



# Statement in Response to FDA Findings

On June 27, 2019, the Federal Drug Administration (FDA) issued its third status report on its investigation into any potential connection between certain diets and Dilated Cardiomyopathy (DCM), a type of heart disease, in dogs. While DCM impacts less than one percent of U.S. dogs, with .000007% being supposedly related to diet, we recognize that these studies are of critical importance to those families whose beloved dogs have been afflicted by this heart diseases.

As you review the FDA's most recent report, it's important to understand the following:

- The American Veterinary Medical Association estimates that there are 77 million pet dogs in the United States. **Most dogs in the U.S. have been eating pet food without apparently developing DCM.**
- The FDA continues to believe that **the potential association between diet and DCM in dogs is a complex scientific issue that may involve multiple factors and that the actual cause has still yet to be determined.**
- Among all the cases from all brands that were reported to the FDA, **the overwhelming majority of impacted dogs belonged to breeds genetically predisposed to DCM**, a disease that was first discovered in the 1980's well before the grain-free diets were available for pets.

- The DCM cases reported to the FDA included dogs who **ate both grain and grain-free diets.**
- The FDA states that chicken is the number one protein of affected dogs, as you know, Zignature does not use chicken. The FDA also stated that no one animal protein was predominant, refuting the earlier claim that this issue is caused by exotic proteins.
- The FDA **issued the June 27<sup>th</sup> update, even though it has no definitive answers yet, to solicit additional reports from pet owners and veterinarians** to help further it's investigation.

To further efforts to fully understand these cardiac issues we have created a dedicated customer care line. We encourage our customers or their veterinarians to call (888) – 897-72-07 . This company was founded out of a passion and commitment to pet health and we care deeply about animals. We continue to invest in our own research to ensure we continue to make the safest and highest quality pet food on the market today.

## **FAQ**

### **What is Canine DCM?**

DCM is a disease of a dog's heart muscle and results in an enlarged heart. As the heart and its chambers become dilated, it becomes harder for the heart to pump, and heart valves may leak, which can lead to a buildup of fluids in the chest and abdomen (congestive heart failure). DCM is prevalent in certain breeds, especially larger dogs.

### **How do I know if my dog has DCM?**

Please contact your veterinarian to determine if diagnostic tools such as echocardiograms are deemed prudent for your dog. If your dog is showing possible signs of DCM or other heart conditions, including decreased energy, cough, difficulty breathing and episodes of collapse, you should contact your veterinarian

immediately.

**Is this an issue only for boutique brands of dog food?**

No. The pet food advocacy website, the [truthaboutpetfood.com](http://truthaboutpetfood.com), has taken a close look at the data that the FDA has released and found that the FDA received a significant number of DCM reports from the largest pet food producers.

**Is there a link between exotic proteins and DCM?**

Based on the most recent data released by the FDA, and contrary to previous speculation, that does not seem to be the case. Most of the cases (more than 50%) reported to the FDA were for foods containing chicken, lamb and salmon.

**How does Zignature formulate its food?**

Our meticulously designed diets have been formulated by a thought-leading team of veterinarians, PhD animal nutritionists and veterinary research scientists to deliver the safest pet products on the market that exceed the industry's AAFCO guide for balanced and thorough nutrition.

**Has Zignature been contacted by the FDA? Are you cooperating with the agency?**

We want to do all we can to help the scientific community determine if there is any tie between a dog's diet and dilated cardiomyopathy. We intend to share any data we collect through our customer care line with the FDA to help further their investigation.

**Why are you continuing to use legumes in your diets?**

Millions of dogs that suffer from severe allergies from gluten are able to live healthy lives because of grain free solutions like Zignature. As no one has been able to determine if or what the association may be between a dog's diet and this rare cardiac condition, we believe it's important that we continue to serve the millions of dogs that thrive on our diets.

We remain confident that the pet products created by Zignature's expert formulation team of veterinarians, PhD animal nutritionists and veterinary research scientists deliver the safest and most nutritious dietary standards available today. Our diets have always included taurine through meats and fish in all our products, which is important given that taurine is a meaningful nutrient dogs are sometimes unable to synthesize naturally. While taurine has always been included in our diets, new studies have shown that extra taurine is important for dogs cardiovascular health. Zignature further supplements all of its diets with extra taurine and L-Carnitine, providing some of the highest level of taurine available in the industry.

**Sincerely,**

**Daniel Hereford,  
President Pets Global Inc.**