

FDA Recall of Dog Food for Aflatoxin

20 January 2021

FDA Alert: Certain Lots of Sportmix Pet Food Recalled for Potentially Fatal Levels of Aflatoxin

January 11, 2021 FDA Update: Midwestern Pet Foods expanded the recall to include additional products that contain corn and were made in their Oklahoma manufacturing plant. The FDA is now aware of more than 70 pets that have died and more than 80 pets that are sick after eating Sportmix pet food. Not all of these cases have been officially confirmed as aflatoxin poisoning through laboratory testing or veterinary record review. This count is approximate and may not reflect the total number of pets affected.

Purdue ADDL: As of the time of this posting, the ADDL has not identified any cases in dogs that are consistent with liver damage caused by aflatoxin poisoning. In addition, at this time, the Office of the Indiana State Chemist has not had any reports of aflatoxin-contaminated dog food in the state. The FDA reports that the aflatoxin-contaminated dog food was prepared in the Midwestern Pet Foods Oklahoma plant which may help explain why the cases have been reported in Missouri and surrounding states. The ADDL is on the watch for any cases of liver disease in dogs which could be compatible with aflatoxin poisoning from dog food.

Testing at the Purdue ADDL: The ADDL has an accurate and sensitive test for aflatoxin in dog food. In cases of severe liver disease in dogs, if the dog food is suspected, samples of food can be sent to the West Lafayette Toxicology laboratory for testing. Likewise, if aflatoxin contamination of a commercial dog food purchased in Indiana is suspected, testing can also be performed at the Office of the Indiana State Chemist. If you have any questions, more information is available at the ADDL website: <https://vet.purdue.edu/addl/index.php> or by calling the West Lafayette laboratory at 765-494-7440.

Additional Information from the FDA:

- The FDA is alerting pet owners and veterinary professionals about certain Sportmix pet food products manufactured by Midwestern Pet Foods, Inc. that may contain potentially fatal levels of aflatoxin.
- The FDA is aware of at least 70 deaths and 80 illnesses in dogs that ate the recalled product.
- This is an ongoing investigation. Case counts and the scope of this pending recall may expand as new information becomes available.
- Aflatoxin is a toxin produced by the mold *Aspergillus flavus* which can grow on corn and other grains used as ingredients in pet food. At high levels, aflatoxin can cause illness and death in pets.
- Pets experiencing aflatoxin poisoning may have symptoms such as sluggishness, loss of appetite, vomiting, jaundice (yellowish tint to the eyes or gums due to liver damage) and/or diarrhea. In severe cases, this toxicity can be fatal. In some cases, pets may suffer liver damage but not show any symptoms.

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- Pet owners should stop feeding their pets the recalled products listed in the FDA Advisory below and consult their veterinarian, especially if the pet is showing signs of illness. The pet owner should remove the food and make sure no other animals have access to the recalled product.
- The FDA is asking veterinarians who suspect aflatoxin poisoning in their patients to report the cases through the Safety Reporting Portal or by calling their local FDA Consumer Complaint Coordinators. Pet owners are also urged to report suspected cases to the FDA.

<https://www.fda.gov/news-events/fda-brief/fda-brief-certain-lots-sportmix-pet-food-recalled-potentially-fatal-levels-aflatoxin>

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