



Written by [Christian Gomez](#) on May 22, 2014

Petco and PetSmart Stop Sale of Pet Treats Made in China

On Tuesday, Petco became the first major pet food and supply retailer to [announce](#) it would discontinue the sale of dog and cat treats made in China, in order to ensure the “well-being of pets.”

“We know some pet parents are wary of dog and cat treats made in China, especially Chicken Jerky products, and we’ve heard their concerns,” Petco CEO Jim Myers said. “Very simply, we feel this decision is in the best interest of the pets we all love and, ultimately, for our business.”



Petco’s announcement was quickly followed by a similar decision from PetSmart, a major nationwide pet-supply retailer and competitor. “This is something we’ve been working toward for some time, and feel it’s the right thing to do for pets and our customers,” PetSmart spokeswoman Erin Gray told [Fox News](#).

Lisa Stark, a spokeswoman for Petco told USA TODAY Network, in a phone interview, that currently “about 50% of the jerky treats sold by Petco is from China, and by the end of the year no China-made jerky treats will be sold by the retailer,” [USA TODAY reported](#).

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Petco and PetSmart’s decisions come just after the U.S. Food and Drug Administration [released a report](#) on May 16, 2014, stating that as “of May 1, 2014, we have received in total more than 4,800 complaints of illness in pets that ate chicken, duck, or sweet potato jerky treats, nearly all of which are imported from China.”

Those complaints involve “more than 5,600 dogs, 24 cats, three people, and include more than 1,000 canine deaths.” FDA investigators began receiving reports of pet-food related illness in 2007, nearly all of which consisted of Chinese-made treats.

Several symptoms that pet owners should look out for are vomiting and diarrhea, which could indicate the consumption of a contaminated treat. Other signs to watch for are a decrease in appetite and physical activity. If your pet shows one or more of these symptoms, it would be wise to see or schedule an appointment with a veterinarian.

Pet owners should familiarize themselves with the manufacturing and processed origin of their pet treats if they are planning to purchase them. “The agency continues to caution pet owners that jerky pet treats are not required for a balanced diet, and encourage them to consult with their veterinarians, both prior to feeding treats and if they notice symptoms in their pets,” the FDA stated.

Since 2000, the amount of pet food imported from China has increased nearly 850-fold. As reported in the November 4, 2013 issue of *The New American* magazine, “[According] to the Department of Agriculture, an estimated 85.8 million pounds of dog and cat food was imported from China to the United States in 2011.” Compare that to 2000 when only 100,000 pounds of dog and cat food was imported from China to the United States.



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Though the health of our domesticated canine and feline friends is a concern, the news of Petco and PetSmart's decision to terminate the sale of chicken and beef jerky products made in China is another reminder of the ever increasing threat of food imports for humans from Communist China.

The three people reported with illness in the FDA's report, as well as the 1,000 canine fatalities, might be a preview of what could happen to humans if China is allowed to increase its processing and sales of food products for human consumption in the United States.

On August 31, 2013, the [USDA's Food Safety and Inspection Service quietly lifted its restriction on processed poultry](#) (such as chicken and turkey) imported from China into the United States.

Even more disturbing, the imported processed poultry from China will not require a country-of-origin label, thus leaving U.S. consumers in the dark about the choices they make when purchasing food for themselves at the supermarket. Unlike in the United States, U.S. inspectors will not be present at the processing plants in China before the poultry products are shipped to the United States for human consumption.

Both Petco and PetSmart's preemptive initiative to completely phase out the sale of poultry and beef jerky pet food made in China is one that food retailers of all types would be prudent to consider in light of China's poor food safety record.

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