

Establishment Inspection Report

American Blanching Company

Fitzgerald, GA 31750-8932

FEI: 1036846

EI Start: 04/08/2008

EI End: 04/08/2008

SUMMARY

The current inspection of this large food manufacturer was conducted as per a request from ATL-DO and in accordance with Compliance Program 7303.803, Domestic Food Safety. The inspection found that the firm continues to operate as a peanut processing plant producing peanut butter, roasted and blanched peanuts, peanut paste, and granulated peanuts.

The previous FDA inspection was conducted on 3/28-29/07. No objectionable conditions were noted on a FDA-483, Inspectional Observations. The inspection was classified as NAI.

A cursory inspection was conducted of all production in operation during the inspection; however, the primary focus of this inspection was on the production of peanut paste and the packaging of (b)(4) (b)(4) Peanut Butter for (b)(4). No deficiencies were found during the inspection and a FDA-483 was not issued.

Sample # 447399, consisting of 10/40 oz. jars of (b)(4) Peanut Butter, was collected as per FY' 08 Mycotoxin Surveillance Sampling Assignment and submitted to Kansas Lab for analysis. A copy of the collection report is attached.

ADMINISTRATIVE DATA

Inspected firm: American Blanching Company

Location: 155 Rip Wiley Rd
Fitzgerald, GA 31750-8932

Phone: 229-423-4098

FAX:

Mailing address: Po Box 1028/Rip Wiley Rd
Fitzgerald, GA 31750

Dates of inspection: 4/8/2008

Days in the facility: 1

Participants: Janet B Gray, Investigator

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HISTORY/ INTERSTATE COMMERCE

The firm was incorporated in the state of GA in 1992. Mr. Allen A. Conger is the President, Mr. Allen Conger, Jr. is the Vice President, and David Conger is the Secretary/Treasurer. Mr. Alan Milton is the Director of Quality Assurance.

This firm manufactures a variety of peanut butter products under private labels, such as (b)(4) (b)(4) Blanched and roasted peanuts and peanut granules are manufactured and packaged in bulk for further processing at facilities such as (b)(4) Peanut Paste is produced and sold in bulk to companies for further processing such as (b)(4) Peanut Butter Products are packaged in 12 oz. plastic jars to 500 lb. drums. The 500 lb. drums of peanut butter are packaged for further manufacture for (b)(4) (b)(4)

According to management, the majority of the peanuts used in the manufacture of their products are purchased from (b)(4) peanut companies (i.e. (b)(4) however, they could not say what percentage of the peanuts are grown in (b)(4) Mr. Conger did comment that they occasionally receive peanuts from (b)(4) The peanut butter products manufactured at this firm are shipped to consignees' nation wide, as well as for export to (b)(4) (b)(4)

PERSONS INTERVIEWED AND INDIVIDUAL RESPONSIBILITY

At the initiation of the inspection, credentials were presented to Mr. Allen Conger, President, and Mr. Alan Milton, Director of QA. The FDA-482, Notice of Inspection, was issued to Mr. Alan Milton under the request of Mr. Conger. Mr. Conger stated that Mr. Milton was the most responsible individual for the day-to-day operations in the plant, and he would be assisting me throughout the remainder of the inspection. I explained that I would be conducting a routine inspection of the entire plant and the current operations, but I wanted to focus on the production of peanut paste and packaging of (b)(4)

I asked for clarification of how this firm was involved with (b)(4) (b)(4) located in (b)(4) Mr. Conger informed me that (b)(4) was now (b)(4) He stated that too much confusion came from the 2 similar names (b)(4) (b)(4) so the holding company that owned (b)(4) decided to change the name. Thus, (b)(4) was established on (b)(4) is owned by a stockholding company, consisting of (b)(4) farmers, with Mr. Allen Conger operating as the President.

Mr. Allen Conger stated that he is the President of American Blanching, but he would be in a meeting most of the day, thus Mr. Milton would be responsible for accompanying me during the

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inspection. He said that he would be available later in the day if he were needed for the closing discussion.

Mr. Milton is the Director of QA, and he provided accompaniment throughout the inspection, and information not otherwise observed. He accepted the FDA-482, and the FDA-484, Receipt for Samples. [It should be noted that Mr. Milton did not sign the Receipt for Samples issued for the collection of 10/40 oz. jars of (b)(4) Peanut Butter. He stated that this particular customer did not allow them to sign any documents concerning their product unless it was approved by their corporate office.] Mr. Milton was observed to give instructions to various employees of the firm during the inspection. Mr. Milton reports to Mr. Conger. FDA correspondence should be sent to Mr. Alan Milton at the plant's address.

Mr. David Conger, Secretary/Treasurer, was briefly introduced during the opening discussion with management, but he did not participate in the inspection.

Mr. Jim Martin, Plant Manager, provided intermittent accompaniment during the walk through inspection of Plant #1. He provided information pertaining to the manufacturing process and equipment.

Ms. Kim Giddens, QA Supervisor, provided intermittent accompaniment during the walk-through inspection of Plant #1. She provided information pertaining to the sample collection and testing procedures.

