

RECEIVED SEPTEMBER 10, 2012

Food safety is the CFIA's top priority. The Agency focuses its resources on protecting the human food supply (including the animals used to produce food such as meat, eggs and dairy products).

Our mandate related to pet food is limited to ensuring that imported pet foods do not introduce serious diseases into Canada that could threaten livestock or public health.

Under the Health of Animals Regulations, the importation of animal products and by-products is prohibited unless certain conditions can be met. For example, the products must be free of, or pose negligible risk for, serious animal diseases such as foot-and-mouth disease (FMD), bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE), or notifiable avian influenza. Some of these (such as BSE and notifiable avian influenza) are zoonotic diseases, which mean they can be transmitted to humans.

Before the CFIA will issue an import permit for pet food, the Agency conducts risk evaluation of ingredients, the disease status of the producing country and on the thermal processing of the product.

If the CFIA should receive scientific confirmation that an imported pet food could be contaminated by an animal disease of concern as outlined in the Health of Animals Regulations, the Agency may refuse to grant an import permit or cancel existing import permits.

The CFIA only issues import permits to manufacturers that fully meet Canada's import conditions and requirements for pet food.

Before deciding whether to issue an import permit, the CFIA conducts a risk assessment of the import permit application for a pet food product. If there is reason to believe there could be concerns about animal diseases as outlined in the Health of Animals Regulations, the CFIA may require an inspection of the producing establishment in the foreign country.

With regards to pet food, the CFIA's mandate is restricted to regulating imports in order to prevent serious animal diseases from entering Canada and threatening livestock or human health.

In terms of recalls, if Canadian pet food manufacturers become aware that their product could be harmful to pets, they are responsible for conducting a recall. Should a pet food be found to be putting Canadian livestock or public health at risk, the CFIA will work with the pet food industry and take the necessary actions to coordinate the removal of this product from the marketplace. The Agency would also work with the Public Health Agency of Canada to provide a health advisory.

If the product is imported, under the terms of the import permit the pet food importer must inform the CFIA of any contamination by diseases of concern as outlined in the Health of Animals Regulations. The Agency may take action by cancelling import permits for suspect products until any concerns are corrected.

Media Relations | Relations avec les médias
Canadian Food Inspection Agency | Agence canadienne d'inspection des aliments
Government of Canada | Gouvernement du Canada
Telephone / téléphone: (613) 773-6600
Facsimile / télécopieur : (613) 773-5558
e-mail / courriel: media@inspection.gc.ca