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DEC Issues Caution on Chicken Jerky Products for Dogs

(JUNEAU, AK) –The Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) is cautioning the public that some chicken jerky products for dogs may be associated with illnesses in dogs. The U.S. Food and Drug Administration reports an increase in the number of complaints it received over the last 12 months of dog illnesses associated with consumption of chicken jerky products imported from China. These complaints have been reported to FDA by dog owners and veterinarians. The products are sold as chicken tenders, strips or treats.

FDA is advising consumers who choose to feed their dogs chicken jerky products to watch closely for decreased appetite; decreased activity; vomiting; diarrhea, sometimes with blood; increased water consumption and/or increased urination. The symptoms may occur within hours to days of consuming the products. If the dog shows any of these signs, stop feeding it the chicken jerky product. Owners should consult their veterinarian if signs are severe or persist for more than 24 hours. Although most dogs appear to recover, some reports to the FDA have involved dogs that have died.

FDA is working with several animal health laboratories to determine why the products are associated with illness in dogs. FDA continues chemical and microbial testing but has not identified a contaminant. Many of the illnesses reported may be the result of causes other than eating chicken jerky.

Veterinarians and consumers should report cases of animal illness associated with pet foods to the FDA office at: <http://www.fda.gov/petfoodcomplaints>.

Consumers may also contact the FDA Consumer Complaint Coordinator for Alaska at (toll free) 800-353-3965. Such cases should also be reported to the Office of the State Veterinarian at 907-375-8200, or jay.fuller@alaska.gov.

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