

Pork Farms Limited Fined Â£600,000 for Health and Safety Breaches

Description

On March 18, 2024, Pork Farms Limited, a prominent UK-based food manufacturer, was fined Â£600,000 for breaching the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974. The fine was imposed following two serious incidents at their Nottingham bakeries, which resulted in severe injuries to two young workers. This article delves into the details of the case, the parties involved, and the implications of the court's decision.

Background

Pork Farms Limited, headquartered on Queens Drive, Nottingham, specializes in producing pork pies and other savory goods. The company operates several sites across England, including the Tottle Bakery and Riverside Bakery in Nottingham.

The Incidents

Tottle Bakery Incident

- **Date:** November 16, 2022
- **Victim:** A 22-year-old worker
- **Details:** The worker's hand was trapped while attempting to clear a blockage on a conveyor. His hand became caught between a chain and sprocket, leading to the amputation of a finger. [The Health and Safety Executive \(HSE\) investigation revealed that an unsuitable interlock was used on a hinged guard over the chain conveyor system, and inadequate inspection and maintenance led to the interlock failing¹.](#)

Riverside Bakery Incident

- **Date:** December 24, 2022
- **Victim:** Mahamad Hassan, 19 years old
- **Details:** Hassan's hand was injured when it came into contact with a rotating shaft on a conveyor. His arm went between the rollers, and his gloved hand became entangled in the rotating driveshaft, resulting in the amputation of a finger. [The HSE found that a section of the driveshaft was unguarded, and the spacing of the rollers allowed access to the dangerous parts¹.](#)

Court Proceedings

Charges and Plea

Pork Farms Limited was charged with breaching Sections 2(1) and 3(1) of the Health and Safety at

Work etc. Act 1974. The company pleaded guilty to these charges.

Sentencing

- **Fine:** Â£600,000 for the Tottle Bakery incident and Â£200,000 for the Riverside Bakery incident
- **Additional Costs:** Â£6,482 in court costs
- **Court:** Nottingham Magistratesâ?? Court
- **Date:** March 18, 2024

HSE Findings and Statements

The HSE investigation highlighted several critical safety failures at both sites:

- **Inadequate Guarding:** Dangerous parts of the conveyors were accessible.
- **Lack of Warning Systems:** No warning system was in place to alert workers that the conveyor was about to start.
- **Emergency Stop Controls:** [Emergency stop controls were not readily accessible¹](#).

HSE inspector Tim Nicholson stated, â??Both of these incidents were completely preventable. They left two young men with injuries that they will carry with them for the rest of their lives. Companies shouldnâ??t overlook important machinery safety basics, including provision and maintenance of adequate guards and protection devices, to ensure that access to dangerous parts of machinery is prevented.â?•

Implications and Conclusion

The hefty fines imposed on Pork Farms Limited underscore the importance of adhering to health and safety regulations. The case serves as a stark reminder to all companies about the critical need for proper safety measures and regular maintenance to prevent such tragic incidents. The injuries sustained by the young workers highlight the human cost of neglecting workplace safety, emphasizing that companies must prioritize the well-being of their employees above all else.

CATEGORY

1. Nottinghamshire

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1. Conveyor Safety
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4. Leadership Accountability
5. Machine Guarding
6. Maintenance Procedures
7. Pork Farms
8. Regulatory Compliance
9. Risk Assessment

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