

DOG FOOD RECALL: Wheat Flour to Blame

Contaminated flour, not gluten or protein concentrate, sickened dogs, leading to dog food recall.

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Melamine-contaminated cat and dog food ingredients imported from China were actually wheat flour disguised to look like wheat gluten and rice protein concentrate, the Food and Drug Administration has revealed.

The tainted products are suspected to have sickened and/or killed potentially hundreds of dogs and cats in the United States and Canada. About 200 products were recalled beginning in March.

Although labeled as wheat gluten or rice protein concentrate by two Chinese firms, the contaminated ingredient was in fact wheat flour, according to David Acheson, M.D., assistant commissioner for food protection with the FDA.

The melamine may have been added to make the flour appear more protein-rich and less starchy, thus mimicking a high-protein product, such as wheat gluten, Acheson speculated.

“Now, there is a plausible hypothesis as to why this would be done. Rather than taking the trouble to extract the wheat gluten and wash away the starch, you simply grind up the wheat, put it all together and then artificially create the appearance of it being high in protein by adding a high-nitrogen containing compound such as melamine,” Acheson said.

U.S. investigators have been in China for about a week, and are expected to return home sometime next week.

“The FDA considers this product to be mislabeled ... and we’re considering possible enforcement options,” he said.

The FDA made the discovery during forensic analysis.

If you suspect your dog may have eaten bad food, take him to his veterinarian as soon as possible. The FDA previously warned pet owners that tainted food may still remain on store shelves. For a list of recalled foods, [click here](#).

To read all of DogChannel’s coverage of this ongoing recall, [click here](#).