

## Farmer's Share of Retail Food Dollar

Did you know that farmers and ranchers receive only 20 cents of every food dollar that consumers spend on food at home and away from home?

According to USDA, off farm costs including marketing, processing, wholesaling, distribution and retailing account for 80 cents of every food dollar spent in the United States.

<b>Bacon</b> 1 Pound  Retail: \$4.39 Farmer: \$0.62	<b>Top Sirloin Steak</b> 1 Pound  Retail: \$3.99 Farmer: \$0.93	<b>Bread</b> 1 Pound  Retail: \$1.99 Farmer: \$0.12	<b>Fresh Carrots</b> 3 Pounds  Retail: \$2.99 Farmer: \$0.81	<b>Beer</b> 6-Pack Cans  Retail: \$5.49 Farmer: \$0.09
<b>Cereal</b> 18 Ounce Box  Retail: \$4.19 Farmer: \$0.05	<b>Cheddar Cheese</b> 1 Pound  Retail: \$3.29 Farmer: \$1.41	<b>Eggs</b> 1 Dozen  Retail: \$2.69 Farmer: \$0.79	<b>Flour</b> 5 Pounds  Retail: \$2.59 Farmer: \$0.58	<b>Boneless Ham</b> Price per Pound  Retail: \$3.99 Farmer: \$0.62
<b>Lettuces</b> 1 Head (2 Pounds)  Retail: \$2.19 Farmer: \$0.38	<b>Milk</b> 1 Gallon, Fat Free  Retail: \$2.50 Farmer: \$1.33	<b>Potato Chips</b> Lays Classic, 11oz  Retail: \$2.49 Farmer: \$0.11	<b>Fresh Potatoes</b> Russet, 10 Pounds  Retail: \$4.39 Farmer: \$0.46	<b>Soda</b> Two Liter Bottle  Retail: \$1.09 Farmer: \$0.06

Farmer's share derived from USDA, NASS "Agricultural Prices," 2010. Retail based on Safeway (SE) brand except where noted.



August 31, 2010

## Filthy Conditions Found At Egg Production Facilities

BY ANDREW ZAJAC AND P.J. HUFFSTUTTER  
McClatchy News Service

WASHINGTON—Federal officials investigating conditions at the two Iowa mega-farms whose products have been at the center of the biggest egg recall in U.S. history found filthy conditions, including chickens and rodents crawling up massive manure piles and flies and maggots "too numerous to count."

Water used to wash eggs at one of the producers tested positive for a strain of salmonella that appears to match the variety identified in eggs that have sickened at least 1,500 people, according to preliminary Food and Drug Administration reports of inspections at facilities operated by Wright County Egg and Hillandale Farms of Iowa Inc.

FDA officials who briefed reporters on the findings in a telephone conference call declined to say how serious the violations were for facilities that house millions of birds. Between them, the two producers have 7.5 million hens. But FDA Deputy Commissioner for Foods Michael Taylor said that "clearly the observations here reflect significant deviations from what's expected."

Food safety experts said conditions described in the reports are some of the worst they've seen in decades.

The reports offer clues to what may have caused the salmonella enteritidis outbreak that prompted the recall of half a billion eggs.

Investigators began examining conditions at the Wright County operation Aug. 12, the day before the company issued its first recall. Inspectors completed their work at that facility on Monday, according to documents released by the FDA.

Investigators checked out the Hillandale site Aug. 19-26. Their tests of spent water from an egg wash station came up positive for salmonella, although it was not clear whether that contaminated water had been used to clean eggs, an FDA official said.

Wright County Egg recalled a total of 380 million eggs beginning Aug. 13, and Hillandale has since pulled 170 million eggs from the market. Last week, FDA officials said that salmonella tests taken at both operations came back positive.

In a statement, a Wright County Egg spokeswoman said that the company had fully cooperated with the FDA and that "to date, the vast majority of the concerns identified in the FDA report already have been addressed through repairs or other corrective measures."

A spokeswoman for Hillandale said the company was "committed to taking the steps necessary to regain the full confidence of our customers and consumers."

FDA officials declined to discuss what, if any, penalties the egg producers might face. Possible penalties include seizure of products, court orders requiring improvements in operations or criminal prosecution. Wright County Egg owner Austin DeCoster has a decades-long record of regulatory violations in at least three states and has paid millions of dollars in fines and settlements. The agency also announced that next month it

would begin inspection of the nation's 600 largest egg farms, which produce 80 percent of the nation's eggs. Those inspections, industry officials say, are expected to include some of the industry's smaller operations — those with as few as 50,000 laying hens — as well as mega-farms such as those operated by the DeCoster family in Iowa.

