



The birds died before any went to market.

The feed contamination event also resulted in 35,900 head of swine being held from market for 29 days to assure none of the drug residue would be in the meat at the time of butchering.

The farm landfilled 500 tons of withdrawn contaminated feed.

The FDA warning letter sent to Shur-Green said samples of feed that had been made with the oil Shur-Green sold as pure revealed concentrations of lasalocid ranging from 0.028 to 1642 parts per million. Lasalocid is a drug approved for use in poultry feed to combat parasites, and in feed for cattle and sheep to help them gain weight faster. The safe level for turkeys is 68-113 grams per ton; levels found in the dead turkeys was much higher than that. The drug is not used in pork production.

The farm believed the oil it purchased as a feed ingredient to be the restaurant-grade oil used in the manufacture of pelleted animal feed, and was unaware of its lasalocid content.

The FDA letter said Shur-Green was implicated in the feed contamination that led to Sietsema's loss.

The warning letter cited an email exchange dated Sept. 11, 2014 between Shur-Green and a distributor in Michigan, the company that delivered the oil to Sietsema Farms.

The subject line was "Soyoil," and Shur-Green asked:

*"Can you use this oil?"*

*The distributor said: "Looks like human grade stuff on the analysis. What is it and what are they saying is wrong with it?"*

*Shur-Green responded: "Nothing wrong with it. It's soy oil we get from a large food manufacturer. We've been selling to bio-diesel and custom blenders."*

"We note that the distribution described above was not the first time you distributed an adulterated animal food product," the warning letter said. "On July 30, 2014, your firm transported a load of lascaloid to (a distributor)" – the load that poisoned the Sietsema Farms turkeys.

Rick Sietsema, one of the owners of the farm, said he has seen no indication the farm will be compensated for its significant losses.

The loss to his family farm has hit more than \$1 million, and there is no insurance coverage for incidents such as this, he said.

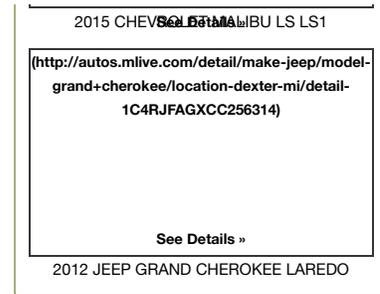
"We are formulating a legal complaint which will be filed soon," he said.

Sietsema said farms rely on proper regulatory controls to assure the feed they buy is pure and properly labeled. It would be impossible to screen feed and additives for their purity at the farm level, he said.

"As it relates to ingredient procurement, which ingredients should we test?" Sietsema asked. "And test them for what foreign compounds? And where do we hold all these feed ingredients for a week before we get tests back for which we could have hundreds of tests to consider testing for? ... It is completely infeasible."

### What next?

The warning letter from the FDA gave Shur-Green 15 days to notify the agency in writing the steps the company has taken to bring it into compliance with the law and assure that these violations do not recur.



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Although the letter threatens that failure to do so may result in enforcement action such as seizure or injunction, it is not immediately clear whether the company has complied. The FDA said a new request under the Freedom of Information Act would be required to provide that response.

The FDA also would not say what other action may be underway, and would not discuss any possible enforcement action.

An employee answering the phone at Shur-Green responded to a request for information by saying, "No thanks," before hanging up.

The FDA has not immediately responded to MLive's questions, either.

Brad Deacon, director of the office of legal affairs for the Michigan Department of Agriculture and Rural Development, said he doesn't know whether Shur-Green has responded to the FDA's warning letter, or whether any criminal charges may result.

"It's outside of our purview," Deacon said.

The incident has reminded officials that the threats and vulnerabilities and risks to the global food chain are changing over time, he said.

Jen Holton, director of Communication for the MDARD, said that her department's investigation of the incident in Michigan is finished. The FDA investigation continues, she said.

In general, the FDA regulates animal drugs, animal feeds, and foods produced by animals. The USDA plays a lead role in regulating aspects of some meat, poultry, and egg products, according to a statement from the FDA.

Rosemary Parker is a reporter for MLive.com and the Kalamazoo Gazette. Contact her at [rparker3@mlive.com](mailto:rparker3@mlive.com) (<mailto:rparker3@mlive.com>).



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 **miguy96** (<http://connect.mlive.com/user/miguy96/index.html>) 3 days ago  
 (<http://connect.mlive.com/user/miguy96/index.html>) The warning letter cited an email exchange dated **Sept. 11, 2015** between Shur-Green and a distributor in Michigan, the company that delivered the oil to Sietsema Farms."  
 How did you get an email from four months in the future?

Like Reply

 **Rosemary Parker** | [rparker3@mlive.com](mailto:rparker3@mlive.com)  
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 Thanks, I fixed that.

1    
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 **Maybe-I-am-confused** (<http://connect.mlive.com/user/Maybe-I-am-confused/index.html>) 4 days ago  
 (<http://connect.mlive.com/user/Maybe-I-am-confused/index.html>) Tea Potters take note. This is a perfect example of why a reasonable regulatory system is so essential.

