

Food Safety and Standards Authority of India

Advisory No: 5/FSSAI/2009

Advisory of the Food Safety and Standards Authority of India on the *Salmonella* contamination in Peanut Butter

An outbreak of Salmonella food poisoning associated with peanut butter started in the last quarter of 2008 in United States of America. This *Salmonella* outbreak in peanut products sickened 714 people, killed 9 and led to a food product recall. The sources of outbreak were peanut butter and peanut paste produced by the Peanut Corporation of America (PCA) at its Blakely, Georgia processing plant. On January 28, 2009, PCA announced a voluntary recall of all peanuts and peanut products processed in its Blakely, Georgia facility since January 1, 2007 and reported that the production of all peanut products had stopped in the facility. Based on the information received from US Embassy and circulated to all Food Safety Commissioners by FSSAI, Maharashtra Food and Drug Administration (FDA) recalled Rockin Roll (Nutty Peanut flavours) bars produced by Labrada Nutrition Inc. from the Indian consignee M/s Nuegen Nutrition Systems Pvt. Ltd. which was likely to have contamination of *Salmonella* and destroyed them.

The contamination of Salmonella in some of the Peanut butter products and the possibility of any large scale adverse health effect on the population was considered by FSSAI keeping in view the likely entry of such contaminated products into the country. After consultations with the experts, the following advisory is being issued to provide consumers relevant information on the significance and sources of salmonella contamination in peanut butter products, so as to facilitate appropriate preventive actions on their part to address this food safety situation.

1. Consumers should avoid eating the recalled products or the products which may contain the recalled products as ingredients.*
2. Any recalled product should be disposed off in a safe manner in closed plastic bag and placed in a sealed trash to prevent Salmonella infection in humans, pets or other animals.
3. Retailers should stop selling of the recalled products and food service establishments should ensure that they are not serving recalled products.
4. The sign and symptoms of Salmonella food poisoning that usually appear 12 to 72 hours after intake of contaminated food include high grade fever, diarrhea, vomiting and abdominal cramps.
5. In most instances, salmonellosis is a relatively benign condition and most people recover without treatment in 3 to 7 days. In young children, the elderly and people with weakened immune systems, salmonellosis may cause serious and sometimes deadly infections.
6. Anyone who believes that they may have become ill as a result of eating salmonella contaminated peanut products, should contact health professionals. Infection is usually diagnosed by culture of a stool sample. If your health professional determines you have Salmonella infection, he or she will likely recommend you increase your fluid intake to replace losses from diarrhea and, in some (but not all) instances, may also prescribe antibiotics for speedy recovery.

* Specific details on brands of recalled products or any other details on Salmonella outbreak in Peanut butter may be seen at US FDA website www.fda.gov or Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), USA website www.cdc.gov.