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ICE executes federal criminal search warrants at Fresh Mark, 146 arrested on immigration violations



SALEM, Ohio – Special agents from U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement’s (ICE) Homeland Security Investigations (HSI) late Tuesday executed a criminal search warrant at Fresh Mark in Salem, Ohio, in addition to federal document search warrants at three other Fresh Mark locations in Northern Ohio. During the search warrant execution, authorities identified 146 Fresh Mark employees working at the Salem meat processor who were subject to arrest for immigration violations.

Search warrants were served at the following locations:

- 1735 S. Lincoln Avenue, Salem, where more than 146 illegal aliens were arrested
- 1888 South Way Street, SW Massillon
- 950 Cloverleaf Street, SW, Massillon
- 1600 Harmont Ave NE, Canton

The enforcement action is part of a year-long, ongoing HSI investigation based on evidence that Fresh Mark may have knowingly hired illegal aliens at its meat processing and packaging facility, and that many of these aliens are utilizing fraudulent identification belonging to U.S. citizens.

"Unlawful employment is one of the key magnets drawing illegal aliens across our borders," said Steve Francis, HSI special agent in charge for Michigan and Ohio. "Businesses who knowingly harbor and hire illegal aliens as a business model must be held accountable for their actions."

Today's enforcement action was coordinated with HSI's federal, state and local counterparts including, the Northern District of Ohio's U.S. Attorney's Office; U.S. Border Patrol, ICE Enforcement and Removal Operations; U.S. Customs and Border Protection Air and Marine Operations; HSI Detroit and Chicago Special Response Teams, Salem Police Department and the Columbiana County Sheriff's Office.

In the context of any enforcement action, ICE utilizes prosecutorial discretion on cases involving humanitarian concerns, such as health or family considerations. Accordingly, during the June 19, action, several individuals were processed and released from custody the same day as a result of humanitarian considerations.

Fresh Mark is a member in ICE's IMAGE program, which stands for ICE Mutual Agreement between Government and Employers. However, IMAGE members are not immune from ICE scrutiny or prosecution for workforce compliance violations.

Aliens who are being detained will be transported to a nearby processing facility located and placed in removal proceedings. Aliens will be detained in facilities in Michigan and Ohio while awaiting removal proceedings.

A 24-hour toll-free detainee locator hotline is available for family members of those arrested in today's operation to field questions about detention status and the removal process. The hotline operates in English and Spanish; the phone number is 1-888-351-4024.

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