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PUBLIC INQUIRIES:

RAW PET FOOD IDENTIFIED AS SOURCE OF BIRD FLU INFECTION TO HOUSE CATS

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OLYMPIA – The Washington State Department of Agriculture (WSDA) and the Oregon Department of Agriculture (ODA) are warning pet owners about the risks of raw pet food after indoor cats in Oregon became ill from highly pathogenic avian influenza (HPAI or H5N1) beginning in early February 2025.

The owners of the cats, in consultation with their veterinarians, have elected to euthanize due to the severity of the illness. Upon further investigation into the source of the illness, officials found the cats all consumed the same brand of raw pet food before becoming ill.

After receiving reports of the illnesses, ODA collected samples from the affected cats pre- and post-mortem, and from open containers of the raw pet food. Tests conducted by the Oregon Veterinary Diagnostic Laboratory (ODVL) at Oregon State University and the National Veterinary Services Laboratories (NVSL) at the U.S. Department of Agriculture confirmed the presence of HPAI in both cats and the food samples.

This public health notice was initiated in response to these findings and further testing conducted by WSDA on unopened containers of the raw pet food, manufactured by Wild Coast Raw. Consumers are urged to check the lot numbers on Wild Coast, LLC products at home. For more information and specific lot numbers, visit the [Washington State Department of Agriculture](#) recalls and health alerts webpage.

Pets with H5N1 infections may have a fever, lethargy, low appetite, reddened or inflamed eyes, discharge from the eyes and nose, difficulty breathing, and neurological signs like tremors, seizure, incoordination, or blindness. If your pet has consumed this product and has any of these symptoms, please contact your veterinarian immediately.

While no human infections have been identified among those handling raw pet food products, people can become infected if the virus enters their eyes, nose or mouth — such as by handling contaminated pet food or touching contaminated surfaces, especially without thoroughly washing their hands afterward. Although the current human health risk is low, those exposed to H5N1 should monitor themselves for symptoms like eye redness or irritation (conjunctivitis), cough, sore throat, sneezing, runny/stuffy nose, muscle/body aches, headaches, fatigue, fever, trouble breathing, diarrhea, nausea and/or vomiting, and pet owners or handlers showing these signs should contact

their healthcare providers.



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