1  ([http://connect.mlive.com/user/michael\\_eddington/index.html](http://connect.mlive.com/user/michael_eddington/index.html)) Like Reply

 **abbynormal** (<http://connect.mlive.com/user/hottubz/index.html>) 4 days ago  
 (<http://connect.mlive.com/user/hottubz/index.html>) @**Maybe-I-am-confused** (<http://connect.mlive.com/user/Maybe-I-am-confused/index.html>) Always all or nothing, black and white with liberals. No Tea Party member that I know suggests "no regulation."

1  (<http://connect.mlive.com/user/grousetter/index.html>) Like Reply

 **abbynormal** (<http://connect.mlive.com/user/hottubz/index.html>) 4 days ago  
 (<http://connect.mlive.com/user/hottubz/index.html>) @**Maybe-I-am-confused** (<http://connect.mlive.com/user/Maybe-I-am-confused/index.html>) Furthermore, regulation won't make any difference in a case like this where people were obviously willing to disregard regulations. There are already regulations in place. Get it?

1  (<http://connect.mlive.com/user/grousetter/index.html>) Like Reply

 **jfmertz** (<http://connect.cleveland.com/user/jfmertz/index.html>) 2 days ago  
 (<http://connect.cleveland.com/user/jfmertz/index.html>) @**abbynormal** (<http://connect.mlive.com/user/hottubz/index.html>) @**Maybe-I-am-confused** (<http://connect.mlive.com/user/Maybe-I-am-confused/index.html>) In the main, we assume people are reasonable. We assume that if we define acceptable limits they will stay within them. Your response indicates the situation would be the same if no regulations were in place. This is a false assumption. It is not telling us much to claim that a criminal will always ignore the law. Having a law, however, is how we determine the difference between law abiding and law breaker. The fact they did this twice is evidence they recklessly, if not intentionally, poisoned others' property in defrauding them. We know that because there is a regulation, and because they have been caught doing it at least once before.

Like Reply

 **swooge** (<http://connect.mlive.com/user/swooge/index.html>) 4 days ago  
 (<http://connect.mlive.com/user/swooge/index.html>) Who needs adequate funding for the FDA, EPA or any other health related agency in the federal or state government? We need jobs not live healthy people to fill them.....

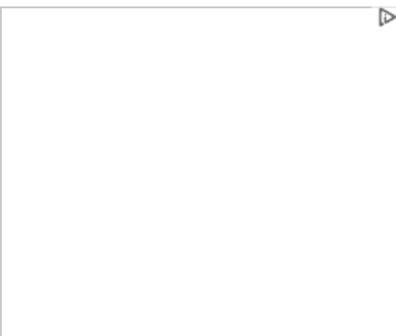
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 (<http://connect.mlive.com/user/hottubz/index.html>) @**swooge** (<http://connect.mlive.com/user/swooge/index.html>) You seriously think either of those agencies are UNDERfunded???

Like Reply

 **NewspaperGrouch** (<http://connect.mlive.com/user/NewspaperGrouch/index.html>) 4 days ago  
 (<http://connect.mlive.com/user/NewspaperGrouch/index.html>) In the 12th paragraph, I believe the date of September 11, 2015 is a typing error.

1  (<http://connect.mlive.com/user/SpartanShoes4/index.html>) Like Reply





**Jmarr1123** (<http://connect.mlive.com/user/Jmarr1123/index.html>) 4 days ago  
 (@[NewspaperGrouch](http://connect.mlive.com/user/Jmarr1123/index.html))  
 (<http://connect.mlive.com/user/NewspaperGrouch/index.html>) Perfect name for you.

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**SpartanShoes4** (<http://connect.mlive.com/user/SpartanShoes4/index.html>) 4 days ago  
 (@[NewspaperGrouch](http://connect.mlive.com/user/SpartanShoes4/index.html))  
 (<http://connect.mlive.com/user/NewspaperGrouch/index.html>) No, they can see the future!

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**Rosemary Parker** | [rparker3@mlive.com](mailto:rparker3@mlive.com)  
 (<http://connect.mlive.com/user/rosemaryparker/index.html>) 3 days ago

Thanks, I fixed it.

1

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**skybox53** (<http://connect.mlive.com/user/skybox53/index.html>) 4 days ago  
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The reason these types of issues happen in Michigan is because of the lack of involvement from Michigan agencies. The DEQ and MDARD are especially notorious concerning enforcement actions. Both these agencies Directors are assigned by the governor and as we all know the current administration's mantra is jobs at any cost. Many times the reason federal agencies ultimately get involved is because States' do not fulfill their legal obligations to protect the environment or human health. Most recently the EPA had to turn up the heat on Michigan concerning Section 404 - protecting wetlands. Michigan is one of the few states that regulates its own 404 program. Our current republican controlled house and senate passed legislation gutting the 404 program to the point where the EPA stepped in and threatened to take back control if it did not rescind the harmful legislation. Additionally, the EPA recently promulgated rules forcing wood burning stove manufactures to sell cleaner stoves. This action was the result of a number of States in 2005 - Michigan included- sending a letter to the Director of the EPA to regulate Outdoor Wood Boilers. So when the EPA finally passed law to regulate these devices, our current administration countered the regulation Michigan begged for by implementing a state statute stating Michigan would not enforce the law - unbelievable! Have any of you noticed our air quality recently. I suggest you subscribe to AirNow and type in your city. You'll get an email weekly telling you how safe your air is. I think you'll be shocked at how many days are in the moderate range. Yet our current administration is against regulating the coal industry. Lastly, the current action by the EPA to regulate waters of the U.S. is not a federal grab for power as many in industry espouse, but a last resort by the EPA to protect our water because many Republican administrations refuse to do so. Keep in mind Governors are judged by jobs and at times will put the breaks on state agencies to protect our natural resources. This is when the EPA gets involved because what happens in one state does have implications in others.

