

Over \$500,000 Fine for Immigration Law Violations

By: Bruce Buchanan, Partner-in-Charge, Immigration Law Section

U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) announced Koch Foods of Cincinnati LLC paid a \$536,046 fine for administrative violations of U.S. immigration laws.

The ICE Office of Investigations in Cincinnati conducted a worksite investigation of Koch Foods after receiving information from a concerned citizen alleging that the company was employing more than 100 illegal aliens at their poultry processing facility in the Cincinnati area. In August 2007, ICE subsequently executed a search warrant at Koch's Fairfield, Ohio, processing facility and arrested 161 illegal aliens and seized relevant documents. ICE also executed a search warrant at Koch's corporate offices in Chicago seizing relevant documents.

Employers are required to complete and retain a Form I-9 for each individual they hire for employment in the United States. This form requires employers to review and record the individual's identity document(s) and determine whether the document(s) reasonably appear to be genuine and related to the individual. The fine relates to I-9 violations at Koch's Fairfield, Ohio, facility. The company has cooperated with ICE in the investigation employing the use of E-Verify and ensuring that its policies and procedures are in compliance with legal requirements.

ICE issued a Notice of Intent to Fine in the specified amount on Feb. 8. The Final Order was issued and fine paid on February 9 in Cleveland. The company has implemented measures revising its hiring and immigration compliance program, and has established new procedures to prevent future violations of federal immigration laws, which includes the removal of the individual employed as the human resource manager during the time period surrounding the violations.