

143M pounds of U.S. beef recalled

by UPI

CHINO, Calif. - A California meat packer is recalling 143 million tons of raw and frozen beef products federal regulators deemed unfit for human consumption, it was announced. The voluntary nationwide recall by Hallmark/Westland Meat Packing Co. of Chino, Calif., came after the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Food Safety and Inspection Service determined that "occasionally over the past two years" the slaughter house's non-ambulatory "downer cattle" had not been completely and properly inspected, the USDA said in a news release. So-called downer cattle are supposed to receive a more thorough inspection after slaughter than is customary. The Class II recall means there is a remote probability the beef being recalled would cause adverse health effects if consumed, the USDA release said. "The products subject to this recall were sent to wholesale distributors nationwide in bulk packages and are not available for direct purchase by consumers," the USDA said. All products subject to recall bear the establishment number "EST. 336" inside the USDA mark of inspection. The products were produced on various dates from Feb. 1, 2006, to Feb. 2, 2008. The USDA urged companies to check inventories and hold products until the recalling firm makes arrangements for final disposition of the products. Agriculture Secretary Ed Schafer said products destined for the school, food shelf and Native American reservations are on hold, and contracts with Hallmark/Westland have been suspended.

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