

Pet food recall issued for product shipped to New Mexico

Written by Staff Reports

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New Mexicans encouraged to check the list of recalled products on FDA website

LAS CRUCES — The U.S. Food & Drug Administration has issued an alert regarding a pet food recall. On Dec. 30, Midwestern Pet Foods, Inc. announced a recall of certain lots of Sportmix pet food products.

On Jan. 11, Midwestern Pet Foods, Inc. expanded the recall to include additional products (not just Sportmix) that contain corn and were made in the company's Oklahoma manufacturing plant. The recalled products may contain potentially fatal levels of aflatoxins.

The FDA is working with several state departments of agriculture to investigate these products.

While the New Mexico Department of Agriculture is unaware of any reports of affected pets in New Mexico, recalled pet food has been identified in the state.

New Mexico Agriculture Secretary Jeff Witte said consumers in the state are encouraged to check the list of recalled products on the FDA website.

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“Not only should New Mexicans check the list of products, but they should specifically check the product codes listed on the FDA website,” Witte said.

Witte also said this serves as an important reminder that pet owners should always keep the original pet food and pet treat packaging until the product is completely used up.

“You should not empty pet food into a container and throw away the packaging,” he said. “You should also not just take photos of the product codes and discard the packaging, because there would be no proof that it is actually the product you have.

Aflatoxins are toxins produced by the mold *Aspergillus flavus*, and at high levels it can cause illness and death in pets. The toxins can be present even if there is no visible mold. The clinical signs of pets suffering from aflatoxin poisoning include:

Sluggishness

Loss of appetite

Vomiting

Jaundice (yellowish tint to the eyes, gums or skin due to liver damage)

Unexplained bruising or bleeding and/or

Diarrhea

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Aflatoxins can also affect blood clotting and cause long-term liver problems and/or death in some cases.

Anyone who suspects their pet has been eating products contaminated with aflatoxins should do the following:

Immediately stop feeding the suspected food, especially if the pet is showing signs of illness.

Contact your veterinarian.

Submit a report to the FDA electronically through the [Safety Reporting Portal](#) or by calling the FDA Consumer Complaint Coordinator in the New Mexico district at (303) 236-3044. It's most helpful to work with the pet's veterinarian to submit medical records as part of the report.

NMDA regulates commercial feed, including livestock feed, poultry feed, fish feed and pet/specialty pet food, at the state level through the New Mexico Commercial Feed Act.

"Rest assured that the NMDA State Chemistry Laboratory is capable of testing for aflatoxin in animal feed," Witte said.

The NMDA State Chemist Laboratory became an International Organization for Standardization accredited laboratory in 2019. This ISO 17025: 2017 accreditation means that the lab has met specific criteria to qualify as an accredited testing lab, within a scope that includes chemical and biological methods for testing animal feed. The accreditation demonstrates the lab's capacity to deliver reliable results.

NMDA Feed, Seed and Fertilizer inspectors are available to assist in investigating possible toxicities and obtain official samples. The goals of the commercial feed team are consumer

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protection, animal protection and human health protection.

In the unfortunate circumstance in which an animal dies of suspected aflatoxin toxicity, NMDA Veterinary Diagnostic Services is available to perform diagnostics. The NMDA VDS Division became a fully-certified ISO laboratory in 2018. Just as with the chemistry lab, the ISO 17025 certification means that the VDS lab has met specific criteria to qualify as an accredited testing lab and demonstrates the lab's capacity to deliver reliable results. The VDS lab tests numerous animal samples, including carcasses for necropsies, tissue samples and bacterial swabs, as well as bodily fluids, such as blood, serum and plasma.

"At NMDA, we are doing our best to stay on top of this issue, and we encourage New Mexicans to be vigilant about checking the FDA website for a list of products and product codes," Witte said.

This investigation is ongoing.

Please visit <https://bit.ly/38Gh6xF> for more information and updates on the recall.