

Feds Shut Down Central Valley Meat Co.

HANFORD, Calif. (AP) — Federal inspectors shut down a central California slaughterhouse that supplies beef to the National School Lunch Program because of unsanitary conditions.

The U.S. Department of Agriculture's Food Safety and Inspection Service said in a statement Tuesday that it withdrew inspectors and suspended operations at Central Valley Meat Co. in Hanford, about 30 miles south of Fresno, over the conditions.

"The plant's suspension will be lifted once we receive adequate assurances of corrective action," the agency said.

The Times reported that Central Valley Meat didn't respond to a request for comment. Company representatives didn't immediately return a phone message left by The Associated Press on Tuesday evening.

In 2012, Central Valley Meat Co. shut down for a week after Compassion Over Killing, an animal rights group, sent videos to federal officials showing workers torturing cows with electric prods and spraying hot water on the animals, the [Los Angeles Times](#) [1] reported.

"This facility has a history of rampant animal abuse, so it's not surprising that it's also having issues with unsanitary conditions," Erica Meier, executive director of Compassion Over Killing, told the newspaper.

The 2012 abuse led to the end of the company's relationship with In-N-Out. The national lunch program and McDonald's also suspended purchases.

Federal inspectors didn't find that the animals' treatment affected food safety.

The facility reopened after submitting a plan of action that included training its workers to use electric prods correctly and banning taking in cows not able to walk or stand.

In addition, in September 2013, [Central Valley recalled 58,000 pounds of beef for the school lunch program](#) [2] after federal officials said the meat possibly contained pieces of plastic. There was no recall in Tuesday's announcement.

Information from: Los Angeles Times, <http://www.latimes.com> [3]

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[1] <http://lat.ms/1m8qZU8>

[2] <http://www.foodmanufacturing.com/news/2013/09/central-valley-recalls-58k-pounds-ground-beef>

[3] <http://www.latimes.com>