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FIRST EVER U.S. CONSUMER-FUNDED IN DEPTH PET FOOD TESTING **REVEALS HIGH RISK CONTAMINANTS**

High levels of dangerous mycotoxins, nutrient concerns and antibiotic resistant bacteria found in pet food.

SAFETY HARBOR, FL – January 5, 2015 – Association for Truth in Pet Food (ATPF) today published the results of an unprecedented pet food testing project conducted by U.S. labs late last year revealing serious concerns for pets and the human families that purchase and handle the pet food. Testing results show some of the most widely-purchased brands in the U.S. and Canada contained high levels of dangerous mycotoxins, problematic nutrient concerns and/or numerous bacterial contamination risks including antibiotic resistant bacteria the FDA terms as "Qualifying Pathogens". Funding for the project came solely from consumers, who raised nearly \$16,000 via an Indiegogo donation campaign.

ATPF's Susan Thixton led the testing effort with the assistance of numerous industry experts who volunteered to aid consumers on the project. Dr. Tsengeg Purejav of INTI Service Corporation contracted various labs on behalf of consumers. All pet food products were purchased online (with the exception of one purchased from a veterinarian) and shipped directly to Dr. Purejav. Pet food samples were shipped to each contracted lab blind.

Pet food products tested:

1. Royal Canin Veterinary Diet Renal LP Modified in Gravy Canned Cat Food
2. Fancy Feast Grilled Chicken Canned Cat Food
3. Science Diet Adult Hairball Control Minced Chicken Entree Canned Cat Food
4. Meow Mix Tender Centers Salmon & Turkey Flavors Dry Cat Food
5. Friskies Grillers Dry Cat Food
6. Wellness Complete Health Deboned Chicken, Chicken Meal & Rice Adult Dry Cat Food
7. Hill's Prescription Diet C/D Urinary Tract Health Canned Dog Food
8. FreshPet Vital Chicken, Beef, Salmon & Egg Recipe Grain Free Fresh Dog Food
9. Cesar Top Sirloin Beef and Grilled Chicken Variety Moist Dog Food
10. Blue Freedom Grain Free Chicken Recipe Adult Dry Dog Food
11. Beneful Original Dry Dog Food
12. Ol'Roy Dog Food Soft & Moist Beef Flavor Dog Food

"This is history making," says Thixton. "No one has ever taken such an up-close and thorough examination of pet food like this before - and most importantly, this was done by pet food consumers!" Thixton says the pet food testing results are "shocking", sharing consumers donated to test pet foods for risk to pets. "Little did we know we'd find serious risks to ourselves and our human families too."

A sampling of the test findings included:

- *Meow Mix Tender Centers Salmon and Turkey Flavors Dry Cat Food*: Tested positive for seven different fungus-based toxins (mycotoxins). On an industry standard risk scale (Risk Equivalent Quality) 0 = no risk, 5 = Low Risk, 10 = Medium Risk, 20 = High Risk -- this Meow Mix cat food scored 70. The mycotoxins found - and at the levels found - "can cause tremors and convulsion, bloody diarrhea and lower immune response" (per analysis by Dr. Tsengeg Purejav) in cats. This cat food also tested to contain numerous bacteria including two bacteria the FDA terms as "Qualifying Pathogens" posing a "serious threat to public health".
- *Hill's Prescription Diet C/D Urinary Tract Health Canned Dog Food*: Tested to contain 7.72% calcium - almost three times the legal limit of calcium (AAFCO 2.5% maximum) allowed in an adult dog food. Mycotoxin Risk Equivalent Rating was at 16 (20 being High Risk), and contained numerous bacteria including two the FDA terms "Qualifying Pathogens" posing a "serious threat to public health".
- Nine of twelve pet foods tested to contain one or more bacteria the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations states is linked to "putrefaction" of meat (putrid meat).

Thixton believes, based on feedback from ATPF constituents and other consumers with whom she regularly comes in contact, that consumers' trust in the pet food industry and regulatory authorities is rapidly eroding. "They continue to witness an alarming increase in the number of pet food and treat recalls, an unwillingness by many manufacturers to be more transparent, and regulatory authorities choosing to protect industry instead of our pets."

"There is a lack of enforcement on the part of regulators," Thixton added. "There are laws in place that should prevent much of this, but state and federal authorities choose not to enforce law with pet food. Pet food consumers pay an estimated \$1 billion dollars a year in sales tax revenue on pet food purchases alone. What are consumers getting in return for this revenue?"

Thixton of Association for Truth in Pet Food states it is "truly sad" that consumers found the many risks in pet food they did. "Now we can hope - with this scientific evidence - that authorities will finally listen to the many complaints of consumers and make pet food safe. Not only for the pets, but for the pet people too."

To read the full Pet Food Test Report, visit <http://associationfortruthinpetfood.com/the-pet-food-test-results/>.

About The Association for Truth in Pet Food

The Association for Truth in Pet Food (ATPF) is a consumer advocacy organization formed to provide consumers a voice with the U.S. pet food industry and agencies responsible for pet food regulation. The Association's lead advocate, Susan Thixton holds two advisory committee positions with the pet food regulatory rule maker AAFCO (the Association of American Feed Control Officials) and frequently engages in meetings and discussions with the FDA (U.S. Food and Drug Association) regarding pet food related issues. For more information, visit www.AssociationforTruthinPetFood.com.

About Susan Thixton

Susan Thixton is the founder, author and publisher of the pet food educational website, TruthAboutPetFood.com. Thixton works with pet food consumers, pet food professionals, scientists, veterinarians and numerous industry insiders to expose

some of the many concerns of commercial pet food and treats. Thixton is also the author of the book, *Buyer Beware*, and co-author of *Dinner Pawsible*, a pet food cookbook.