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**Wendy Lockwood Banka** (<http://connect.mlive.com/user/wbanka/index.html>) 4 days ago  
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I don't think that we know that no contaminated turkeys went to market last fall, because we don't know when the contaminated feed was first fed to the turkeys, and if any of those birds went to market before the huge die-off made it clear that there was a problem.

Also, as the warning letter of the FDA to Shur-Green stated, Shur-Green began distributing lascaldoil a year earlier, in July of 2013. How much of that ended up in animal feed?

We DO know that MDARD allowed 35,900 swine to go to market after being fed highly contaminated feed, after a 28-day waiting period, without notifying the public.

I think MDARD and Governor Snyder owed the people of Michigan a press release when this situation was discovered last August. That has still not happened. The only public disclosure of any of this story occurred at an obscure meeting of the Michigan Commission of Agriculture and Rural Development in January of 2015, after it was too late for consumers to respond in terms of what turkey they purchased for their Thanksgiving dinner, or what pork they purchased afterwards.

And, since we weren't informed about this incident last fall, we were unable to ask Governor Snyder about this event and his response to it before re-electing him in November.

No one should want a food system that is so secretive that we are not allowed to know when animals known to have been fed contaminated feed are sent to market. And no one should want an uninformed electorate going to the polls to elect our leaders. But that is what we have right now, here in Michigan.

Like Reply



**Bly615** (<http://connect.mlive.com/user/Bly615/index.html>) 4 days ago  
@ **Wendy Lockwood Banka** (<http://connect.mlive.com/user/wbanka/index.html>)  
"turkeys at five of the farm's locations died on the same weekend in August after eating feed that contained the oil."

All the contaminated turkeys died on the same weekend so nothing went into the food system. You can't send already dead turkeys to the slaughter house. Also the article stated that "The drug is not used in pork production." So pork should have been fine to eat.

1 (<http://connect/user/AnitaStuever/index.html>) Like Reply



**Wendy Lockwood Banka** (<http://connect.mlive.com/user/wbanka/index.html>) 4 days ago

I understand that none of the turkeys that died went to market. What we don't know is whether any birds sent to market earlier were also fed contaminated feed.

As far as the pork goes, please read the story again. It is undisputed that 35,900 hogs were fed very high levels of contaminated feed, then held for 28 days before being sent to market. I believe that MDARD considers this to be a success since the market value of the meat was not lost.

Like Reply



**oshtemo** (<http://connect.mlive.com/user/oshtemo/index.html>) 4 days ago  
The failure of Congress to adequately fund regulatory agencies has consequences.

2 (<http://connect.mlive.com/user/wbanka/index.html>) ([http://connect.mlive.com/user/denny\\_olson/index.html](http://connect.mlive.com/user/denny_olson/index.html)) Unlike Reply



**abbynormal** (<http://connect.mlive.com/user/hottubz/index.html>) 4 days ago  
@ **oshtemo** (<http://connect.mlive.com/user/oshtemo/index.html>) You are out of touch with reality if you actually believe what you typed.

Like Reply



**abbynormal** (<http://connect.mlive.com/user/hottubz/index.html>) 4 days ago  
@ **oshtemo** (<http://connect.mlive.com/user/oshtemo/index.html>) Inadequately funded federal agencies...bahahahaha! There is no such agency.

Like Reply



**Irritable** (<http://connect/user/Irritable/index.html>) 4 days ago  
"Let's get the government out of our lives."

1 (<http://connect.mlive.com/user/grousetter/index.html>) Like Reply



**boomer1941** (<http://connect.mlive.com/user/boomer1941/index.html>) 4 days ago  
A year or so ago on the FDA Homepage they clearly stated they test nothing and relied on the data furnished by the producer or manufacturer and that testing was only done after a product had gone awry, however that homepage has since been changed but you may find this link interesting....

<http://www.fda.gov/ForConsumers/ConsumerUpdates/ucm047470.htm>  
(<http://www.fda.gov/ForConsumers/ConsumerUpdates/ucm047470.htm>)

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**Rosemary Parker** | [rparker3@mlive.com](mailto:rparker3@mlive.com) (<http://connect.mlive.com/user/rparker/index.html>) 4 days ago

Thanks, that is interesting.

Like Reply

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