

# Company Tries Donating Dog Food Laced With Euthanasia Meds

Do you buy your pet food from this cunning company? Be very careful. They talk out of both sides of their mouths, use false labels, claim they use human-grade, USDA-inspected meat - when nothing could be further from the truth. And now they want to donate their junk?

Analysis by Dr. Karen Shaw Becker

## STORY AT-A-GLANCE

- Recently the FDA put the kibosh on donations of potentially toxic dog food to animal shelters
- The food in question was recalled by Evanger's Pet Food for pentobarbital contamination (pentobarbital is an animal euthanasia drug) after four dogs were made ill, and one of them died after eating an Evanger's product
- Evanger's marketed the recalled dog food as human-grade, but the meat it was made from was labeled "inedible hand boned beef," meaning it was unfit for human consumption and therefore NOT human-grade
- Evanger's meat supplier, Bailey Farms, also operates a dead livestock removal service, which is likely the source of the pentobarbital-laced horse meat that wound up in the dog food that sickened four dogs, and resulted in the death of 1 of the 4
- The FDA has thus far refused to enforce federal laws regarding the use of 4-D animal products in pet food, and initiates investigations only when a contaminated product makes pets ill and/or results in their death

**Editor's Note: This article is a reprint. It was originally published August 25, 2017.**

I've got a real doozy to share with you today. Do you remember the recent Evanger's dog food recall, the one due to pentobarbital contamination?<sup>1</sup> As a refresher, in January, four Pugs in one household in Washington State became ill and one died after eating Evanger's Hunk of Beef au Jus canned dog food.

The FDA opened an investigation, and lab tests revealed a large quantity of pentobarbital (an animal euthanasia drug) in the food. The agency also found the drug in other Evanger's products, including Evanger's Braised Beef Chunks and Against the Grain Grain-Free Pulled Beef with Gravy.

Evanger's issued a voluntary recall of those products, and then apparently got the bright idea to donate the stuff to animal shelters. I kid you not. Fortunately, the FDA rejected the company's donation request. According to a pet food industry journal article, Nicholas F. Lyons, FDA director of compliance, stated the following in a letter to Evanger's:

*"In your firm's correspondence dated 4/4/17, it was requested to donate the recalled product to an animal shelter. FDA does not agree that analyzing individual units from recalled lots and finding those units negative for pentobarbital contamination provides sufficient assurance that the remaining units are not adulterated.*

*As can be observed in the samples collected by FDA, the pentobarbital contamination is not homogeneous throughout all units in a lot.”<sup>2</sup>*

Apparently, Evanger’s also told the FDA they could grind up the dog food to “reduce pentobarbital to negligible levels,” but the FDA informed them there’s NO tolerable level of pentobarbital in pet food. Fortunately, the FDA was watching out for pets in this instance, which sadly isn’t always the case.

## **Evanger’s Planned to Donate Recalled Pet Food to Shelters**

Evanger’s, apparently feeling the heat from their pentobarbital debacle and in a desperately misguided effort to resurrect their public image, published the following response to the FDA’s smackdown on their website:

*“We were approached by several shelters asking if we would be willing to donate recalled products that were tested as 100 percent safe and negative for pentobarbital. Before taking any action, we approached the FDA to ask if we could donate healthy batches of recalled product that were tested and safe.*

*We received the FDA’s answer that each can of product listed in the recall must be disposed of per their instructions. Upon receiving the FDA’s response, we complied 100 percent and began working with our distributors to have the product disposed of immediately.”<sup>3</sup>*

While I’m sure animal shelters regularly contact Evanger’s and every other pet food manufacturer for donations, I seriously doubt any shelter specifically requested products — “100% safe” or otherwise — that were part of the pentobarbital recall. Thank goodness Evanger’s decided to check with the FDA before donating those cans of dog food, and thank goodness the FDA responded appropriately.

## **How Did Euthanized Animals End Up in ‘Human-Grade’ Dog Food?**

Predictably, the way in which the pentobarbital (as well as horse meat) got into the Evanger’s products is officially a “mystery.” The company is blaming a meat supplier for selling them pentobarbital-tainted horse meat, and has filed a multi-million dollar lawsuit against them.<sup>4</sup>

According to court documents, last year the supplier shipped around 43,000 pounds of meat labeled “inedible hand boned beef” to Evanger’s. That meat was used to produce approximately 50,000 cans of Hunk of Beef dog food. One lot of the dog food was delivered to a distributor in Washington State, where it was ultimately fed to the four Pugs.

Interestingly, “inedible” on the label means the meat is not fit for human consumption, which means it’s feed grade, not FOOD grade meat, yet until very recently, Evanger’s claimed their products were made with human-grade, USDA inspected meat.<sup>5</sup> The company has removed the claim from their website, but you can see an older screen capture of the human-grade statement [here](#) at Susan Thixton’s site, [Truth About Pet Food](#).

