A number of food products have been recalled recently because of potential salmonella contamination. The recall list is still growing and has the potential to affect thousands of items in nearly every aisle at the grocery store.

The contamination originated in hydrolyzed vegetable protein (HPV) which is a common, inexpensive salty and savory flavor enhancer used in a variety of products. All HPV from Basic Food Flavors of Las Vegas made since September 17, 2009 has been recalled.

The salmonella contamination occurred in the processing equipment at a one location, but HPV from that supplier was sold to food manufacturers nationwide. HPV is a specialized product and there are only a few suppliers for it so issues at a single supplier have the potential to affect a significant percentage of the processed food supply.

The overall risk to the public is considered low. No cases of illness from this contamination have been reported. As long as products are heated to a sufficient temperature, either during the manufacturing process or cooked after purchase, the salmonella risk will be eliminated. The highest risk products are ready to eat products such as chips, dips, and dip powder.