



Though the National Beef parking lot was less than half full Tuesday, it wasn't because of a USDA recall. It was due to telecom problems Friday and Saturday that shut down phone and computer lines. The plant had to reduce a shift and a half of labor for the day, but everything is back up to normal today. However, the USDA did issue a recall Tuesday of ground beef from National due to possible E. Coli contamination. L&T photo/Larry Phillips

Recall involves 22,737 lbs. of raw ground beef

By LARRY PHILLIPS

• Leader & Times

Despite rumors, National Beef was not shut down Tuesday due to an E. Coli outbreak.

However, the United States Department of Agriculture's Food and Safety Inspection Services did issue a recall Tuesday to National Beef of ground beef products due to "possible" E. Coli contamination.

According to the [press release](#) , FSIS said National Beef is recalling 22,737 pounds of raw ground beef.

"The problem was discovered through routine FSIS monitoring which confirmed a positive result for E.coli O157:H7," the statement noted. "An investigation determined the firm was the sole supplier of the source materials used to produce the positive product. FSIS and the company have received no reports of illnesses associated with consumption of these products."



The following products are subject to recall:

- 10 lb. packages of "National Beef" 80/20 Coarse Ground Chuck, package code "0481."
- 10 lb. packages of "National Beef" 81/19 Coarse Ground Beef, package code "0421."
- 10 lb. packages of "National Beef" 80/20 Fine Ground Chuck, package code "0484."

All these products have a "USE BY/SELL BY DATE" of June 14, 2013. The products were produced on May 25, 2013, and shipped to various institutions and retail establishments.

FSIS and the establishment are concerned that some product may be frozen and in shoppers' freezers.

FSIS advises all consumers to safely prepare their raw meat products, including fresh and frozen, and only consume ground beef that has been cooked to a temperature of 160° F. The only way to confirm that ground beef is cooked to a temperature high enough to kill harmful bacteria is to use a food thermometer that measures internal temperature.

The release noted: "Consumers with questions should contact the company at (877) 857-4143 for details about the recall and their return and reimbursement policy. Media with questions regarding the recall should contact the company's spokesperson, Keith Welty, at (816) 713-8631. Additional information can be found at www.nationalbeef.com."

For the complete [USDA recall](#) release, [click here](#).

Many residents did notice the parking lot at National Beef on Tuesday was less than half full, but National Beef spokesman Keith Welty said it had nothing to do with the recall.

"It's an unrelated matter (to the recall)," Welty said earlier today. "The issue in Liberal yesterday – we had some telecommunication issues taking out phone lines and computer lines starting Friday and into Saturday. You can imagine with the amount of boxes of product we produce out of that plant and your systems go down. It caused quite a bit of problems in terms of keeping track of your product and production.

"So, we actually took a shift and a half out of production yesterday," he continued. "But then we're going to sprinkle those hours back into Liberal and Dodge City to make up the time we lost yesterday.

"We're back up and running today – everything is fine," Welty added.

