

STATE OF CONNECTICUT  
DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH



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**EHS Circular Letter 2014-28**

TO: Local Directors of Health  
Certified Food Inspectors

FROM: Tracey Weeks, MS, RS  
Coordinator, Food Protection Program

DATE: June 13, 2014

SUBJECT: Fruitland American Meat Beef Recall Due to Inclusion of Specified Risk Material

USDA announced that Fruitland American Meat, a Jackson, Mo. establishment is recalling approximately 4,012 pounds of fresh beef products because the dorsal root ganglia may not have been completely removed as required by the USDA Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS). Dorsal root ganglia is included in the list of Specified Risk Material – the parts of the cattle aged 30 months and older, that are not allowed into the food chain because they can harbor prions, the infectious agent that causes Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathy (BSE - more commonly known as Mad Cow disease) in cattle.

Information available at this time indicates that the recalled products were sent to a restaurant in New York City and a Whole Foods distribution center in Connecticut which services its stores in New England. A detailed distribution list has not been provided at this time but will be shared with local health departments once received.

Although the Food Protection Program (FPP) does not normally send notices for Class 2 recalls (those food products with a remote risk of disease), this notice is being sent to make local health departments aware of the recall because of the media attention and potential for increased consumer concern. Please read the attached USDA recall notice for details on the bone in ribeye steaks and beef quarters produced in establishment #2316 between April 2013 and September 2014 that are included in the recall.

Although BSE is extremely rare (only 4 US cows have been identified to date) it is a concern due to the potential to cause variant Creutzfeldt Jakob Disease (vCJD) in humans who have consumed beef from an infected cow. There is no treatment for either disease, they have long incubation periods (approximately 3-8 years for BSE and about 10 years for vCJD), and are always fatal, hence the potential for increased consumer concern. Consumers should be aware that vCJD is also extremely rare (only 4 human cases have been identified in the US to date) and based on investigations conducted, it is believed that they contracted the disease while living outside the US.

If calls are received, it should be emphasized that the risk that the beef was contaminated is extremely low as all animals were reported to be healthy at the time of slaughter.

C: Suzanne Blancaflor, M.S., M.P.H., Chief, Environmental Health Section  
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## News Release

### Missouri Firm Recalls Ribeye and Carcass Products That May Contain Specified Risk Materials

Class II Recall 034-2014

Health Risk: Low Jun 11, 2014

[En Español \(?1dmy&current=true&urile=wcm%3apath%3a%2Ffsis-content%2Finternet%2Finformational%2Fen-espanol%2Fnoticiasysucesos%2Favisos-de-alerta-sobre-salud-publica%2Farchive%2F2014%2Frc-034-2014-sp\)](#)

Congressional and Public Affairs

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**WASHINGTON, June 11, 2014** – Fruitland American Meat, a Jackson, Mo. establishment is recalling approximately 4,012 pounds of fresh beef products because the dorsal root ganglia may not have been completely removed, which is not compliant with agency regulations that require their removal in cattle 30 months of age and older, the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS) announced today.

The products subject to recall include:

- 40-lb. cases containing two, roughly 20-lb. cryovac packages of bone-in "Rain Crow Ranch Ribeye" bearing the establishment number "EST. 2316" inside the USDA mark of inspection with the following production dates: 9/5/13, 9/10/13, 9/11/13, 9/26/13, 10/2/13, 10/3/2013, 11/8/13, 11/22/13, 12/17/13, 12/26/13, 12/27/13, 1/16/14, 1/17/14, 1/23/14, 1/31/14, 2/13/14, 2/14/14, 2/21/14, 2/28/14, 3/8/14, 3/20/14, 4/4/14 or 4/25/14 printed on the box.
- Quartered beef carcasses stamped with the USDA mark of inspection and establishment number "EST. 2316."

The products were produced and packaged on various dates between September 2013 and April 2014. The bone-in ribeye roasts were the source material of concern.

Fruitland American Meat advises that the bone-in ribeye roasts were distributed to a restaurant in New York, NY, and a Whole Foods distribution center in Connecticut which services its stores in New England. The quartered carcasses were distributed to an FSIS-inspected establishment in Missouri for further processing and distribution, and to a restaurant in Kansas City, Mo. All products would have been processed into smaller cuts with no identifying consumer packaging.

The problem was discovered by FSIS during a review of company slaughter logs. The problem may have occurred as a result of the way some company employees were recording information and determining the age of various cattle. Dorsal root ganglia, branches of the nervous system located in the vertebral column are considered specified risk materials (SRMs) and must be removed from cattle 30 months of age and older in accordance with FSIS regulations. SRMs are tissues that may contain the infective agent in cattle infected with Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathy (BSE), as well as materials that are closely associated with these potentially infective tissues. Therefore, FSIS prohibits SRMs from use as human food to minimize potential human exposure to the BSE agent.

Every animal received ante-mortem inspection by an FSIS Public Health Veterinarian. This involves observing each animal at rest and in motion and there is no indication that any of the cattle slaughtered displayed any signs of BSE.

FSIS and Fruitland American Meat have received no reports of adverse reactions due to consumption of these products. Anyone concerned about a reaction should contact a healthcare provider.

FSIS routinely conducts recall effectiveness checks to verify recalling firms notify their customers of the recall and that steps are taken to make certain that the product is no longer available to consumers. When available, the retail distribution list will be posted on the FSIS website at [www.fsis.usda.gov/recalls](http://www.fsis.usda.gov/recalls) (<http://www.fsis.usda.gov/recalls>).

Consumers and media with questions about the recall should contact company sales manager James Fortner at 573-243-3107.

Consumers with food safety questions can “Ask Karen,” the FSIS virtual representative available 24 hours a day at [askkaren.gov](http://www.askkaren.gov) (<http://www.askkaren.gov>) or via smartphone at [m.askkaren.gov](http://m.askkaren.gov) (<http://m.askkaren.gov>). “Ask Karen” live chat services are available Monday through Friday from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. ET. The toll-free USDA Meat and Poultry Hotline 1-888-MPHotline (1-888-674-6854) is available in English and Spanish and can be reached from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. (Eastern Time) Monday through Friday. Recorded food safety messages are available 24 hours a day.

<b>USDA Recall Classifications</b>	
<b>Class I</b>	This is a health hazard situation where there is a reasonable probability that the use of the product will cause serious, adverse health consequences or death.
<b>Class II</b>	This is a health hazard situation where there is a remote probability of adverse health consequences from the use of the product.
<b>Class III</b>	This is a situation where the use of the product will not cause adverse health consequences.

*Last Modified Jun 12, 2014*