

The USDA Permits the Dangers Lurking in Animal-Based Foods. Fish and Dairy Additives, Microplastics, Improper Meat Handling...

Part II

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[The Dangers Lurking in Animal-Based Foods: Harmful Additives, Synthetic Hormones, Colorings, Antibiotics, Glyphosate](#)

By [Richard Gale](#) and [Dr. Gary Null](#), November 25, 2024

Dairy Additives

At this point in history, the presence of natural hormones in cow's milk and their effect on us seems almost minor compared to the dangers due to the over-industrialization of animal-raising today. Another pollutant of milk and dairy products that accompanies the raising of livestock industrially is recombinant bovine growth hormone (rBGH), which is routinely injected in dairy cattle to increase milk production.

For years, Monsanto (now Bayer)—perhaps the world's wealthiest and largest agro-developer and food industry lobbyist—has marketed rBGH under the trade name Posilac. The company created a global monopoly on the manufacture and sale of this dairy additive before selling it to Eli Lilly for \$300 million. Earlier, Monsanto lobbied aggressively with the FDA and the National Dairy Council to sustain its freedom to sell Posilac to dairy farmers. Many voiced health concerns about the use of the hormone. There became such an outcry that, in 1999, the United Nations Food Safety Agency, representing 101 nations, ruled unanimously on a moratorium against Monsanto's genetically engineered hormonal milk.[31] Nevertheless, the United States didn't adopt the ban, and rBGH remains a standard fare in the raising of dairy cows. However, many countries, including the European Union, Canada, Japan, Australia, etc, banned rBGH years ago.

Why is there such alarm over rBGH's use? One thoroughly investigated health concern is that a comparison between milk of cows with or without the hormone has shown that rBGH leaves more bacteria in final milk products. It also aids in preserving traces of antibiotics if any were used to treat infections that appeared following injection of the hormone.

But that's not the main fear over the hormone's health threats. The primary reason for the United Nation's decision against Posilac use is that it has been linked to colon, breast, and prostate cancers. One agent that may well take part in the development of cancer and other diseases is IGF-1, a biomolecule associated with severe inflammatory illnesses, which is found in rBGH treated milk. IGF-1 levels can be as much as ten times higher in this milk than in untreated milk. Also, it appears that the IGF-1 in treated milk is more potent, because it binds more strenuously to human proteins than that in cows' milk that didn't receive the hormone." [32] There is evidence that this IGF-1 molecule, and hence the rBGH that carries it, plays a major role in diabetic complications and during the early stages of diabetic nephropathy—kidney damage resulting from high protein in the urine.

Samuel Epstein, M.D., author of *What's in Your Milk*, did extensive research on how the health threats of rBGH occur. He writes that traces of rBGH "are absorbed through the gut... supercharged with high levels of... IGF-1, which is [also] readily absorbed through the gut," where "excess levels of IGF-I have been incriminated as a cause of... colon cancer." The molecule weakens the body's defenses since "IGF-1 blocks natural defense mechanisms against early submicroscopic cancers." And not only does IGF-1 appear to allow for the emergence of colon cancer from its stronghold in the gut, Epstein warns that IGF-1 can also cause breast and prostate cancers. [33]

When a cow is administered rBGH, it is followed by administration of a sulfur-based drug to prevent infection due to injection of the growth hormone. Traces of this antibiotic may be found in the milk, and these sulfur drugs may cause cancer.

Moreover, frequent antibiotic administration to animals in general tends to make bacteria drug resistant, and these bacteria often make their way into the milk. Moreover, in fighting the bacteria, which either from the hormone injection or in relation to the unhealthy conditions of the animal's living quarters, pus forms in the cow as its body fights against the pathogenic intruders. When a dairy cow is infected with mastitis, more than 90 percent of her cells are the inflammatory cells that form pus. [34] This is par for the course and accepted by the FDA, which labels pus in milk as an accepted "additive." After all, the FDA reasons, it is a natural by-product. With this in mind, the FDA permits 750 million somatic pus cells to be present in every liter of milk. [35] In contrast, the European Union allows for 400,000 cells per liter.

