

White House warns of food safety cuts

11 February 2013, by Mary Clare Jalonick

(AP)—Impending across-the-board budget cuts could mean fewer government food safety inspections and higher prices for meat at the grocery store.

A White House memo released late last week said that one consequence of the federal [budget cuts](#) set to take place on March 1 would be 2,100 fewer food facility inspections by the [Food and Drug Administration](#), "putting families at risk and costing billions in lost food production."

Department of Agriculture inspectors could be furloughed for up to 15 days, meaning meatpacking plants would have to intermittently shut down and there could be less meat in grocery stores.

Meatpacking industry officials immediately responded to the USDA furlough threat, saying it would devastate their industry.

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