

06-35

For Immediate Release
March 27, 2006

SANTA MARIA FOODS CORPORATION FINED \$75,000 FOR HEALTH AND SAFETY VIOLATION

TORONTO – Santa Maria Foods Corporation, a food processing company with plants in Rexdale and Belleville, was fined \$75,000 on March 23, 2006 for a violation of the Occupational Health and Safety Act that resulted in serious injuries to an employee.

On June 18, 2004, a worker was inspecting a pasta-shaper machine when the worker's coverall sleeve got caught in a moving bar, dragging the worker's arm into the bar. Just prior to the incident the worker had removed a guarding device from the top of the pasta-shaper machine. The worker slipped while standing on the top step of a platform near the machine. The worker's arm came into contact with the bar after the arm fell into the machine's "hopper" (a funnel-shaped container designed to receive food materials used in the pasta-making process). The worker suffered broken ribs, multiple fractures to the arm and jaw and the loss of several teeth. The incident occurred at the company's former food processing plant at 21 Steinway Boulevard, Unit 8 in Rexdale.

A Ministry of Labour investigation found the machine was running when the worker inspected it. When the worker removed the guarding device, the machine was supposed to have automatically shut off, but failed to do so.

Santa Maria Foods Corporation pleaded guilty, as an employer, to failing to ensure a nip hazard on the machine was equipped with, and guarded by, a guard or other device to prevent access to the pinch point, as required by Section 25 of the Regulations for Industrial Establishments. This was contrary to Section 25(1)(c) of the act.

The fine was imposed by Justice of the Peace David Keilty of the Ontario Court of Justice at Old City Hall in Toronto. In addition, the court imposed a 25-per-cent victim fine surcharge, as required by the Provincial Offences Act. The surcharge is credited to a special provincial government fund to assist victims of crime.

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Court Information at a Glance

Location: Ontario Court of Justice
Old City Hall
60 Queen Street West, Courtroom C
Toronto, Ontario

Judge: Justice of the Peace David Keilty

Date / Time: March 23, 2006, 9 a.m.

Defendant: Santa Maria Foods Corporation

Matter: Occupational Health & Safety

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