Many antibiotics go into cattle but how does this affect our milk. As the Toronto Vegetarian Association notes, "Antibiotics, mostly penicillin, are given to cows for treatment of mastitis [an inflammation of the mammary gland]. Cows are not supposed to be milked for 48 hours after receiving penicillin. When this precaution is not followed [which is not an uncommon occurrence], the penicillin appears in the milk." [36] Consequently, these drugs end up in the dairy products we may be consuming. When Consumers Union and the *Wall Street Journal* tested milk samples in the New York metropolitan area they discovered the presence of 52 different antibiotics. Eat ice cream, yogurt, and cheese toppings, and you're also consuming antibiotics.

Fish Additives

It may seem that while there can be negative health consequences to eating fish, but consider this: fish live in oceans and lakes that are so polluted that no person in their right mind would dare drink from them.

Because fish are floating in seas of pollutants, every time we eat them, we are ingesting, along with their meat, noxious chemicals, heavy metals, and disease-bearing organisms. This is a fact that has been noted by leading physicians, such as Neal Barnard, M.D., Director of the Physicians Committee for Responsible Medicine (PCRM), who has explained, “As a result of human pollution of aquatic environments, eating fish flesh has become a major health hazard.”[37]

In more striking terms, as Richard Schwartz points out in his article, “Troubled Waters,” the fish we eat today are little more than “a mixture of fat and protein, seasoned with toxic chemicals.” During the course of a six-month investigation, the Consumers Union found that nearly half of all fish tested from markets in New York City, Chicago, and Santa Cruz were contaminated by bacteria from human or nonhuman feces, pathogenic worms, and parasites.[38]

A number of health watch groups arrived at the conclusion that the risks of fish consumption outweigh the upsides. A National Academy of Science’s Institute of Medicine report found “seafood is the major source of human exposure to methylmercury,” a potent neurotoxin known to cause cognitive impairment, memory loss, and coordination difficulties. An examination of the study noted,

“Evidence suggesting that people who have suffered heart attacks can reduce their risk of future heart attacks by eating seafood is weaker than previously thought, the committee concluded. It is also not clear whether consuming seafood might reduce people’s risks for diabetes, cancer, Alzheimer’s disease, or other ailments.”[39]

In tuna fish—a favorite American food—there are traces of methylmercury. Vas Aposhian, a toxicologist and professor of molecular and cell biology and pharmacology at the University of Arizona, who served as a scientific advisor on mercury issues to the FDA and EPA, reported that mercury levels in albacore tuna are so high consumers should avoid the fish completely. “[Even] eating small amounts of some fish may be unsafe.”[40]

Unlike the agribusiness-sponsored scientists whose research always seems to discover positive things about meat and dairy consumption, Aposhian resigned his advisory position in protest when the FDA and the EPA issued “a national health advisory warning that children and women of childbearing age should limit mercury intake by eating no more than six ounces [one can] of albacore tuna a week,” a warning that Dr. Aposhian criticized as “dangerously lax.” As he saw it, the food industry had exerted influence to weaken the agencies’ mercury warnings.[41]

Another of America’s favorite fish is salmon. Salmon’s popularity has grown rapidly because of its reputation for being high in omega fatty acids. However it also deserves notoriety for being one of the most polluted fish. This is due to the high burden of PCB contamination as a result of agricultural runoffs, human and livestock sewage, and industrial wastes.[42] PCBs, known carcinogens, are used as coolants in waterproofing compounds, paints, and for many other industrial purposes. These chemicals have now become all-pervasive in factory and factory farm environments.

Eating wild caught fish is not the only problem. Many are raised in fish farms, living in tanks or other enclosed areas, which poses the same risks as livestock feedlots. In fact the majority of fish sold in restaurants today come from unhealthy fish farms. This is not only done for the industry’s convenience and financial gain, but because wild fish stocks are

rapidly being depleted, down as much as 90% for some species. At the current rate of wild-catch exploitation, the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) estimates that the world's fish supply will be completely depleted by 2048. Fish in the depleted category are so few it is no longer feasible to try and catch them.

Adding to the problem of depletion is that much of the fresh fish caught in the world today are processed as fishmeal for pigs, chickens, and farm-raised animals. In 2024, *The Fishing Daily* reported “approximately half of all caught fish, ranging from 490 to 1,100 billion, are reduced to fishmeal and oil primarily utilized in farmed animal diets.”[43] The fishmeal fed to livestock is usually produced from small forage fish, including anchovies and sardines, which are near the bottom of the ocean food chain as a major food source for larger fish, ocean mammals, and seabirds. Consequently, excessive small fish removal injures the species that feed on them. There are other concerns. These smaller fish could easily be consumed directly by humans as a nutritional source, rather than shipped to farms to feed livestock. This is especially true for areas of the world where people rely on fishing for daily survival. Indeed, this is another example of the insanity of raising animals for food.

