” “will,” “should” and “intends” and the negative of these words or other comparable terminology. In addition, Ashland may from time to time make forward-looking statements in its annual report, quarterly reports and other filings with the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC), news releases and other written and oral communications. These forward-looking statements are based on Ashland’s expectations and assumptions, as of the date such statements are made, regarding Ashland’s future operating performance and financial condition, the economy and other future events or circumstances. Ashland’s expectations and assumptions include, without limitation, internal forecasts and analyses of current and future market conditions and trends, management plans and strategies, operating efficiencies and economic conditions (such as prices, supply and demand, cost of raw materials, and the ability to recover raw-material cost increases through price increases), and risks and uncertainties associated with the following: Ashland’s substantial indebtedness (including the possibility that such indebtedness and related restrictive covenants may adversely affect Ashland’s future cash flows, results of operations, financial condition and its ability to repay debt); the impact of acquisitions and/or divestitures Ashland has made or may make (including the possibility that Ashland may not realize the anticipated benefits from such transactions); the global restructuring program (including the possibility that Ashland may not achieve the anticipated revenue and earnings growth, cost reductions, and other expected benefits from the program), Ashland’s ability to generate sufficient cash to finance its stock repurchase plans, severe weather, natural disasters, and legal proceedings and claims (including environmental and asbestos matters). Various risks and uncertainties may cause actual results to differ materially from those stated, projected or implied by any forward-looking statements, including, without limitation, risks and uncertainties affecting Ashland that are described in its most recent Form 10-K (including Item 1A Risk Factors) filed with the SEC, which is available on Ashland’s website at <http://investor.ashland.com> or on the SEC’s website at www.sec.gov. Ashland believes its expectations and assumptions are reasonable, but there can be no assurance that the expectations reflected herein will be achieved. Unless legally required, Ashland undertakes no obligation to update any forward-looking statements made in this Form 8-K whether as a result of new information, future events or otherwise.

SIGNATURES

Pursuant to the requirements of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934, the registrant has duly caused this report to be signed on its behalf by the undersigned hereunto duly authorized.

ASHLAND INC.
(Registrant)

May 8, 2015

/s/ Peter J. Ganz
Peter J. Ganz
Senior Vice President, General Counsel and Secretary