



UPDATED PUBLIC NOTICE

14 October 2019

UPDATED INFORMATION RELATING TO ISOLATED OCCURRENCES OF MOULD IN MONTEGO PRODUCTS

On 13 September 2019, our quality processes identified above-average incidents of mould formation in specific production batches of Montego dog food, in certain parts of the country. At that stage, testing, reports and investigation indicated that there was a high likelihood that roughly 3% of units sold were more susceptible to mould formation than may typically occur in the storage, transportation and distribution of dry perishable food products, such as pet food. We immediately actioned a retail and distribution recall at our retailers and depots to ensure that all mould-affected products not in line with our high-quality standards, were swiftly removed from the market.

Following ongoing investigations, we can provide the following updated information. During production, moisture levels are monitored every 30 minutes by laboratory equipment analysers. **We have since determined that the moisture readings provided during testing were inaccurate and thus resulted in the packing of product which would normally have been rejected by our strict quality control procedures.** This occurred during August and early September, after the earlier commissioning of two new analysers. The faulty analysers resulted in moisture readings that were on average 1% to 2% lower than actual moisture levels, which then created suitable conditions for mould formation.

Initially, we were able to identify a high likelihood of mould formation in specific batches, but as time progressed, our data indicated that there were, in fact, no identifiable pattern of certain batches. What we did find, however, is that the occurrences were mostly in hotter/humid areas of the country, of which Gauteng showed the highest number of occurrences, with roughly 4% of units sold affected. In response, we actioned a proactive retailer and distribution recall of all batches of certain Montego brands manufactured between 23 July 2019 and 12 September 2019 in Gauteng.

We continue to urge customers who have encountered mould growth in their products to **refrain from feeding their pets the affected food** as it could lead to allergic reactions. Internally, and with the cooperation of external laboratories, we have conducted, to date, **more than 850 tests on affected samples for various mycotoxins.** All tests conducted have indicated **no harmful toxin levels to be present** in any affected samples tested. **If you purchased a Montego product that is not in line with our high-quality standards, please return the product to the place of purchase to have it replaced free of charge. We apologise for any inconvenience caused and reassure you of our commitment to upholding world-class quality and food safety standards. You can also contact us on 049 891 0825 or info@montego.co.za for further assistance.**

We would like to thank our depots, retailers and their staff, and most importantly our loyal customers for their continued support during the last four weeks. Quality and food safety are of the utmost importance at Montego Pet Nutrition. Each bag we produce should reflect the highest standards in nutrition and guarantee a safe, fully balanced and tasty meal for your beloved pet. **It has been distressing to know that products which do not conform with our standards have been distributed and purchased by our customers and we assure you that various measures have been put in place to ensure that this never happens again.**

We thank you for supporting Montego Pet Nutrition as we continue to produce and sell pet food of the same high-quality we have become known for over the past 19 years.

Yours Sincerely:
Johan van Jaarsveld
Managing Director