

School Lunch Prep Lawsuit Goes To Court

A minority-owned food manufacturer is suing one of the world's largest privately held food manufacturing companies for millions of dollars in damages.

The lawsuit is headed for a Lexington County courtroom Sept. 11, according to Cherokee Foods attorney **Richard L. Robbins** of Atlanta.

Robbins said Cherokee Foods alleges that OSI Industries and its subsidiary, Carolina Culinary Foods of West Columbia, failed to process and package fully-cooked chicken products for school lunch programs.

Cherokee Foods alleges that OSI's plant in West Columbia:

- Had severe operational problems, including poor management, a malfunctioning freezer and excessive equipment downtime.
- Allowed more than two truckloads of Cherokee Foods' raw chicken to rot on site.
- Was unable to manufacture Cherokee Foods' chicken products on time or to specifications, leaving Cherokee Foods unable to meet its obligations to provide chicken lunches to schools.

Cherokee Foods claims that these failures put it out of business. Cherokee Foods is seeking several million dollars in actual and punitive damages.