



NEWS RELEASE

ALABAMA DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH

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ADPH to provide additional TB screening in Decatur

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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On Oct. 16 the Alabama Department of Public Health completed its initial review of approximately 200 employees who had been in contact with a former employee of Wayne Farms Chicken Processing Plant in Decatur suspected of having tuberculosis.

During this review, one additional employee was identified with an abnormal X-ray. Although this employee's initial laboratory tests were negative for TB, health department staff continued to monitor the employee's status closely and a subsequent test has been read as positive.

Although 200 employees have been evaluated thus far, the Alabama Department of Public Health and Wayne Farms Chicken Processing Plant agree that the best course of action is to expand the screenings. Public health and Wayne Farms made this decision out of an abundance of caution and with the full support of plant management.

Beginning Oct. 29 the department plans to offer tuberculin skin tests to the remaining 700 employees who work in the area referred to as the Fresh facility where chickens are unloaded and processed.

Dr. Donald E. Williamson, state health officer, said, "It is very important for the public to understand our mission in this case. The health department must respond to each suspected case of tuberculosis in order to prevent future cases. In some instances, screening is expanded as a precaution."

For more information on TB, please contact Pam Barrett at 334-206-5330.