

Single Point Lesson: Salmonella Contamination

Step 1

WHY did RTE houmous contain Salmonella?

Tahini (ground sesame seed paste) contaminated with Salmonella had been used to produce houmous.

Step 2

WHY did tahini contain Salmonella?

The tahini had been produced by a third-party supplier from sesame seeds which had not been sufficiently heat treated.

Step 3

Why was tahini insufficiently processed?

The best quality tahini is slow roasted to optimise flavour. The supplier of this product had reduced processing time to command the highest market value.

Step 4

WHY was the risk of contamination not identified?

The houmous manufacturer was unaware of the process used to produce tahini.

Step 5

WHY was the humous manufacturer unaware of the risk?

The tahini had been purchased from an unapproved supplier and the manufacturer did not appreciate that heat treatment was a critical control.

Best Practice:

Understand your supply chain particularly the critical controls that are necessary – know your suppliers and their products.
