

**From:** Slawinski, Tim [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Thursday, February 5, 2009 10:00 AM  
**To:** Tong, Jennifer [REDACTED]  
**Cc:** Chestnut, Tom [REDACTED] Bail, James [REDACTED]  
**Subject:** RE: AIB named at Peanut Corp

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Yeah. However, if the FDA sent their team of inspectors to the facility before the outbreak occurred with no knowledge of whether there was a problem at the facility or not, would they really have found these problems? I'm pretty confident they would have had similar results as the State of Georgia and the multiple third party firms that inspected the place. Plus, the biggest problem was with the positive micro data that they ignored. From my understanding, this data was not initially available for the FDA either. They had to really pry into their documentation before uncovering the additional test results. The media may not understand the difference between a full blown FDA investigation and a routine inspection, but I'm hoping the FDA does.

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-----Original Message-----

**From:** Tong, Jennifer  
**Sent:** Thursday, February 05, 2009 9:10 AM  
**To:** Slawinski, Tim  
**Cc:** Chestnut, Tom; Bail, James  
**Subject:** RE: AIB named at Peanut Corp

Not good for auditing companies in general as we work with the FDA to try to get them to recognize 3<sup>rd</sup> party inspection/certification in lieu of government oversight.

Jen

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**From:** Slawinski, Tim  
**Sent:** Wednesday, February 04, 2009 11:52 PM  
**To:** Bail, James; Chestnut, Tom; Tong, Jennifer  
**Subject:** AIB named at Peanut Corp

FYI. New York Times article names AIB as one of the third party companies at Peanut Corp.

Peanut Plant Says Audits Declared It in Top Shape

By ANDREW MARTIN  
Published: February 4, 2009

A company at the center of a huge and deadly salmonella outbreak said Wednesday that its peanut plant was regularly visited last year by private inspectors, several of whom declared it to be in tip-top shape.

In a statement released Wednesday, the company, Peanut Corporation of America, reported "regular visits and inspections" of its Blakely, Ga., plant in 2008, not only by federal and state regulators but by independent auditors and food safety companies that made "customary unannounced inspections."

At least one of the private inspectors was hired by the peanut company itself, which provided the audit to customers to meet their food safety requirements.

One of the private inspectors "gave the plant an overall superior rating," the peanut company's statement said. "The other rated the plant as 'meets or exceeds audit expectations (Acceptable-Excellent) ratings.'"

Peanut Corporation of America's statement was released as food manufacturers and public health officials tried to determine how so many inspectors missed what some have said were obvious problems at the plant, including improper sanitation procedures, live roaches, mold and slimy residue on floors and equipment.

Federal officials have begun a criminal inquiry of the peanut company after learning that it knowingly shipped products that had tested positive for salmonella. The outbreak has caused more than 500 illnesses and eight deaths. More than 1,000 products have been recalled, including pet food, ice cream and brownies.

Kellogg, one of the companies that recalled peanut products, received reports of third-party independent audits of Peanut Corporation of America in 2007 and 2008. The audits, paid for by the peanut company to meet food manufacturers' requirements, were intended to assess its compliance with federally mandated manufacturing practices, including the condition of the plant and equipment and cleanliness, said Kris Charles, a spokeswoman for Kellogg.

Audits are also supposed to review the supplier's food safety program, microbial test results and internal audit results.

Each audit, conducted by AIB International, gave the Blakely plant a "superior" rating. "We are looking into whether the third-party auditor reviewed state inspection reports or the plant's test results," Ms. Charles said by e-mail. "It is certainly something we would have expected them to do because it is an audit requirement." Kellogg also received written test results from Peanut Corporation of America that the peanut paste it had supplied Kellogg showed no positive salmonella results, she said.

Had Kellogg known of the problems at the plant that the Food and Drug Administration detailed recently, "we would have discontinued the relationship with P.C.A. immediately and would not have accepted any ingredients from them," she said.

Jim Munyon, president of AIB International, based in Manhattan, Kan., said he could not release details of the peanut company's audit because of confidentiality agreements. He said the company would not have received a superior rating if his auditors had seen the filth the federal government described.

"It would mean that we didn't see it on the day we were there," he said of the rating. "What goes on the rest of the time, we don't know."

He said his company relies on his customers to provide details of internal microbial tests. Had the peanut company divulged the presence of salmonella, he said, "We would have had a discussion about those failures."

Doug Powell, an associate professor of food safety at Kansas State University, said the salmonella outbreak at Peanut Corporation of America showed the "fallacy" of independent audits, which are commonly used to verify food safety, animal welfare claims and organic production methods. While the intent might be good, he said, the results are usually withheld from the public.

"Companies say they do all this testing. Great. Show us the data. They won't," Mr. Powell said. "Given all the outbreaks, why should we believe them?"