



# Blue Bell® Creameries

May 01, 2020

## **Food Safety and Production Fact Sheet**

### **About Blue Bell Creameries**

In 1907, the Brenham Creamery Company was established in Brenham, Texas, to produce butter from excess milk and cream brought into town by local farmers. In 1911, the Brenham Creamery cranked out its first two gallons of ice cream by hand. The production of butter continued until 1958, when the sole focus of the company became the production of what some say is "the best ice cream in the country."

Blue Bell Creameries currently produces ice cream, sherbet and a variety of frozen snacks. These products are available in half gallons, pints, quarts and multipack snack sizes.

Blue Bell has now been in operation for 113 years and has production facilities in Brenham, Texas; Broken Arrow, Oklahoma; and Sylacauga, Alabama. Blue Bell employs approximately 3,000 people at our three production facilities, 62 distribution facilities and 23 transfer stations across 22 states.

### **Blue Bell's Safety Enhancements**

Following the shutdown in 2015, Blue Bell engaged in an extensive review and analysis of its safety and manufacturing processes. During this period, Blue Bell worked closely with federal and state regulatory authorities as well as independent experts and consultants. As part of resuming production, Blue Bell committed to implementing comprehensive food safety measures, all of which are now in place. These include, but are not limited to:

- Enhanced cleaning and sanitation processes at all three manufacturing facilities;
- Significant facility improvements (including replacing floors, rerouting overhead piping to reduce condensation risk, reconfiguring equipment storage areas, upgrading air handling systems, revising foot traffic patterns, updating related controls and investing in new manufacturing technologies);
- Addition of detailed manufacturing date/time stamps on each finished product (including single serving items) to ensure traceability;
- Restructuring of Blue Bell quality assurance and quality control departments;
- Creation of a separate hygienic department and sanitation department;
- Updates to key manufacturing practices (such as hygienic zoning, cleaning and sanitation, footwear and clothing policies and environmental and finished product testing);
- Adoption of enhanced food safety policies, procedures and testing programs;
- Regular training of employees on these modernized food safety principles and practices

Additionally, Blue Bell instituted an enhanced environmental testing program throughout its facilities to identify early warning signs of *Listeria* in the manufacturing environment as well as implemented a universal "test and hold" program for all finished product. Under this program, samples from all ice cream products are tested for *Listeria monocytogenes*, and the product is not released into the market until the sample has been tested and cleared for distribution by an independent lab.