

Case Study

RTE - Low Moisture



RTE company experienced Salmonella contamination in post-lethality process environment. Specifically, numerous positive findings sporadically reported in zone-3 around dryer and enrober over a several month period. Corporate Food Safety Team (including Food Safety Director and VP Ops) were unable to effectively coordinate with Corrective Action Team (QA, Sanitation, and Production).

- Team was experienced and knowledgeable, having conducted an extensive environmental pathogen swabbing program over a long period, with low rate of positive findings.
- The Team communicated results via spreadsheets downloaded from their third-party testing lab.
- The environment was particularly complex having a multi-floor building with pneumatic transfer lines and conveyance systems around the process

Roadblocks

- CAT Team mistakenly thought it had identified and corrected events prior to the current acute issue.
- CAT Team had difficulty communicating the findings relative to nearby locations (e.g., ventilation) which were not swabbed at the same frequency.
- Team collaborated via discussion, based on individual recollection of the surfaces involved.
- Facility was particularly complex making it challenging to manually correlate data in nearby locations to one another.
- Company lacked a way to show indicator microbial count trends relative to pathogen findings in the environment.

How eBacMap Helped

- Allowed visualization of trends and locations recognizable to both local CAT Team and Corporate Team.
- Team members could discuss equipment and locations with specificity.
- Team created maps and data trends for each floor, key surfaces between floors, and key equipment (e.g. dryer, enrober, product transfer lines).
- Team could rely on hard data, maps and pictures, rather than recollection.
- Automated notifications with photographs of affected sites clearly showed problem areas.
- Facility at-a-glance dashboard showed maps and trends for each facility.

Better Corrective Actions

- Team was able to rely on common pictorial images, maps and trend data.
- Trends showing microbial counts on dryer and enrober enabled Team to focus sanitation efforts.

Improved Food Safety

- Team was able to demonstrate better control of environmental pathogens by focusing their efforts.

Save Money

- Effective interaction between corporate and local teams members saved time and money.
- Team experienced fewer out-of-scope products, reducing rework.