



# CSREES NEWS RELEASE

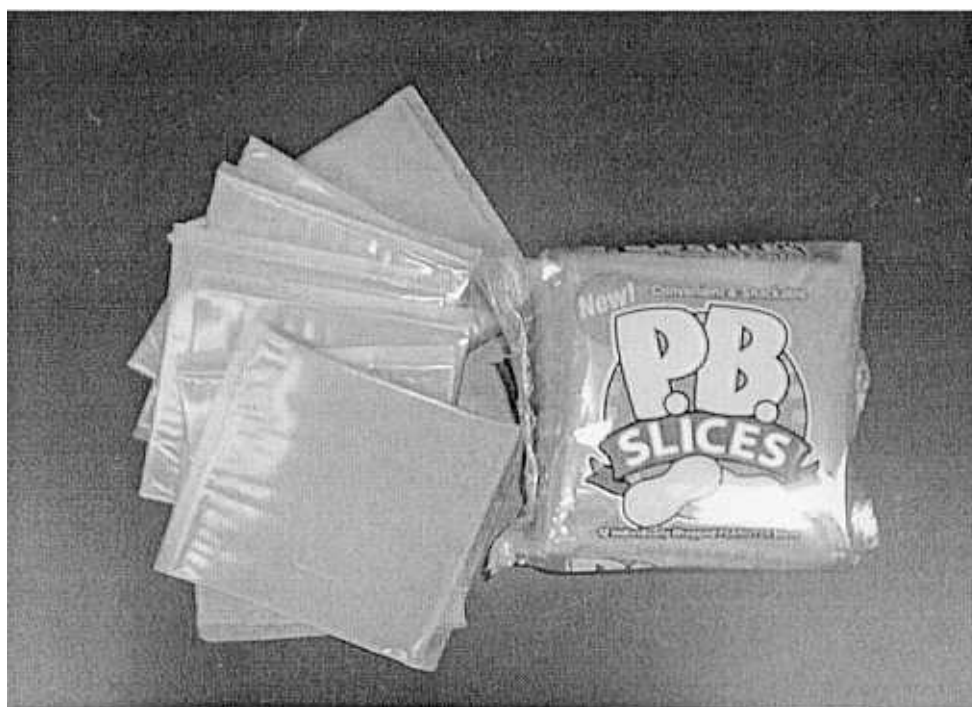
Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Service--Office of the Administrator--Communications Staff  
1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, D.C. 20250-2207--E-mail: [masner@reeusda.gov](mailto:masner@reeusda.gov) --Web: [www.reeusda.gov](http://www.reeusda.gov)

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Marti Asner (202) 720-8188

## USDA-FUNDED RESEARCH LEADS TO NEW PEANUT BUTTER PRODUCT

WASHINGTON, Jan. 24, 2003- A new convenience food developed by Oklahoma State University (OSU) researchers with partial funding from the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), is now available at many supermarkets nationwide. Called "P.B. Slices", these individually wrapped slices of peanut butter contain almost 90% peanuts, minimal additives and can be eaten as is or used in a sandwich. There is no need for a knife.



INDIVIDUALLY-WRAPPED SLICES OF PEANUT BUTTER. PHOTO COURTESY OF DR. DANIELLE BELLMER, OKLAHOMA STATE UNIVERSITY

"I am pleased that this new product is now being sold in many grocery stores nationwide," said Colien Hefferan the administrator of USDA's Cooperative State Research, Education and Extension Service. "In addition to satisfying the consumer need for convenience, this product helped producers and processors add value to the food and agricultural processing industries in Oklahoma."

Product formulation began in 1998. The goal was to develop a product containing mostly peanut butter that was both shelf-stable and easily peeled from its wrapper. The slices were poured into molds, cooled and then tasted by a sensory panel to evaluate texture and flavor.

The next hurdle was to ensure that existing slice processing equipment would work as the product changed from a slurry-like consistency to a firm yet pliable individual slice. Several modifications to the recipe needed to be made before the test runs could begin. The next stage was evaluation of the optimum packaging materials to ensure an extended shelf-life. Commercial distribution began in south-central U.S. and expanded nationwide. P.B. Slices are shelved in the refrigerated section next to cheese. A 12-pack of 1-oz. slices is about \$2.69.

According to OSU researchers, potential product extensions include individually wrapped jelly slices, soy butter slices, or crunchy, low fat or flavored peanut butter slices.

The research behind the development of P.B. Slices was funded, in part, by CSREES, the extramural research arm of the USDA.

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