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Department of Agriculture Reminds Pennsylvanians Importance of Saving Pet Food Lot Numbers

Harrisburg, PA – The Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture today reminded pet owners across the commonwealth of the importance of saving their pet food lot numbers. The lot number is a crucial piece of information when trying to identify if a product has been recalled or for reporting a potential problem with a pet food or treat to the FDA or the producer. The Department of Agriculture licenses and inspects businesses that make and sell animal feed and pet food.

“It’s no secret that we love our pets as family members. We care for them in a variety of ways with perhaps the most important being that we feed them daily. It only takes an extra minute to save the lot code found on the food packaging when you first bring it home,” said Agriculture Secretary Russell Redding. “Reading labels correctly and feeding your pet only foods appropriate for his or her age, species and health condition can save you the heartache of special diets, high vet bills, and an unhealthy pet. Love your pet, feed with care and ensure safe and proper feeding for all of Pennsylvania’s pets.”

A lot number, also known as a “lot code,” can be a long or short string of printed numbers and letters found on pet food packaging. Pet food producers include the lot number as a way to track batches of pet food. The lot number can be found in different areas on different pet food products, but most often it is near the “Best by” or expiration date.

A lot number tells a company when a product was made and in which manufacturing plant. It also allows a pet food company to quickly pull or recall a specific batch, without having to recall all batches from store shelves.

Animal feed, pet food, and specialty pet food are all considered Commercial Feed under the Pennsylvania Commercial Feed Act and are regulated through the inspection of Pennsylvania manufacturing and distribution (retail and wholesale) establishments for compliance with labeling, licensing, and Federal Current Good Manufacturing Practices (CGMPs).

Pet treats and pet foods must be properly labeled. All ingredients must be listed by their recognized common names and must be appropriate for use in pet food. Major ingredients are generally recognizable animal or plant names. Minor ingredients are mostly those that supply minerals, vitamins and other nutrients. Minor ingredients may also include preservatives, emulsifiers, stabilizers, and coloring or flavoring.

Pet food complaints can be reported directly to the [Bureau of Plant Industry](#) or by using the [Safety Reporting Portal](#) to report a pet food complaint directly to the FDA. Applications for a license to manufacture animal feed or pet food, or to be the guarantor of such products can be completed on the online [Application for Commercial Feed License](#).

For detailed information on how to buy safe, nutritious pet food, visit the [Association of American Feed Control Officials](#).

More information on [animal feed and pet food](#) can be found at agriculture.pa.gov/feedwithcare.