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UNIVERSAL CORP /VA/
Form 8-K
April 05, 2002

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: April 3, 2002
(Date of earliest event reported)

UNIVERSAL CORPORATION
(Exact Name of Registrant as Specified in its Charter)

| | | |
|---|-----------------------------------|--|
| Virginia (State or Other Jurisdiction of Incorporation) | 1-652 (Commission File Number) | 54-0414210 (IRS Employer Identification No.) |
|---|-----------------------------------|--|

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|--|---------------------|
| 1501 North Hamilton Street Richmond, Virginia (Address of Principal Executive Offices) | 23230 (Zip Code) |
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Registrant's telephone number, including area code:
(804) 359-9311

Item 5. Other Events.

On February 26, 2001, Universal Leaf Tobacco Company, Incorporated, J.P. Taylor Company, Incorporated and Southwestern Tobacco Company, Incorporated, who are subsidiaries of Universal Corporation (the "Company Subsidiaries") were served with the Third Amended Complaint, naming them and other leaf tobacco merchants as defendants in DeLoach, et al. v. Philip Morris Inc., et al., a suit originally filed against U.S. cigarette manufacturers in the United States District Court for the District of Columbia and now pending in the United States District Court for the Middle District of North Carolina, Greensboro Division (Case No. 00-CV-1235) (the "DeLoach Suit"). The DeLoach Suit is a purported class action brought on behalf of U.S. tobacco growers and quota holders that alleges that defendants violated antitrust laws by bid-rigging at tobacco auctions and by conspiring to undermine the tobacco quota and price support program administered by the federal government. Plaintiffs seek injunctive relief, trebled damages in an unspecified amount, pre- and post-judgment interest, attorneys' fees and costs of litigation. On April 3, 2002, the United States District Court for the Middle District of North Carolina issued an opinion and order certifying the class. The Company Subsidiaries intend to petition the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Fourth Circuit for appeal of the class certification pursuant to Rule 23(f) of the Federal Rules of Civil Procedure. Regardless of the outcome of such petition and any consequent appeal, the Company Subsidiaries intend to vigorously defend the DeLoach Suit. The suit is still in its initial stages, and at this time no estimate of the impact on the Company that could result from an unfavorable outcome at trial can be made.

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SIGNATURES

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

UNIVERSAL CORPORATION
(Registrant)

Date: April 5, 2001

By: /s/ George C. Freeman, III

George C. Freeman, III
General Counsel and Secretary