There are obvious concerns about fish stocks collapsing, and alternative livestock feed would be an enormous help for struggling fish populations. But the problem is worse than we suspect. The scientific journal *Nature* reported that only 10% of all large fish—both open ocean species including tuna, swordfish, marlin as well as large groundfish such as cod, halibut, skates and flounder—were left in the sea.[44] We might wonder about the implications of such a large depletion. One thing is for sure, fewer of today's children will have the opportunity to experience fish in their natural environments, abundant, lively, and healthy.

Similar to livestock, fish raised in aquacultures tanks are being overdosed with antibiotics. Due to the horrible environmental conditions created for aquaculture, farmed fish are far more susceptible to a variety of bacterial and parasitic diseases. To protect and preserve large aqua farms, fish raisers use vast amounts of antibiotics. According to one study, these antibiotics are not biodegradable and remain in the fishery waters for long periods of time, thereby generating the perfect conditions for new forms of pathogenic, drug-resistant pathogens to emerge.[45]

Consumers ultimately ingest the antibiotics, along with any infectious organisms and bacteria that remain in fish. An additional example of these drugs' presence is the fungicide and dye known as malachite green. Although banned in the 1990s because of its association with cancers, genetic mutations and endocrinal disorders it has still been used illegally in fish factories. But there are other legal artificial dyes to make fish more appealing to buyers with serious health risks. One is the synthetic dye canthaxanthin that has been linked to ocular and retinal damage and defects.[46] High doses can lead potentially to aplastic anemia, a fatal blood disorder.

In three separate independent studies of 37 fish pellet samples (animal feed made from fish) used in six countries, each sample was found to have PCB contamination, and an Environmental Working Group study reported that farmed salmon—which contains 52 percent more fat than wild-caught—is perhaps the most PCB-contaminated protein sourced.[47] These fish will store PCBs in their fat and ultimately be passed to humans. An American study of fish filets sold commonly sold in grocery stores found that many had unwanted chemical additives and noted that two fish in particular had the highest levels of health-threatening chemicals, including PCBs: bluefish and rockfish.[48]

In order to raise cattle, huge amounts of land and feed crops are required. The same is true for aquaculture. What has evolved is an absurdly paradoxical cycle. Fish purveyors turn to aquaculture because they realize the ocean fish stocks are running out, but in doing so, they rely on fish taken from the seas to feed their in-house creatures—a practice that not only adds to further depletion of free stocks, but that is putting the American public at greater health risk.

Microplastics in Animal Food Products

Microplastics, tiny plastic particles less than 5 millimeters in size, have become a catastrophic environmental and health issue. These fragments, which also include nanoplastics measuring less than 1 micrometer, are the result of the breakdown of larger plastic debris or are manufactured at microscopic scales for use in products like cosmetics. Once released into the environment, these plastics persist for decades due to their resistance to natural degradation.[49]

Image [source](#)



The pathways through which microplastics enter the food chain are numerous and deeply concerning. They infiltrate aquatic ecosystems via improper waste disposal and illegal dumping, industrial runoff, and agricultural activities. Fish and other marine organisms ingest these plastics directly or indirectly through their prey. On land, microplastics contaminate soil, water sources and are often carried by airborne deposition. Livestock such as cattle, chickens, and pigs consume microplastics via contaminated feed, water or forage. Filter-feeding sea animals such as shellfish are particularly vulnerable and accumulate significant amounts of microplastics due to their natural feeding methods.[50]

The extent of contamination is staggering. Studies have shown that 30 to 60 percent of fish species sampled from both oceanic and freshwater environments contain microplastics. Popularly consumed species such as cod, tuna, and haddock are among the most affected. Shellfish exhibit the highest levels of contamination. Microplastics have also been detected in the gastrointestinal tracts of cattle and poultry; there is some evidence of accumulation in muscle tissues that eventually find its way into our food system.[51]

Physically, these particles can obstruct gastrointestinal tracts leading to reduced feeding and malnutrition. Chemically, they carry hazardous substances such as phthalates and bisphenol A (BPA), which are known endocrine disruptors. Furthermore, persistent organic pollutants (POPs) adhere to microplastics thereby amplifying their toxicity. These contaminants can accumulate in the food chain, posing significant risks to animal health,

longevity, and reproductive systems.[52]

