

£100,000 fine for food processing firm after worker severs finger

A food processing firm has been hit with a £100,000 fine after a worker severed part of her finger when her hand was caught in machinery at a site in Devon.

The 37-year-old woman was employed by Amber Foods Limited at a site in Cullompton, when the incident happened on 31 October 2018. She had been working on a Meyn eviscerator – a conveyor-fed machine that slices and separates chicken livers and hearts – when she noticed a build-up of offcuts around the blades. Believing the machine had stopped, she reached in to unblock the area but her hand was caught by the moving conveyor, partially severing her right index finger.



The 37-year-old severed part of her finger in the food processing machine

An investigation by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) found the blade and chute area of the machine lacked effective guarding, failing to prevent any person coming into contact with the moving parts.

At a hearing at Taunton Magistrates Court, Amber Foods Limited of Trinity Park Business Park, Wakefield, pleaded guilty to breaching Regulation 2 (1) of the Health and Safety At Work Act 1974. They were fined £100,000 and ordered to pay costs of £7,241.

Speaking afterwards, HSE inspector James Collins said: “This incident could so easily have been avoided by simply implementing correct control measures for machinery guarding and safe working practices.

“Employers should make sure they properly assess risk and apply effective control measures to protect workers from dangerous parts of machinery.”

Notes to editors

1. [The Health and Safety Executive](#) (HSE) is Britain's national regulator for workplace health and safety. We prevent work-related death, injury and ill health through regulatory actions that range from influencing behaviours across whole industry sectors through to targeted interventions on individual businesses. These activities are supported by globally recognised scientific expertise.
2. More information about the [legislation](#) referred to in this case is available.
3. Further details on the latest [HSE news releases](#) is available.