

JournalNews

\$500K fine for immigration violations paid by Koch Foods

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FAIRFIELD — More than two years after immigration officials raided Koch Foods on Port Union Road, the chicken processor has paid a fine of more than \$500,000.

U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement announced Friday, Feb. 12, Koch foods paid the fine for administrative violations of U.S. immigration laws.

In August 2007, ICE agents executed a search warrant at Koch Foods, arrested 161 illegal immigrants and seized various documents. ICE agents also executed a search warrant at Koch's corporate headquarters in Chicago, also seizing various documents.

A work site investigation started two years ago after ICE agents at the Cincinnati investigations office received information "from a concerned citizen" alleging the company employed more than 100 illegal immigrants.

The \$536,046 fine relates to Form I-9 violations. This form requires employers to review and record an employee's identity documents and determine if those documents are genuine.

According to an ICE release, the company has cooperated and began using E-Verify, an Internet-based system that allows an employer to verify a person's work eligibility.

"Employers have a responsibility to hire men and women who are authorized to work in the United States and fines are an important component of ensuring their compliance," said Brian Moskowitz, ICE Special Agent in Charge of investigations in Michigan and Ohio. "The significant civil fines leveled here represent ICE's firm commitment to holding employers accountable."

The Butler County Sheriff's Office, West Chester Twp. and Fairfield police departments, and U.S. Department of Agriculture's Office of the Inspector General were involved in the investigation and executing the 2007 search warrant. The West Chester Twp. and Fairfield fire departments assisted as those arrested were detained.