

# Immigration crackdowns reported in 6 states

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LITTLE ROCK, Ark. Immigration agents raided a poultry plant in north Arkansas Wednesday morning and made some arrests for suspected immigration violations. Agents also were serving arrest warrants in five other states, authorities said.

The raid in Arkansas was part of an ongoing criminal investigation involving the Pilgrim's Pride poultry plant in Batesville, Temple Black, a spokesman for U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement, told The Associated Press.

ICE agents also were serving arrest warrants in New York, Pennsylvania, Ohio, West Virginia and Georgia as part of an investigation of illegal immigrants, said ICE spokesman Michael Gilhooly in Buffalo, N.Y. Federal officials did not immediately give details or say if that operation was connected with the Arkansas raid.

Black would not say how many people were arrested at Pilgrim's Price or describe the nature of the investigation.

We anticipate agents and officers will be on the premises for several hours, Black said. He said more information would be released later in the day.

It was the first ICE raid on an Arkansas poultry plant since July 27, 2005, when 119 people suspected of being illegal immigrants were arrested at a Petit Jean Inc. poultry plant in Arkadelphia.

Independence County Sheriff Keith Bowers said Wednesday's raid took place at 6 a.m.

Bowers said he and five deputies only provided security at the plant's gates during the operation and left just after 8 a.m.

The sheriff said ICE agents did not give him details on the purpose of the raid, but he said agents had a warrant list with about 60 names.

Bowers said Pilgrim's Pride cooperated with the investigation.

Ray Atkinson, a spokesman for Pittsburg, Texas-based Pilgrim's Pride, did not immediately return a call seeking comment. The company has other plants in Arkansas in Clinton, De Queen and El Dorado