

PRESSRELEASE

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For Immediate Release

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FDA Issue definitive statement on Peanut Butter Salmonella - Do not eat guidelines

The following is a statement released by the FDA and is being supplied to local media by the Office of Mayor Charles Oberlie and the Michigan City Emergency Management Agency.

January 18, 2009:

Based on this information, and on the current state of the investigation, the FDA recommends that consumers avoid eating products that have been recalled and discard them.

Because identification of products subject to recall is continuing, the FDA urges consumers to postpone eating commercially-prepared or manufactured peanut butter-containing products and institutionally-served peanut butter until further information becomes available about which products may be affected. Efforts to specifically identify those products are ongoing.

The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) is conducting a very active and dynamic investigation into the source of the *Salmonella* Typhimurium outbreak. At this time, the FDA has traced a source of *Salmonella* Typhimurium contamination to a plant owned by Peanut Corporation of America (PCA), which manufactures both peanut butter that is institutionally served in such settings as long-term care facilities and cafeterias, and peanut paste—a concentrated product consisting of ground, roasted peanuts—that is distributed to food manufacturers to be used as an ingredient in many commercially produced products including cakes, cookies, crackers, candies, cereal and ice cream.

The FDA has notified PCA that product samples originating from its Blakely, Ga., processing plant have been tested and found positive for *Salmonella* by laboratories in the states of Minnesota and Georgia. The state of Minnesota has reported to FDA that its samples of King Nut peanut butter are a genetic match to the strain of *Salmonella* that has caused illnesses in that state and around the country. King Nut is a distributor of PCA product.

On January 16, PCA expanded its voluntary recall to include all peanut butter produced on or after August 8, 2008, and all peanut paste produced on or after September 26, 2008, in its Blakely, Ga., plant because of potential *Salmonella* contamination. The product being recalled is sold by PCA in bulk packaging in containers ranging in size from five to 1700 pounds. The peanut paste is sold in sizes ranging from 35-pound containers to product sold by the tanker container. These products are not sold directly to consumers. PCA has stopped all production at its Blakely, Ga. plant as the FDA continues its investigation into the source of the *Salmonella* contamination.

At this time, there is no indication that any national name brand jars of peanut butter sold in retail stores are linked to the PCA recall. As the investigation continues over the weekend, and into next week, the FDA will be able to update the advice based on new sampling and distribution information.

The FDA is working closely with members of the food industry to narrow this advice and to publish a detailed list of implicated products as soon as possible. The FDA is encouraging manufacturers to help inform consumers about whether their products could have contained commercially prepared peanut butter or peanut paste from PCA. Also, if manufacturers know their products do not contain ingredients from PCA, they may wish to inform consumers of that fact. Retailers should stop selling products which have been recalled.

For information on products containing peanut butter from companies not reporting recalls, consumers may wish to consult the company's website or call the toll-free number listed on most packaging. Information consumers may receive from the companies has not been verified by the FDA.

The FDA will closely monitor these events by continuing to work with the firms on the details of their actions, conduct follow-up audits and inspections, monitor the progress of the firms' actions, and notify our foreign regulatory counterparts of products that may have been distributed internationally.