OPERATIONS, PERSONNEL, AND EQUIPMENT

American Blanching consists of (b)(4) separate metal structures, identified as (b)(4) (b)(4) (b)(4) houses a blanching line, peanut butter line, as well as the offices. (b)(4) (b)(4) houses a roasting line, peanut granule line, and a peanut butter line. (b)(4) (b)(4) houses the peanut paste line and the (b)(4) (b)(4) Peanut Butter packaging line. Each building has a warehouse location and a raw product receiving dock. It should be noted that this section of the report will primarily describe the peanut paste operations at the firm.

The firm receives raw, shelled whole kernel peanuts or raw, shelled peanut halves or splits in (b)(4) lb. super sacks. Incoming lots of raw nuts are accompanied by USDA grade certificate and aflatoxin certification. The peanuts are visually inspected by the firm's QC department for infestation, and at least (b)(4) of the peanuts received are sampled for in-house testing, including aflatoxin, color, size and moisture content.

According to Ms. Giddens, (b)(4) environmental swabs are collected each (b)(4) on the roasted side, and shipped to (b)(4) for *Listeria* and *Salmonella* analysis. The swabs are collected on a rotation of different locations according to their "zone system". Samples of finished

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peanut paste are collected and sent to (b)(4) and tested for Salmonella, aerobic plate count, E. coli, coliforms, and yeast and mold count. Mr. Milton reported that the product is not shipped until they receive the test results from the private lab, which is typically within 24-48 hours.

Raw peanuts in the super sacks are unloaded into holding bins. From the holding bins, the raw peanuts are conveyed through a magnet, and then through a series of screens in the scalper, which mechanically removes large foreign objects through vibratory screening and aspirations. The nuts are then conveyed through the destoner (b)(4) which removes smaller stones and other foreign objects. Peanuts from the (b)(4) and the cleaned peanuts are fed onto the rotating belt of the roaster.

The roaster has (b)(4) heating zones and (b)(4) cooling zones. According to firm's HACCP Plan, the Critical Control Point is (b)(4) F for a dwell time of (b)(4) minutes in (b)(4) heating zones, at a belt speed of (b)(4) feet per minute. Mr. Jim Martin stated that they actually have the roaster set for a higher temperature and a lower belt speed. The peanuts are cooled with ambient air flow while in the (b)(4) cooling zones, so the temperature of the peanuts coming out of the roaster depends on the exterior temperature.

The roasted peanuts are transferred from the roaster onto a horizontal vibratory conveyor that moves the peanuts to the nut blanchers. The nuts are conveyed through the blancher and the skins are removed from the peanuts and aspirated from the process flow. Next, the nuts are fed into the electronic color sorting system which rejects off-colored or dark nuts from the product flow. At this point, roasted and cleaned peanuts are transferred through the (b)(4) (primary grinding mills), (b)(4) (final grind), and the (b)(4). The peanut paste exits the (b)(4) at approximately (b)(4) and is piped to the bulk holding tanks located in the tanker loading station. The product is held in the tanks until the laboratory test results are received from the private lab. From the bulk holding tanks, the product is piped into a tanker and then shipped to (b)(4) (formerly (b)(4) which is located (b)(4).

Peanut powder is produced at (b)(4) by pressing the oil out of the peanut paste, and adding (b)(4) and (b)(4). The product (b)(4) is transferred into plastic lined 55 gallon plastic lined fiber drums and shipped back to American Blanching. At this location, the product is packaged into plastic jars on the filling line typically used for peanut butter. (b)(4) is injected into the head space of each jar prior to the plastic screw cap being applied to each jar. A foil liner is applied to each jar by a (b)(4) which seals the metal foil liner on the cap to the mouth of the jar. Sealed jars are then passed through the label applicator, and the video ink jet printer applies the manufacturing code to the lid.

MANUFACTURING CODES

The manufacturing code is inked in black dot-matrix on the lid of each jar. According to management, the code indicates the date of packaging at this facility, not the date of actual

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production. The code consists of a "best by date", which represents one year from the packaging date, and the julian date/military time at packaging. For example: "BEST BY: 05/12/2008 13207 18:28". This indicates that the product was packaged on May 12, 2007 at 18:28 military time.

SAMPLES COLLECTED

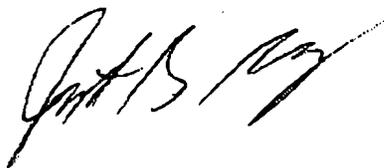
Sample # 447399, consisting of 10/40 oz. jars of (b)(4) Peanut Butter, was collected as per FY' 08 Mycotoxin Surveillance Sampling Assignment and submitted to Kansas Lab for analysis. This sample was pulled from the production line on 4/8/08. Mr. Milton was observed to collect a corresponding sample for their own testing.

CLOSING DISCUSSION

The closing discussion was held with Mr. Alan Milton. I stated that no deficiencies were found during the inspection, and a FDA-483 would not be issued. I issued the FDA-484, Receipt for Samples, for the mycotoxin surveillance sample collected and Mr. Milton explained that he was not authorized to sign any documents concerning (b)(4) Peanut Butter as per their customer's request. Mr. Milton stated that they would be holding this lot of peanut butter pending FDA's lab results.

ATTACHMENTS

Collection Report for Sample collected during EI.



Janet B Gray, Investigator