

Subject: Chicken Jerky Treats--FDA Warning

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http://www.fda.gov/cvm/CVM_Updates/ComplaintsChicJerky.htm

Preliminary Animal Health Notification

December 19, 2008

FDA Continues To Receive Complaints about Chicken Jerky Products for Dogs and Cautions Consumers

The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) continues to caution consumers of a potential association between the development of illness in dogs and the consumption of chicken jerky products also described as chicken tenders, strips or treats. FDA continues to receive complaints of dogs experiencing illness that their owners or veterinarians associate with consumption of chicken jerky products.

The chicken jerky products are imported to the U.S. from China. FDA issued a cautionary warning to consumers in September 2007.

Australian news organizations report the University of Sydney is also investigating an association between illness in dogs and the consumption of chicken jerky in Australia. At least one firm in Australia has recalled their chicken jerky product and the recall notification stated the chicken jerky product was manufactured in China.

FDA believes the continued trend of consumer complaints coupled with the information obtained from Australia warrants an additional reminder and animal health notification.

Chicken jerky products should not be substituted for a balanced diet and are intended to be used occasionally and in small quantities. Owners of small dogs must be especially careful to limit the amount of these products.

FDA, in addition to several veterinary diagnostic laboratories in the U.S, is working to determine why these products are associated with illness in dogs. To date, scientists have not been able to determine a

definitive cause for the reported illnesses. FDA has conducted extensive chemical and microbial testing but has not identified any contaminant.

FDA is advising consumers who choose to feed their dogs chicken jerky products to watch their dogs closely for any or all of the following signs which may occur within hours to days of feeding the product: decreased appetite, although some may continue to consume the treats to the exclusion of other foods; decreased activity; vomiting; diarrhea, sometimes with blood; and increased water consumption and/or increased urination. If the dog shows any of these signs, stop feeding the chicken jerky product. Owners should consult their veterinarian if signs are severe or persist for more than 24 hours. Blood tests may indicate kidney failure (increased urea nitrogen and creatinine). Urine tests may indicate Fanconi syndrome (increased glucose). Although most dogs appear to recover, some reports to the FDA have involved dogs that have died.

The FDA continues to actively investigate the problem. Many of the illnesses reported may be the result of causes other than eating chicken jerky. Veterinarians and consumers alike should report cases of animal illness associated with pet foods to the FDA Consumer Complaint Coordinator <http://www.fda.gov/opacom/backgrounders/complain.html> in their state. Web page updated by hd - December 19, 2008, 1:12 PM ET