



NEWS RELEASE

ALABAMA DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH

RSA Tower 201 Monroe Street, Suite 914 - Montgomery, AL 36104
Phone 334-206-5300 - Fax 334-206-5534

www.adph.org

No additional TB cases confirmed among employees of Decatur plant

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CONTACT:

Scott Jones
(334) 206-5330

The Alabama Department of Public Health reports that no additional cases of tuberculosis have been confirmed among employees of the Wayne Farms Poultry Processing Plant in Decatur. All employees were screened during October and November.

"Although we have a bit more work ahead of us, we are pleased to report that no additional cases have been confirmed thus far in this investigation -- the index case and one additional case found during the first round of testing," said Scott Jones, interim director of the health department's Division of TB Control. "These individuals are in treatment and no longer pose a threat for transmission of TB."

A total of 212 employees tested positive for latent TB infection. These employees were given chest X-rays to rule out active TB disease.

Jones added, "ADPH staff have already begun to initiate preventive therapy for those employees with positive skin tests. Employees with positive skin tests alone do not have active TB and therefore cannot transmit TB."

After public health staff initiate preventive therapy for persons found to have positive skin tests during the first round of testing, skin tests will be scheduled for employees who work in adjacent buildings. If, at the completion of these final tests, no new cases have been identified, the investigative phase will be closed and public health staff will work with Wayne Farms officials to assure that employees complete preventive therapy.

Fewer TB cases have been confirmed in Alabama this year than last year. About 20 to 25 percent of Alabama TB cases are in foreign-born persons.

"We fully understand and empathize with those who have expressed concern during the past few weeks," Jones said. "At this time we would like to thank those who have worked with us. The medicines and methods that have contributed to the historic decline in tuberculosis in Alabama continue to serve and protect our communities today, and into the future."