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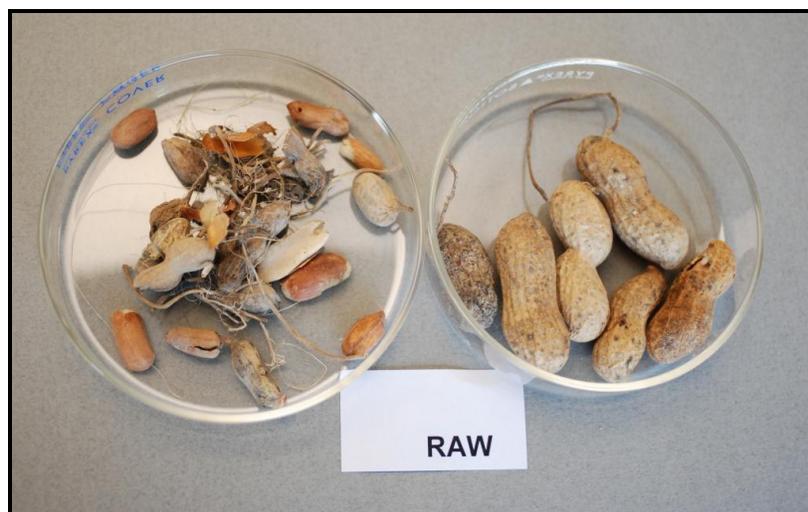
ATTENTION HUNTERS

Information about Peanut Processing and the Placement of Peanut Products

Numerous questions have arisen concerning placement of various peanut products on the landscape for the purposes of feeding or attracting wildlife. These considerations are important within the context of [G.S. 113-294 \(r\)](#) which prohibits the placement of “processed food products” in any area where the Wildlife Resources Commission (WRC) has set an open bear hunting season.

In order to address some of these questions, WRC staff compiled the following information regarding peanut processing and peanut products. This information is based on interviews with peanut processors and bear hunters. In essence, peanut processing spans the conversion of raw peanuts into several products including, ultimately, peanut butter.

Peanuts are received at processing facilities in their raw state after harvesting. Batches of harvested peanuts will contain whole peanuts in the shell, some shelled peanuts, and foreign objects (e.g., leaves, nodes, weed seed, etc.). The peanuts are then cleaned using screens and air to remove any trash. The sample on the left in the photograph below contains foreign objects and waste peanuts. The sample on the right in the photograph below shows raw peanuts after foreign objects and trash have been removed. These products are discarded or sold if there is a market for them. At this stage the peanuts, “in-shell” or “shelled”, are still in their raw state. Raw peanuts “in-shell” and raw peanuts “shelled” are not considered “processed food products” as defined in G.S. 113-294 (r). In addition to the information herein, executive director Gordon Myers has issued a policy memo outlining the placement of peanut products.



After cleaning, the peanuts are shelled and then blanched by heating to 190° F with dry heat. The blanching process swells the nut, cracks the skin, and allows for easy removal of the skin. By-products of the blanching process (pictured below) will contain peanuts (or pieces of peanuts), skins, and peanut meal. At this stage the peanuts and by-products are no longer considered raw, but cooked. Blanched peanuts and by-products of the blanching process are considered “processed food products” as defined in G.S. 113-294 (r). Therefore, it is unlawful to place these products in locations where the WRC has set an open season for taking black bears.



After blanching, and depending on what product is being produced, the peanuts may be further cooked by roasting. The peanuts can be left whole or crushed to varying sizes. These products

can be screened to produce coarse or finely crushed peanuts and/or meal (pictured below) as by-products of the process.



By-products that are not fit for human consumption are often bagged and discarded or sold. There are at least three plants in eastern NC that are producing and selling these peanut by-products.

Roasted peanuts and by-products of the roasting process are also considered “processed food products” as defined in G.S. 113-294 (r). Therefore, it is unlawful to place these products in locations where the WRC has set an open season for taking black bears.

After the final roasting, the peanuts may be processed further resulting in a range of products including peanut butter. Peanut butter that is unfit for human consumption (pictured below) due to poor quality is collected and sold or discarded.



All of the products pictured below except the peanut butter waste were obtained from bear hunters who indicated they have placed the products in the woods for the purpose of attracting bears.

With the exception of raw peanuts “in-shell” or raw peanuts “shelled”, any peanut products described or processed as described herein are considered “processed food products” as defined in G.S. 113-294 (r). Therefore, it is unlawful to place these products in locations where the WRC has set an open season for taking black bears.

