

Twin Rivers Response to Recent Media Stories about Lean Finely Textured Beef

3/8/2012

Twin Rivers Nutrition Services Department does not purchase beef directly from USDA. Our finished beef products come from USDA approved private vendors.

These companies have been contacted and asked to provide written statements concerning their use of LFTB. Please see the statements below from four vendors that supply our beef products.

About Lean Finely Textured Beef (LFTB)

Since the early 1990s, Lean Finely Textured Beef (LFTB) has been allowed as a component of the ground beef purchased by USDA for distribution through the National School Lunch Program (NSLP). The maximum allowable percentage of LFTB that may be formulated into single servings of the ground beef purchased for the NSLP is 15 percent, which is similar to the composition found in many commercially available ground beef products.

USDA does not purchase LFTB directly. Rather, LFTB may be used as a raw material in USDA-purchased ground beef products after it undergoes stringent testing. Of the ground beef purchased by USDA in 2011 for the NSLP, LFTB comprised approximately 6.5 percent of the total volume.

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration as well as the Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS) considers ammonium hydroxide as "generally recognized as safe." FSIS reviewed the suitability of Beef Products, Inc.'s (BPI) use of ammonium hydroxide in order to assess its effectiveness in performing the intended technical purpose of use, at the lowest level necessary, and to ensure that the product is not adulterated or misleading to consumers.

All USDA beef purchases for the NSLP and other Federal food and nutrition assistance programs meet very high food safety standards, which include stringent pathogen testing. Beef supplied by BPI as a component of the beef products purchased by USDA for the NSLP is subject to the same strict pathogen testing requirements for beef raw ingredients.

Additional information on this product or product specific inquiries should be directed to BPI at <http://www.beefproducts.com/>.

Although USDA makes every effort to ensure that commodities provided through the Food Distribution Program are nutritious and of the highest quality, a problem may arise from time to time. When a problem involves the quality of the product, foreign material in a product, poor packaging of a product, or cooking or preparation issues, a complaint should be filed with this department so that we may pass the information on to the state.

Filing a formal complaint is important because allows the state and USDA to track and respond to complaints about commodities. Complaints can lead to specification improvements, help monitor vendor performance, and can help indicate possible trends.