

XL Foods adds RVA to new food safety protocols

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by Meat&Poultry Staff



BROOKS, Alberta – XL Foods, Inc. admitted there were problems with its food safety processes and detailed corrective actions the company is taking — which includes installing a remote video auditing system (RVA).

“We believed XL Foods was a leader in the beef processing industry, with our food safety protocols, but we have now learned that it is not enough,” the company said in a statement. “We take full responsibility for our plant operations, and the food it produces, which is consumed by Canadians from coast to coast.

“We are doing everything we can to take the lead in an enhanced, comprehensive food safety program at our plant.”

Prevention, process verification and correction, response and product control are areas the company said required improvements. The plant will operate under an intensified and enhanced testing protocol in which meat will be quarantined until tests for *E. coli* are complete and results have been analyzed, the company said. Tests can take up to 18 hours to complete.

“The plant will also include remote video auditing to significantly inform our supervisory oversight as we become the first Canadian business to use this 21st century technology in our food safety program,” the company said.

Mt. Kisco, NY-based Arrowsight confirmed the company is providing the RVA technology. Arrowsight is a developer of software programs designed to provide remote video monitoring and auditing of food safety and animal handling practices at meat processing operations throughout the US.

Additional measures XL Food is taking include:

- Extending high pressure, hot water wash intervention and increasing monitoring of this system;
- Redesigning the company’s training program to ensure high-quality and consistent training for management and employees; and
- Adding quality control personnel to each shift with primary duties to monitor all sanitary dressing programs and practices.

“These changes, in addition to others, when fully integrated into our existing monitoring and statistical process control programs, will allow us to improve the decision-making in our prevention program,” the company said. “When we re-open our plant under direction from the CFIA, we will start with limited production runs with intensified testing protocols.

“We will work collaboratively with the 48 CFIA inspectors who work at XL Foods facility to ensure something like this never happens again.”