

Dog Owners Warned About Chicken Jerky

FDA continues to receive complaints about products, cautions consumers.

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Chicken jerky imported to the United States from China continues to be the source of complaints from dog owners and veterinarians who maintain that these products are making pets sick, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration said.

The FDA first issued a cautionary warning in September 2007 alerting consumers about the potential association between illness in dogs and these products, also described as chicken tenders, strips, or treats.

In Australia, recent reports that the University of Sydney is also investigating a link between sick dogs and the consumption of chicken jerky has led to at least one firm recalling their chicken jerky product. The recall notification indicated that the chicken jerky product was manufactured in China.

The FDA on Friday released a statement that said, "The continued trend of consumer complaints coupled with the information obtained from Australia warrants an additional reminder and animal health notification."

In addition, the FDA said that chicken jerky products should not be substituted for a balanced diet and are meant to be used occasionally in small amounts. Consumers who choose to feed their dogs these products are advised to watch for the following symptoms:

- * Decreased appetite, although some may continue to eat the treats but not other food.
- * Decreased activity or lethargy.
- * Vomiting and diarrhea, sometimes with blood.
- * Increased water drinking and urination.

Scientists have not determined a definitive cause for the reported illnesses. The FDA said it continues to investigate the problem.