Susan is a long-time pet food activist and tireless warrior on behalf of healthy food for companion animals, and she’s been digging into both Evanger’s and their meat supplier, Bailey Farms, and has uncovered some incredibly disturbing information.

*“... The meat supplier Evanger’s Pet Food purchased from was a dead animal carcass processor,” writes Susan. “A company that removes dead animals from farms — including euthanized horses — and processes the meat from those dead animals for sale to pet food.”<sup>6</sup>*

Susan learned that Bailey Farms holds an “Animal Food Processor License” in the state of Wisconsin, which allows them to transport and process dead animal carcasses. According to Wisconsin law, this license does NOT permit Bailey Farms to process human-grade meat, so it would seem Evanger’s was knowingly purchasing feed-grade ingredients and making false human-grade claims about their dog food.

## **Meat Supplier Doubles as a Dead Livestock Removal Operation**

And that’s not all. Susan also found Bailey Farms on Google Maps, and discovered there’s another business at the same address called Marshall Stock Removal. When she searched Marshall Stock Removal, Google returned a listing for Bailey Farms Stock Removal, which probably means Bailey Farms bought Marshall Stock Removal at some point.

*“Bailey Farms and Bailey Farms Stock Removal have the same exact logo, same physical address — they are the same company,” Susan writes. “Bailey Farms is not a ‘farm’ at all. Bailey Farms turns out to be a dead animal processor. A company that picks up dead animals (cattle and horses) from area farms and processes meat from these animal carcasses into pet food meat — no matter why the animal died and no matter if the animal was euthanized.”*

So while the source of the pentobarbital-contaminated Evanger’s dog food will undoubtedly officially remain a “mystery” for all time, Susan has unearthed the truth.

## **It’s Illegal to Sell Euthanized Animals’ Meat for Pet Food**

These companies sell raw meat processed from dead/non-slaughtered and euthanized animals, and yet federal law prohibits the sale of the meat for use in pet food. As Susan points out, the FDA turns a blind eye to violations of this law unless and until a dog or cat is made sick after eating a pet food containing material from dead/non-slaughtered and euthanized animals. Here’s the proof, right from the FDA website:

*“CVM [Center for Veterinary Medicine] is aware of the sale of dead, dying, disabled, or diseased (4-D) animals to salvagers for use as animal food. Meat from these carcasses is boned and the meat is packaged or frozen without heat processing.*

*The raw, frozen meat is shipped for use by several industries, including pet food manufacturers, zoos, greyhound kennels, and mink ranches. This meat may present a potential health hazard to the animals that consume it and to the people who handle it.*

*Districts should conduct preliminary investigations only as follow-up to complaints or reports of injuries and should contact CVM before expending substantial resources.”<sup>7</sup>*

So to recap, while I'm grateful the FDA prohibited Evanger's from donating their potentially deadly recalled product to animal shelters, they are seriously falling down on the job in other areas. The FDA is aware 4-D animal meat is being used in pet food. It is aware the practice is in violation of federal laws that it is charged with enforcing. It is aware 4-D animal products are a potential health hazard to pets.

However, the agency has no intention of enforcing the law (which can result in imprisonment and/or a fine), and will only show interest in cases like Evanger's, in which pets were sickened and worse by a contaminated product. Neither Evanger's nor Bailey Farms will receive punishment for breaking the law.

A few months ago Susan and I, along with a class action attorney, met with the head of the FDA's Center for Veterinary Medicine and asked that a system of appropriate labeling (feed versus food) be instituted for pet food products. Please support this proposal by signing the petition [here](#).

## Protecting Your Furry Family Member From Poisoned Pet Food

There are few situations in which the old adage "let the buyer beware" is more appropriate than when deciding what food to offer your animal companion.

Between the weekly pet food recalls and an exploding population of pets with chronic digestive issues, allergies and other health problems, it's no wonder so many pet parents are exploring homemade diets, fresh food diets made by smaller, transparent pet food producers, raw diets and other alternatives to the dead, rendered, dubious, processed stuff.

My advice? Search this website for more information on choosing the best diet for your pet. There are dozens of videos and articles here that can help you become very knowledgeable about pet nutrition so that you can make the best diet choices for your own dog or cat.

When it comes to changing the deceptive practices occurring in the pet food industry itself, I recommend becoming a member of the [\*\*Association for Truth in Pet Food\*\*](#), which is the only organization out there committed to holding the regulatory agencies and AAFCO accountable.

### Sources and References

[The Sacramento Bee July 8, 2017](#)

<sup>1</sup> [FDA.gov](#)

<sup>2</sup> [PetfoodIndustry.com, July 6, 2017](#)

<sup>3</sup> [Evanger's Dog Food](#)

<sup>4</sup> [Evanger's v Bailey Farms](#)

<sup>5</sup> [Food Safety News, February 24, 2017](#)

<sup>6</sup> [Truth About Pet Food](#)

<sup>7</sup> [FDA.gov, CPG Sec. 690.500 Uncooked Meat for Animal Food](#)

---