

Is Fido sick? Check recall list

• Experts say owners should watch their pets for symptoms of illness

By RANDAL YAKEY
Of The Oakland Press

Concerned pet owners in Oakland County are calling veterinary clinics asking for advice in dealing with a pet

Pet food

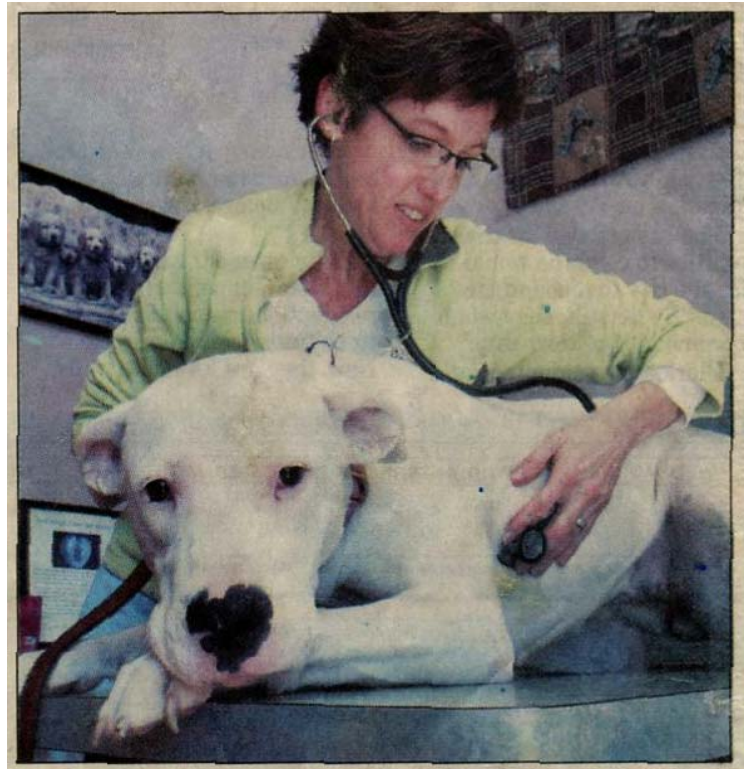
See Page A-9 for a list of recalled brands.

food contamination recall sweeping the country.

Veterinarian Julie Mass of Veterinary Care Specialists in Milford Township said a pet owner

brought in a dog over the weekend that showed symptoms of the poisoning and died.

"We did have a young dog that passed away just prior to arrival at our hospital, and it had consumed some of the food items that are on the recall list," Hass said. "If there was a relationship there, we really don't know. It was a very peculiar scenario with such a young dog passing without any explanation." On Friday, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration was informed by Menu Foods Inc., a private-label pet food manufacturer based in Streetsville, Ontario, that it was recalling all its "cuts and gravy" style dog and cat food produced at its facility in Emporia, Kan., between Dec. 3 and March 6. The products are sold in the



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Veterinarian Julie Hass examines Zelda at Veterinary Care Specialists in Milford Township.

United States, Canada and Mexico.

A federal investigation is focusing on wheat gluten as the likely source of contamination that sparked a recall

Friday of 60 million cans and pouches of the suspect food, said Stephen F. Sundl of, the Food and Drug Administration's top veterinarian.

The ingredient, a protein source, is commonly used as

filler. Agency investigators are looking at other ingredients, as well.

The wet-style pet food was made by Menu Foods, an Ontario-based company.

The recall was prompted by consumer complaints received by the manufacturer and by tasting trials conducted by the manufacturer.

There has been a small

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PET

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number of reported instances of cats and dogs in the United States that developed kidney failure after eating the affected product.

Ten deaths — one dog and nine cats — have been reported, according to the PDA.

FDA officials report that Menu Foods has undertaken extensive testing of the pet food products in question, but to date has been unable to find the source of the problem.

Hass' suggestion to pet owners is to watch for any symptoms of illness in their pets. "Be vigilant," she said. "I understand that some of the pets have died of kidney failure. Some of the things people should watch out for is excessive thirst, vomiting, diminished appetite or possibly going out to urinate more frequently or not urinating at all. All those things can be a cause for concern, especially if they have been exposed to the food. I would also suggest they go to their veterinarian and get their pet a full examination if they had the food in the house."

Chris Benes, manager of The Pet Supplier in Highland Township, says the pet food scare has affected his customers.

"The phone has been ringing," Benes said. "What they (FDA) are not telling you is that the dry foods are not affected. Only *the* wet canned food is affected."

Veterinarian Tyler Hutchinson of the Pet Authority Hospital in Waterford Township said the recall is the biggest he's ever seen.

"We have had numerous calls on this, but we haven't seen any pets that may have become sick," Hutchinson said. There was a food recall several months ago, but it's nothing like this."

The FDA is conducting an investigation and working with Menu Foods to ensure the effectiveness of the recall.

The Associated Press contributed to this story. Contact Randal Yakey at (248) 745-4631 or randal.yakey@oakpress.com.

Recalled brands

Moist chunk foods with gravy of the following brands have been recalled:

Cat food — Arnericas Choice, Preferred Pets; Authority; Best Choice; Companion; Compliments; Demoulas Market Basket; Eukanuba; Fine Feline Cat; Food Lion; Foddtown; Giant Companion; Hannatord; Hill Country Fare; Hy-Vee; Iams; Laura Lynn' Li' Red; Loving' MRiifir's Main Chice Nutriplan; Nutro Max Gourmet Classics; Nutro Natural Choice; Paws; Pet Pride; Presidents Choice; Price Chopper; Priority US; Save-A-Lot; Schnucks; Science Diet Felne Savory Cuts Cans; Sophistacat; Special Kitty Canada; Special Kitty US; Springfield Prize; Sprout; Stop & Shop Companion; Tops Companion; Wegmans; Weis Total Pet; Western Family US; White Rose; Winn Dixie.

Dog food — Arnericas Choice, Preferred Pets; Authority; Award; Best Choice; Big Bet; Big Red; Bloom; Wegmans Bruiser; Cadillac; Companion; Demoulas Market Basket; Eukanuba; Food Lion; Giant Companion; Great Choice; Hannaford; Hill Country Fare; Hy-Vee; Iams; Laura Lynn; Loving Meals; Meijer's Main Choice; Mighty Dog Pouch; Mixables; Nutriplan; Nutro Max; Nutro Natural Choice; Nutro Ultra; Nutro; Ol'Roy Canada; Ol'Roy US; Paws; Pet Essentials; Pet Pride - Good n Meaty; Presidents Choice; Price Chopper; Priority Canada; Priority US; Pubftx; Roche Brothers; Save-A-Lot; Schnucks; Shep Dog; Springsfield Prize; Sprout; Stater Brothers; Stop & Shop Companion; Tops Companion; Weis Total Pet; western Family US; White Rose; Winn Dixie; Your Pet.

Consumers with questions are advised to call the Menu Foods hot line at (866) 895-2708.