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NF94-165 Trichinella spiralis

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Trichinella spiralis

By Susan S. Sumner, Extension Food Microbiologist
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The Disease:	Trichinosis is caused by the colonization of trichinella larvae in muscles where they grow an encyst. Severe symptoms are likely if the levels exceed 100 larvae per gram of muscle (8,400 per 3 oz. portion).
The Organism:	*Trichinella spiralis* is a parasitic roundworm. The life cycle of the parasite begins when the infectious cysts are eaten with the flesh of any meat eating animal. The cysts are digested and the liberated larvae invade the small intestine. The female hatches larvae that are carried by the blood and lymph to the muscles.
Sources:	This parasitic roundworm is most often found in pork and bear meat.
Control:	Thoroughly cook pork (at least 160°F) and other potential infected meats. Cook garbage fed to hogs and avoid cross-contamination of beef with pork. The concern from trichinosis is not as great today with improved pork production practices.

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