

MEAT DERIVED BY ADVANCED MEAT RECOVERY

What is advanced meat recovery?

Advanced meat recovery (AMR) is a technology that uses specialized equipment to remove meat from beef and pork bones. Just as fruit processors use machines to remove fruit from peels thoroughly and efficiently, meat companies use equipment to remove meat from some bones that are hard to trim by hand.

What do you call the meat that is removed using this equipment?

Meat derived by AMR is meat. The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) regulates and inspects all meat plants on a continuous basis. USDA has reviewed meat derived by advanced meat recovery and determined it is no different than meat trimmed from bones by hand. Therefore it is simply called “beef” or “pork.”

Are there any special regulations required when using AMR systems?

Yes. AMR systems may not crush or grind bones when removing meat. Certain bones, including the vertebral column from older cattle, cannot be processed through AMR systems.

In addition, because more than 50 percent of the meat derived from AMR comes from the hard-to-trim backbones and neck bones, USDA requires that the spinal cord be removed from the spinal column before those bones are placed in AMR systems. This practice helps ensure the spinal cord is not added inadvertently to meat. Spinal cords and nervous system tissues are not meat, and therefore are not permitted in meat products.

The AMR process, like all meat processing systems, is overseen by USDA inspectors on a continuous basis to ensure wholesomeness and safety. USDA routinely inspects for the presence of spinal cord and nervous system tissues.

Why do meat companies use AMR systems?

AMR systems help ensure that all meat is removed from bones. The greater value a meat company can derive from an animal, the more affordable meat products are for the consumer. The meat, if left on the bones, would go to waste or be rendered. Therefore, AMR contributes to enhancing sustainability and decreasing food waste.

AMR systems also help reduce hand trimming by employees. Hand trimming requires repetitive cuts with a knife, which can cause repetitive motion injuries to employees. Reducing hand trimming protects employees.

What consumer products use meat derived from AMR?

Meat from AMR can be used in any product. It is typically used in products like ground beef, pork sausage, meatballs, and taco meat.

Does meat derived using AMR equipment have to be labeled?

Meat derived using AMR equipment is meat. Therefore no special labeling is required, other than the species from which it is derived—like beef or pork.

Helpful Links:

North American Meat Institute
<http://www.meatinstitute.org>

U.S. Department of Agriculture
<http://www.usda.gov>