Unfortunately, humans are not spared from the health consequences of microplastic contamination. Studies estimate that seafood consumers ingest up to 11,000 microplastic particles annually. They accumulate in edible seafood tissues, particularly in smaller fish and shellfish that are consumed whole. The health implications for humans include gastrointestinal distress because these toxic plastics can disrupt gut microbiota and cause inflammation. The toxicological risks are even more concerning. Over time, chemical additives leached from plastics may increase the risk of cancer, reproductive disorders, and hormonal imbalances. Moreover, nanoplastics are capable of penetrating the bloodstream; this contributes to oxidative stress, immune suppression, and other systemic effects.[53]

The pervasive presence of microplastics in the food chain underscores the urgent need for more strict regulatory action to reduce plastic pollution. Addressing this issue will require concerted efforts to improve waste management, regulate industrial waste disposal practices, and reduce the production of single-use plastics. Protecting aquatic and terrestrial ecosystems from further contamination is not only essential for environmental health but also critical for safeguarding human health and food security.

Animal Foods: You Get Far More Than You Bargained For

Millions of dollars are spent by the transnational food industry to convince us that it is healthy to eat an abundance of meat, dairy, fish and processed foods to remain healthy. Besides advertising, there is the cost of lobbying and contributions to politicians. In 2022, agriculture companies and industry groups spend a record \$165 million lobbying.[54] In 2024, total campaign contributions amounted to over \$130 million[55]—all to ensure that their products don't incur further federal regulations and continue to be seen in a positive light. This, of course, means that any health risks are underplayed and hostile legislation that might better protect citizens are minimized.

Many might remember the headlines about an illness that emerged during Christmas in 1994. In the UK, 180,000 animals were infected with a disease that can be transmitted to humans who eat meat from sickened animals. One hundred and sixty-five deaths were reported. When this outbreak occurred overseas, the beef lobby rushed to assure Americans that its beef was fine.

The outbreak of Mad Cow Disease was attributed in part to "rendering," parts of slaughtered animals being reprocessed into animal feed; a disgusting practice that turned grass eating cows into unsuspecting cannibals as well as turning herbivore animals into carnivores. The same feeding method was going great guns in the US. After the British panic and deaths, this practice was banned in the US. But this didn't mean that a seemingly sick cow would not be led to the slaughterhouse and sold. As long as it was checked and didn't have mad cow, it was good to go. Some state politicians were so deep in the meat industry's pockets that laws were passed laws to stop activists from publicly talking about their fears of eating tainted meat that hadn't been proven safe.



The memorial plaque to victims of CJD is located on the boundary wall of Saint Thomas' Hospital in Lambeth facing the Riverside Walk of Prince Albert Embankment. The plaque contains an embossed representation of a Chrysanthemum, a flower traditionally placed on graves to honour the dead. The inscription reads "In loving memory of the victims of Human BSE (vCJD). Always in our thoughts. Human BSE Foundation" (Licensed under CC BY-SA 4.0)

Eventually, because of continual threats of mad cow disease, a ban on this practice became law in December 2004. Even though these sick or "downer" cattle are federally banned from our food supply, two major problems remain: some companies do not heed the ban, and a loophole exists that still allows young downer veal calves to be sent to slaughter. On the first issue, the Humane Society of the United States (HSUS) exposed the Westland Meat Co., in Riverside, California, one of the nation's leading suppliers to the state's school lunch program, for the illegal slaughter and sale of sick and downer cattle. This was in spite of eight on-site USDA inspectors.[56] Calves were nevertheless allowed to proceed to slaughter as long as they were "able to rise and walk after being warmed or rested." [57] Sadly, this has led to food manufacturers using cruel and inhumane methods including beating, kicking, and the use of electric prods to get these sick animals to the kill room.

Propaganda from the meat industry doesn't stop at downplaying the possible health hazards that are associated with its products. It also makes scientifically unsupported claims. For example, the question of whether meat has a lot or a little fat is hardly the only consideration that should occupy someone thinking about eating any meat.

