

# News Release

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## **US Labor Department files complaint against Cargill Meat Solutions for discrimination at Springdale, Ark., facility *Suit seeks back wages and job offers for more than 4,000 affected job applicants, cancellation of federal contracts***

**SPRINGDALE, Ark.** – The U.S. Department of Labor’s Office of Federal Contract Compliance Programs has filed an administrative complaint against federal contractor Cargill Meat Solutions, alleging that the company systematically discriminated against 4,069 qualified female, white, black, Hispanic and Native American applicants who sought entry-level production jobs at its Springdale facility.

The complaint was filed with the department’s Office of Administrative Law Judges after OFCCP was unable to secure a fair resolution from Cargill Meat Solutions to pay back wages and interest to the rejected job applicants and extend job offers to at least 167 of the affected workers. OFCCP is seeking cancellation of Cargill Meat Solutions’ existing government contracts and debarment from entering into future contracts until the company resolves all violations and corrects its discriminatory employment practices.

“This is an unfortunate case in which thousands of qualified workers were denied the opportunity to compete fairly for jobs in a tough economy,” said OFCCP Director Patricia A. Shiu. “Cargill has discriminated against vulnerable workers. OFCCP is prepared to use every tool at our disposal, including canceling a company’s federal contracts when necessary, to achieve the goal of equal opportunity for workers.”

OFCCP discovered the company’s discriminatory practices during a scheduled review to determine its compliance with Executive Order 11246, which prohibits federal contractors from discriminating on the basis of race, national origin or sex when making hiring decisions. The investigation found that the company’s selection criteria were subjectively and inconsistently applied. As a result, women were less likely to be employed in entry-level production jobs, and Asian and Pacific Islander job seekers were unfairly favored over other racial groups.

Cargill Meat Solutions, a wholly-owned subsidiary of Minneapolis, Minn.-based Cargill Inc., currently holds contracts in excess of \$550 million with the U.S. Department of Defense. The Springdale facility processes turkeys for sale under the brand names Honeysuckle White and Riverside.

OFCCP enforces Executive Order 11246, the Vietnam Era Veterans’ Readjustment Assistance Act and Section 503 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. As amended, these three laws require those who do business with the federal government, both contractors and subcontractors, to follow the fair and reasonable standard that they not discriminate in employment on the basis of sex, race, color, religion, national origin, disability or status as a protected veteran. For general information, call OFCCP’s toll-free helpline at 800-397-6251 or visit its website at <http://www.dol.gov/ofccp>.

OFCCP v. Cargill Meat Solutions, case number: 2012-OFC-00001

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Added Text