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NEWS RELEASE

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OPERATOR OF FORT MORGAN MEAT PROCESSING FACILITY SENTENCED FOR CLEAN WATER ACT VIOLATIONS

DENVER – Cargill Meat Solutions Corporation was sentenced today for violating clean water standards in discharges from its associated wastewater treatment operation, United States Attorney David Gaouette and Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Special Agent in Charge Lori Hanson announced. Cargill was sentenced by U.S. Magistrate Judge Boyd N. Boland to a total fine of \$200,000, as well as a \$250 special assessment to a victims of crime fund. Separate from the court's sentence, Cargill also entered into an administrative agreement with the EPA under which it has undertaken or will undertake a range of corrections, including staff training, mechanical upgrades to its wastewater treatment operation, and reassignment of personnel responsible for the violations.

Cargill was charged by the United States Attorney with two misdemeanor offenses and pled guilty on September 28, 2009. According to the stipulated facts contained in the plea agreement, Cargill operates a meat packing plant in Fort Morgan, Colorado. The plant processes about 5,000 head of cattle and generates about 1,500,000 gallons of wastewater each working day. Cargill operates a wastewater treatment plant on site to remove feces, dirt, meat scrap, and other pollutants from its discharge to the South Platte River.

Cargill held a National Pollution Discharge Elimination System permit from the State of Colorado to discharge treated waste water to the South Platte River. Cargill's permit limited its discharge of total suspended solids (TSS) to a maximum of 2,874 pounds per day. The permit's limit for discharge of fecal coliform was 400 colonies per 100 milliliters. On August 27, 2003,

Cargill sampled its discharge and measured fecal coliforms at 522 colonies per 100 milliliters, a violation of its permit. On July 16, 2004, Cargill sampled its discharge and measured total suspended solids at 4,332 pounds for the day, a violation of its permit.

Under the agreement, any further violations of law will subject Cargill to possible sanctions, including debarment from federal contracts.

“This case demonstrates the tremendous effort made by EPA and our office to protect our environment, and pursue those who violate federal law,” United States Attorney David Gaouette said. “The defendant's illegal discharges risked polluting the South Platte River,” said Lori Hanson, Special Agent-in-Charge of EPA's criminal enforcement office in Denver. “Today's guilty plea and sentence demonstrates that companies will be held responsible if they commit environmental crimes.”

Cargill was prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney John Haried.

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