Illnesses from Improper Meat Handling

According to CDC analyses of outbreak surveillance, animal food products are responsible for approximately 48 million foodborne illnesses annually. This includes 128,000 hospitalizations and over 3,000 deaths.[58] The leading sources cover the full spectrum of the most popular meat-based sources Americans regularly consume: poultry, beef, pork and eggs. Poultry, a leading source of *Campylobacter* and *Salmonella* infections, accounts for

the most deaths. The bacteria linked to meat and dairy products are extremely dangerous to those with weakened immune systems. *Listeria monocytogenes*, commonly associated with deli meats and ready-to-eat products, is especially dangerous to people with autoimmune conditions. In fact, *Listeria* bacteria can survive refrigeration and even freezing.

Once someone has experienced food poisoning, there can be recurrent physical experiences after the initial bout. The University of Maryland Medical Center made a partial list of them:

- After shigellosis, white blood cell problems and kidney problems

After *E. coli* infection, renal and bleeding problems

- After botulism, long hospital stays (1 to 10 months) with fatigue and difficulty breathing for 1 to 2 years or, if worse, respiratory failure
- After salmonellosis, Reiter syndrome (an arthritis-like disease) and inflammation of the heart lining
- After campylobacteriosis, Guillain-Barré syndrome (a nerve disease).

In addition, another seldom presented danger of food poisoning is that physical effects often don't manifest till years down the road. According to an Associated Press article:

"It's a dirty little secret of food poisoning: *E. coli* and certain other food-borne illnesses can sometimes trigger serious health problems months or years after patients survived that initial bout. Scientists only now are unraveling a legacy that has largely gone unnoticed. What they've spotted so far is troubling. In interviews with The Associated Press, they described high blood pressure, kidney damage, even full kidney failure striking 10 to 20 years later in people who survived severe *E. coli* infection as children, arthritis [coming] after a bout of salmonella or shigella, and a mysterious paralysis that can attack people who just had mild symptoms of campylobacter... For now, some of the best evidence comes from the University of Utah, which has long tracked children with *E. coli*. About 10% of *E. coli* sufferers develop a life-threatening complication called hemolytic uremic syndrome, or HUS, where their kidneys and other organs fail." [59]

Furthermore, the list of bacteria contaminating milk and dairy products is similar to those associated with meat: *Salmonella*, *E. coli*, *Listeria* (frequently in cheese), *Campylobacter*, and *Staphylococcus*.

Because these adverse lingering effects are so little known, people have not yet faced some of the most troubling consequences of contaminated food. Further, they may not even be aware that legal rights are suspended upon initial settlement. This means that should diseases present themselves down the road, the patient could have no additional legal recourse. The majority of people who contract a foodborne illness never figure out the actual cause of their sickness.

Faulty Inspection Regimes

Several theories have been suggested as to why so much pathogen-infected meat appears in the animal produce Americans consume. One is that oil prices encourage greater ethanol production, a corn byproduct that increasingly is being used as cattle feed. This feed appears to make the animals' digestive tracts even more hospitable breeding grounds for the toxic strain of *E. coli* bacteria. This was the opinion from Kenneth Petersen, an assistant

administrator in the Office of Field Operations at the US Department of Agriculture.

Nevertheless, perhaps the primary obstacle for preventing the spread of foodborne bacteria, toxic *E. coli* in particular, is inadequate government inspection and meat-handling practices in slaughterhouses where contamination is most likely to occur. "Slaughter plants are the primary source of *E. coli* contamination, so the USDA should be putting more resources toward recording and tracing back the original source of contaminated meat detected in test samplings at smaller down-line processing facilities," stated John Munsell, former owner of a Montana-based meat packing and slaughter company who testified about beef contamination at congressional hearings. Munsell owned Montana Quality Foods and got into trouble when the USDA discovered his firm's hamburger was contaminated with *E. coli*. He protested, however, that the meat was already contaminated before it came to his plant; and he even identified the source: ConAgra where it had passed USDA inspection. This experience soured him on meatpacking and turned him into an activist.

Other shortfalls in the safety system identified by experts include:

- Carcasses can move through slaughterhouses at a rate of up to 390 per hour, making inspection difficult.
- If meat tests positive for the bacteria, companies are allowed to cook it for sale in other products such as pizza or tacos. While thorough cooking should kill *E. coli*, diverting tainted meat creates an opening for cross-contamination, the transfer of germs to other meats before cooking.
- Consumer illnesses, not government or industry testing, trigger recalls for the majority beef subject to *E. coli* contamination. In 2024, 83.5 tones of ground beef had been recalled due to possible *E. coli* contamination, according to the USDA.[60]

In the largest call back in US history, 143 million pounds of meat were recalled. The vexing problem was not that the weak cattle had Mad Cow disease, which was never determined, but that the USDA had not detected the likelihood that these animals were carriers, even in their enfeebled condition.[61] It was an animal rights group brought this to the nation's attention, not USDA inspectors. The Hallmark plant was subsequently shut down, but that is not much comfort to those possibly ate the tainted meat its recall.

