



SALMONELLA

Salmonella is an organism that can cause serious and sometimes fatal infections in young children, elderly people, and others with weakened immune systems. Healthy persons infected with *Salmonella* often experience fever, diarrhea, nausea, vomiting and abdominal pain.

Most types of *Salmonella* live in the intestinal tracts of animals and birds and are usually transferred to humans by contaminated meat and poultry products. Thorough cooking destroys *Salmonella* organisms.

The American Peanut Council has adopted a Voluntary Code of Good Manufacturing Practices (Good Manufacturing Practices or GMPs) that includes recommended operating procedures specifically for peanut processors. The recommended procedures include regular sampling, testing and verification of negative microbiological contamination in peanut manufacturing plants. The Good Manufacturing Practices also recommend thorough sanitizing of hands, work surfaces, and utensils. In addition, peanut processing, from raw to roasted product, must include a “kill step” – or a step to eliminate microbiological contamination. The roasting process satisfies this requirement.

In response to the 2009 *Salmonella* outbreak associated with peanut products, the industry accelerated measures to improve its food safety knowledge and practices based on the best available science.

The industry has:

- Begun a baseline pathogen prevalence assessment in order to better understand risk
- Engaged in a kill-step study to better understand pathogen resilience
- Collaborated with FDA to provide food safety education and training to industry members
- Designed a special HACCP accredited food safety course for peanut processors in partnership with the University of Georgia’s Food Science Dept.
- Commissioned scientific studies to ensure we are using the best practices to eliminate contaminants
- Updated the industry’s Good Manufacturing Practices (GMPs) to reflect our most current scientific knowledge

Food safety is the U.S. peanut industry’s highest priority. Recognizing that food safety is not an end point but an evolving process, the industry will continue to engage in efforts that help improve our understanding of and enhance our ability to combat *Salmonella* and other food borne pathogens.

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