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## The Sriracha Factory Could Get Shut Down. Panic? (Update: Don't Panic)



Photo: cookbookman17

**Update, 10/31/13:** A judge ruled this morning that the factory can stay open until a Nov. 22 hearing on the odor problem.

In Irwindale, California, nose-y neighbors, sick of the supposedly strong chili smell emanating from the factory where Sriracha hot sauce is made,

Read more:

<http://blogs.smithsonianmag.com/smartnews/2013/10/the-sriracha-factory-could-get-shut-down-panic/#ixzz2jMRJvTii>

want the Huy Fong Foods factory shut down unless the odor can be abated. The city has filed a public nuisance lawsuit, [says the Associated Press](#), “seeking temporary closure of the factory until Huy Fong submits a plan to minimize the smell.” [CBS](#):

“The odors are so strong and offensive as to have caused residents to move outdoor activities indoors and even to vacate their residences temporarily to seek relief from the odors,” according to the suit.

Living next to a food processing plant is always a scented existence, and Huy Fong Foods has denied there’s a problem. But if the injunction goes through, it could spell bad news for hot sauce lovers everywhere.

The factory in Irwindale where Sriracha is now made opened within the last year. At 650,000 square feet, [says Quartz](#), the company can pump out up to 7,500 bottles of hot sauce each hour. [Huy Fong Foods was started 33 years ago by Vietnamese refugee David Tran](#), and the company, says Quartz, has never raised its wholesale prices. If the Sriracha factory is shuttered, supply and demand may do what Tran never did. [Canada might have a strategic maple syrup reserve](#), but if Sriracha goes out of production, there’s no emergency warehouse waiting to be tapped.

If the price of Sriracha skyrockets, where will the heat-seeking foodie turn? [For the New Yorker, Lauren Collins](#) details how chili sauces have grown into a massive industry.

Chilis have become an attractive business. According to a report by IBISWorld, a market-research firm, hot-sauce production is one of America’s ten fastest-growing industries, along with solar-panel manufacturing and online eyeglass sales.

Unfortunately, it seems, based on Collins’ account, the so-called “chiliheads” driving the hot sauce boom have been in a bid to best each other on one metric alone, [Scoville units](#), a measure of hotness. With manufacturers racing to abandon taste for sheer burn, we can only hope the city of Irwindale and Huy Fong Foods can work out their differences before our bottle is empty.

More from Smithsonian.com:

[How a Vietnamese Refugee Built the Multi-Million Dollar Sriracha Hot Sauce Empire](#)