Many of the eggs consumers eat are being produced by a shrinking number of farmers. There are 192 large commercial egg producers in the U.S. that control 95 percent of all the laying hens, compared with 2,500 in 1987, according to the trade group United Egg Producers. The majority of those operations are based in six states.

But Iowa, which has 54 million laying hens, produces far more eggs than any other state, according to University of California, Riverside, poultry specialist Don Bell. (The next two largest states, Ohio and Pennsylvania, have only 50 million hens combined.)

Iowa has far fewer rules regarding regular inspections of either farm or feed operations. That, along with cheaper land, feed and energy costs, explains why much of the nation's cheapest eggs are being produced in the Hawkeye State, food safety experts and industry critics say.

Nancy Donley, president of Safe Tables Our Priority, a nonprofit food safety advocacy group, said she'd never seen a report so "horrific and where something that's so clearly wrong is so clearly apparent to the naked eye."

Among the most disturbing details, Donley said, were the descriptions of the hen houses that investigators said were missing exterior siding and had broken ventilation systems and holes in walls and doors, some chewed by rodents. Such structural damage, she said, takes time and could have been prevented "if any inspectors had been out there. ... This is a matter of just walking around the farm and looking."

Food safety attorney William Marler, who represents people sickened by the current salmonella enteritidis outbreak, said the inspection report is "one of the worst I've ever seen. Knowing now that this was going on, it doesn't surprise me that those operations had a systematic salmonella problem."

The recall, which already has triggered a congressional investigation, with hearings slated for next month, continues to have political repercussions.

Rep. Rosa DeLauro, D-Conn., who has asked the FDA and the U.S. Agriculture Department what they knew about reports of the Iowa farms' past violations, said the recall underscores the country's need for comprehensive federal food safety regulations.

"We're dealing with life and death when it comes to food safety," DeLauro said last week. "What is it going to take to understand that strong regulations are needed?"

In Iowa on Monday, state Attorney General Tom Miller agreed to return a \$10,000 campaign contribution from Peter DeCoster, Austin DeCoster's son, made in 2005, after he was criticized by his Republican opponent.

## BEETS

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the ruling has the potential to disrupt the entire industry.

White noted in his 10-page ruling that regulators had time to prepare because he had already overturned the deregulation of the genetically altered beets in September 2009.

USDA officials "already had more than sufficient time to take interim measures, but failed to act expeditiously," he wrote.

USDA officials have not commented on the ruling.

Monsanto, based in St. Louis, referred requests for comment to the American Sugarbeet Growers Association, which pointed to a statement from the Sugar Industry Biotech Council (SIBC). In the statement, the sugar beet council said it intends to help the USDA come up with "interim measures" that would allow continued production of the genetically altered seeds while regulators conduct their environmental review.

"APHIS may adopt interim measures regarding future planting of Roundup Ready sugar beet crops that are compliant with federal legal requirements," the biotech council statement reads. "The sugar beet industry will provide its full support to USDA to allow full consideration of appropriate interim measures that allow continued production of Roundup Ready sugar beets."

But if a temporary solution isn't found, the planting restrictions are likely to cause headaches for growers and food processors.

"Next time you sprinkle sugar on your cereal, eat a candy-bar or bake a batch of chocolate chip cookies, consider this: The people manipulated by Monsanto and vilified by Earthjustice are folks like (my husband) and me... hardworking stewards of the land who just want to be left alone to work our fields, raise our kids and pay our bills," Otte said.

## FDA Seeks Court Order Against Michigan Dairy

Gov. Alleges Cattle Sold For Human Consumption Contained Illegal Drug Residues

SILVER SPRING, Md. —The U.S. Department of Justice, on behalf of the U.S. Food and Drug Administration, has filed a complaint for permanent injunction against Scenic View Dairy of Hamilton, Mich., its president, and three of its managers alleging that they sold dairy cows for human consumption that contained illegal drug residues in edible tissues.

The complaint, filed August 31, in the U.S. District Court for the Western District of Michigan, also alleges that the defendants, despite numerous warnings, sold for slaughter dairy cows that were treated with drugs contrary to the drugs' FDA-approved labeling and without a valid veterinary prescription authorizing such use.

The complaint alleges that violations occurred from 2002 through 2010 at Scenic View Dairy's three farms, located in Fenville, Freeport, and Gowen, Mich. Company president Michael D. Geerlings, Fenville farm manager Mark A. Lucas, Freeport farm manager Michael J. Van Dam, and Gowen farm manager Jeremy A. Portell were all named in the complaint.

