

**Reprinted from the website of
Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction:**

**Notice to parents and school district personnel about
safety of beef served in schools**

Most school districts involved in the national school lunch program purchase their meat through the U.S. Department of Agriculture, which prohibits the use of meat from sick and injured animals - so-called "downer" cows. The USDA requires that any meat purchased for school lunches be slaughtered in a way that strips away potential disease-carrying tissue, and is very specific about the devices and systems that can and cannot be used.

The USDA's Western Food Distribution office has confirmed that no beef at any Washington-approved processors is part of the commercial beef recall currently in progress. In addition, the Agricultural Marketing Service reports that the USDA has never had purchase contracts with any of the processing plants involved in the recall.

Please note that some districts may choose to purchase meat through other suppliers who may not adhere to the USDA standards outlined above. If you have questions about the supply of meat used in your community's school lunch program, please contact your local school district.