AGRICULTORES A LA CARCEL EN USA POR INFECCIONES DE LISTERIA

**Farmers Eric and Ryan Jensen sentenced in deadly listeria outbreak**

Two Colorado farmers, whose listeria tainted cantaloupe killed nearly three dozen people, will not spend any time in jail.

A federal magistrate sentenced Eric and Ryan Jensen to 5 years of probation, with the first six months in home detention. Each defendant was also sentenced to 100 hours of community service and was each ordered to pay $150,000 restitution. That money will go to the victims.

In addition to probation and restitution, Ryan Jensen was told he cannot possess a gun, commit any other crimes or use alcohol or marijuana. He must attend a substance abuse program and take drug tests. Eric Jensen agreed to provide a DNA sample as part of his probation. Both will have to start their home detention within 21 days.

U.S. Magistrate Judge Michael Hegarty called it an unusual, heart-rending case. He said, "No facts suggest the Jensens had any prior knowledge or knew the cantaloupe was tainted, or that they were trying to cut corners."

The sentence drew mixed reaction from the victims' families. Some wanted to see a jail sentence, others did not. "They could have gotten six years on each count," said Penny Houser, while holding a picture of her late husband, Michael. "I would like to have seen it. Anything would have been better."

Last October, the Jensen brothers pleaded guilty to six counts of introducing adulterated food into interstate commerce. During their sentencing hearing in U.S. District Court, both apologized for what happened.

Prosecutors say the listeria outbreak, which began in May 2011, was initially estimated to have caused 33 deaths and sickened 147 people in 28 states. During the court hearing Tuesday, the prosecutor said there were closer to 40 deaths.

U.S. Attorney John Walsh said, "No sentence of incarceration, restitution or financial penalty can undo the tragic damage done as a result of the contamination at Jensen Farms.  Today's sentence serves as a powerful reminder of farmers' legal and moral responsibility for ensuring their product is safe." Walsh said that because of this case, changes have been made regarding how fruit is processed and transported across the country.

Acting Special Agent Spencer Morrison of the Food and Drug Administration's Office of Criminal Investigation said, "We sincerely hope that today's sentencing will provide some small measure of justice to the victims of this awful tragedy. FDA will continue to appropriately utilize its resources to ensure the integrity of our nation's food supply."

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