

Horsemeat scandal

ABP Food Group and the horsemeat scandal

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Felicity Lawrence ([Where did the 29% horse in your Tesco burger come from?](#), 22 October) misleadingly puts ABP Food Group at the heart of a story of alleged malpractice by Dutch meat trader Willy Selten. While ABP Silvercrest received a small amount of his meat, this was via a third-party supplier, Norwest. ABP was not one of the 502 customers in 16 different countries who purchased meat directly from Selten - meat that was later recalled by Dutch food authorities due to concern that it may have contained equine DNA. The meat that Norwest delivered to ABP Silvercrest was less than 0.1% of this total product recall.

In a second article ([24 October](#)), Ms Lawrence asserts "it is still not clear that anyone will be found responsible" for the horsemeat incident. ABP is taking every step possible to establish the source of contaminated product and reached a legal settlement in September with Norwest, which apologised for inadvertently supplying our company with contaminated product. We have also started legal proceedings in the Irish high court against a second supplier in Poland.

Among other misapprehensions, the second article gives the impression of an axis of corporate and personal relationships between Eamon Mackle of Freeza Meats and ABP's chairman Larry Goodman. Mr Goodman was never friends with Mr Mackle and has not spoken to or met him in over 20 years, making the article's characterisation of him being an "old friend" difficult to sustain. It is clear that the horsemeat issue was the result of an EU-wide fraud, and that many leading food producers - including Nestlé, Birdseye, and Findus - were independently and inadvertently affected by it. ABP is as keen as anyone to see that those responsible are prosecuted. We believe the industry in general, and ABP in particular, have made more progress than these two articles recognise.

Paul Finnerty

Group chief executive, [ABP Food Group](#)

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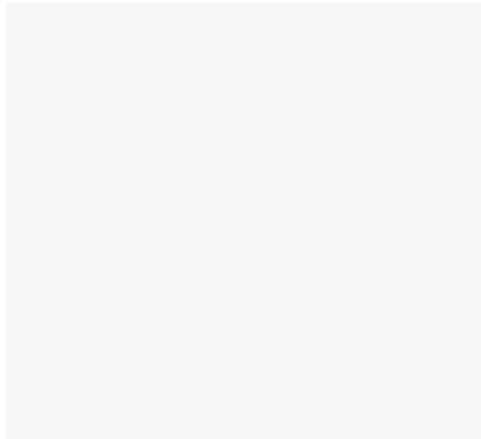
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