

Dog Food Company Aims to Raise Money for Cancer

The Blue Buffalo Company was inspired by its mascot to put a portion of its May sales toward pet cancer research.

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The Blue Buffalo Co. of Wilton, Conn., expects to raise \$150,000 for pet cancer research through its charitable foundation this year. During the month of May it will contribute a portion of the proceeds from each Blue Buffalo product sold to pet cancer awareness and research.

Blue Buffalo's contribution will range from 25 cents to up to \$1 on its 30-pound bag, depending on the size of the bag of dog or cat food sold, according to David Petrie, president of the Blue Buffalo Foundation for Cancer Research and partner and vice president of Blue Buffalo Co. In-store signs and pet cancer literature, which includes a list of 10 early warning signs of cancer, will alert consumers to the fundraiser and raise awareness of the issue, he added.

The foundation will raise additional funds through the sale of pet cancer awareness wristbands with the motto "Protect Our Pets," and direct donations through its website, PetCancerAwareness.org.

This is fourth time the Blue Buffalo Foundation for Cancer Research has designated a pet cancer awareness month. Founded in 2003, the foundation began giving out grants to support pet cancer research in 2005.

The company's founders were inspired to tackle the issue after its mascot Blue, an Airedale, battled three bouts of cancer.

"After Blue was diagnosed, we wanted to find out all we could about pet cancer and were amazed to learn that it is the leading disease-related cause of death for both dogs and cats," said Bill Bishop, Blue Buffalo's CEO.

In total, the foundation has raised \$100,000, taking in \$75,000 of that last year. Past recipients include Ohio State University's study of lymphoma tumors and Cornell University's study on feline epithelial cancer, among others.

"When we started the program, we were only in 230 stores and didn't raise much money," Petrie said. "Now that the Blue brand has national distribution in over 2,000 Petsmart, Petco and independent pet stores, we were able to raise over \$100,000 without too much trouble."