

Cutting plant fined for obstructing FSA inspections

A red and white meat cutting plant in London, M Coban Ltd, has been fined £9,000 plus costs of £1,000 after preventing inspectors from entering the site.

At a hearing at Thames Magistrates Court, the site owner was found guilty of two offences of obstructing Food Standards Agency inspectors from entering the premises on 4 July 2018 and 22 August 2018.

The business was also ordered to pay a £120 victim surcharge which goes to the court.

The FSA monitors compliance in cutting plants using a system of planned audits with additional unannounced visits. The frequency of the audits depends upon the level of compliance found at the site.

Mr Coban told the court he felt harassed by the inspections and that he had spent a lot of time and resources on the visits.

The site is no longer regulated by the FSA and is instead registered by Waltham Forest Local Authority which has a separate inspection regime.

Dr Colin Sullivan, Chief Operating Officer of the Food Standards Agency, said:

'The FSA has an obligation to ensure that cutting plants are inspected on a regular basis.

'Obstructing our staff from carrying out their role not only prevents us from assessing whether the food being produced is safe, it can also be an offence.

'I am pleased that this company has been held accountable for breaking these rules.'