Between 2001 and 2010, the FDA notified the defendants of

its inspectional findings on at least eight occasions, and USDA sent Scenic View at least 11 letters regarding illegal tissue residues. The complaint alleges that the defendants continue to violate the law despite these warnings.

The complaint is based, in part, upon illegal neomycin, penicillin, and sulfadimethoxine drug residues that the USDA found in the edible tissue of dairy cows that defendants had offered for sale for human consumption.

Neomycin, penicillin, and sulfadimethoxine are antibiotics. The sale of animals for human food that contain illegal levels of drugs can lead to the development of bacteria that resist antibiotics and can cause reactions in people with drug allergies. FDA regulations for animal drugs include a specified time to withdraw an animal from treatment prior to slaughter so that a drug is depleted from edible tissue to levels safe for humans.

Scenic View Dairy buys cows primarily from New Hampshire, Pennsylvania and Vermont and sells to slaughterhouses in other states, including Pennsylvania and Wisconsin.

## Extension Offers Tips For Winter Wheat Planting

BY STEVE SUTERA  
Extension Educator

Here are a few tips that will set your crop up for success in 2011.

- Choose a variety with agronomic characteristics that is both recommended for our area and performs well in test locations.

- Direct seed into standing stubble helps trap snow. This insulates the wheat seedlings against cold temperatures, reducing risk of winterkill. Seeding winter wheat into broadleaf crop stubble is recommended to reduce the risk of disease, insect, and weed problems.

- Seeding into wheat stubble increases the risk of disease carryover into the following season. Proper disease management may be needed next spring to reduce disease pressure.

- Control weeds now. Controlling grassy weeds and volunteer wheat crop two weeks prior to planting winter wheat will provide a break in the life cycle of wheat curl mite and help to control wheat streak mosaic and other diseases next season.

- Plant at the right time. The recommended time to plant in our area is September 20 to October 15. Wheat plants should be well established before freezing up. Early planted wheat may act as a host for leaf curl mites. It can also increase the risk of root and crown rot diseases. Research generally shows that yields begin to decrease as the planting date goes beyond October 15.

- Don't plant too deep or shallow. Plant winter wheat at a



Steve Sutera

depth of 1.5 to 2 inches. Plant into a firm seedbed. Planting deeper than 2 inches reduces emergence and can result in weak spindly seedlings with a poor ability to survive the winter. If it is necessary to plant deeper to get to moisture, growers should choose a variety with a longer coleoptile. Make sure there is good soil to seed contact. A good firm seedbed is very important.

- Plant the right amount of seed. The recommended seeding rates are 22 to 28 pure live seeds per square foot. Winter wheat has a tremendous ability to tiller and compensate for this stands.

- Test soils and apply fertilizer based on soil test results and yield expectations. Research shows that phosphorus helps winter survival by stimulating root growth and tillering in the fall. Therefore, if soil test results indicate low phosphorus, application of the required rate is recommended.

- Apply nitrogen according to your yield goal. Winter wheat requires 2.5 pounds of N per bushel of yield goal. Nitrogen applied to soils with temperatures above 50 degrees is more likely to convert to the nitrate forms which can leach easier. Treating seed with a fungicide is a good practice. The last few years we have seen a reduction in the amount of root and crown rot where the seed was treated prior to planting.



It's Simple!

Draw A Holiday Scene On 8.5"x11" White Paper and Submit It To The Yankton Daily Press & Dakotan

- Top drawings selected will be printed on Christmas cards. The cards will be sold with proceeds going to our Newspapers In Education Program
- The winners will be featured with their picture and first name in the Press & Dakotan and will receive a full package of the Christmas cards.
- Child's first name and age will be printed on the back of the Christmas Card.

Mail or bring to:  
Yankton Daily Press & Dakotan  
Holiday Card Contest  
319 Walnut, Yankton, SD 57078

Any questions contact Noelle at 665-7811 ext. 112

Please write child's first name, age, phone number and school on back of drawing.



Entry deadline September 30, 2010.  
Press & Dakotan staff will judge drawings.

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'O Brother' Artists To Perform At WJ Ranch

Saturday, Sept 18 at 8:00 p.m., Dan Tyminski and Ronnie Bowman will be in concert at the WJ Ranch south of Yankton.

Dan is a member of Allison Kraus' Band "Union Station," and was the voice of George Clooney, singing "O Brother Where Art

Thou" as the "Soggy Bottom Boys" in the movie.

Ronnie was a member of the most well known bluegrass band "Lonesome River Band" and is a songwriter for Brooks & Dunn and Kenny Chesney.

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