In January of 2015, Food Safety reported that in 2014 alone there were 94 meat recalls, and nearly half were because of undeclared allergens, while 16 were due to *E. coli*, *Listeria*, or *Salmonella* contamination.[62] In 2018, the JBS Tolleson beef recall amounted to 12.1 million pounds of *Salmonella*-contaminated beef products across 25 states.[63] CongAgra had 2.6 million pounds of canned meat products contaminated with botulinum toxin recalled in 2023 due to improper processing.[64]

Another factor that hampers livestock inspection is the speed of the "disassembly line," which keeps being boosted by companies to increase productivity. With an average of only 1.25 inspectors per slaughterhouse, the sheer volume of animals being slaughtered daily threatens to overwhelm the inspection regime. The USDA work force hardly seems adequate to properly scrutinize the 2,850 slaughterhouses in the US that provide the billions of pounds of meat for food stores each year.

The parasitic disease trichinosis caused by undercooked pork is a dread illness for good reason. *Trichinella spiralis* larvae is first ingested in the intestinal tract, then later in active

muscles—the calves, diaphragm, and tongue— which are weakened until the victim can barely move. Severe case can lead to heart inflammation, encephalitis and respiratory complications. Even non-pork eaters can pick up the illness, as this organism can get into other meats by the intentional or inadvertent mixing of pork with chopped beef in supermarkets, butcher shops, and restaurants. Despite federal oversight, and USDA guidelines for freezing pork to kill the parasite, there are still major gaps in monitoring hog farming and pork processing that have resulted in trichinosis outbreaks and recalls. In 2018, there was a trichinosis outbreak due to contaminated raw sausage resulting in the recall of 48,000 pounds of pork.

A couple of other deadly bacteria that have been detected in meats that made their way to the supermarket shelves or restaurant tables are *listeria* and *salmonella*. *Listeria* rarely infects humans, but when it does, it is quite lethal, with a 25% fatality rate. Once the bacteria invades a cell, it propagates by moving cell to cell, avoiding reentering the bloodstream where it might be detected by antibodies. Those most at risk are newborns, the elderly, pregnant mothers, and AIDS patients.[65] Given its lethality, special biochemical detection assays have been developed to determine its presence in commercial food products.

Salmonella is an enterobacteria often associated with food-poisoning and food-borne illnesses. It is responsible for causing typhoid and paratyphoid fevers. There is no realistic hope of wiping out the possibility of *Salmonella* infections. As the National Academy of Sciences states, “Reluctantly, we are forced to recognize the unfeasibility of eradicating salmonellosis at this time.” According to current CDC figures, each year there are approximately 1.35 million *Salmonella* poisoning annually, including 26,500 people requiring hospitalization and 420 deaths, many of them elderly or infants.[66] The symptoms of *Salmonella* poisoning might appear less than life-threatening: nausea, vomiting, and diarrhea; however, if the bacteria enters the bloodstream of an immune-compromised individual, severe conditions may include septic shock, meningitis, endocarditis and reactive arthritis or Reiter’s Syndrome.

It should also be stressed that the presence of one pathogenic bacteria in a meat product does not preclude a second, third, or even more pathogenic intruders in the same product. Laboratory studies have indicated that contaminated meat likely contains more than one disease-causing microbe. *E. coli* in cultures taken from animals, for example, is often backed up by brother germs, such as Enterbacteriaceae, and *Salmonella*.

Even if meat leaves the factory farms pure, it will not necessarily reach your plate that way. There is still a second line of hazards for someone eating in a restaurant or institution (such as a hospital or school cafeteria). According to the CDC, mishandling of food in such places is the major factor in outbreaks of botulism, a serious nerve toxin and form of food poisoning. The CDC identifies, among other factors that lead to food-borne illnesses, improper storage temperatures, inadequate cooking time, and poor personal hygiene of food handlers.[67]

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Notes

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