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LabDiet® ANNOUNCEMENT

SUBJECT: Mercury levels and Fish Meal ingredient

Recent publications focusing on the effects of methylmercury in rodents have indicated some grain-based control diets may contain concentrations of methylmercury that are sufficient to directly affect the outcome of an experiment. The use of Purina Laboratory Rodent Diet 5001 as a control diet was mentioned to be a potential problem when used in such experiments.

There were several inaccurate statements made in one particular article that we would like to clarify.

1. LabDiet® 5001 is not an “open” formula diet in which “the ingredients within the diet change depending on the source of raw ingredients”. LabDiet® 5001 is a closed and Constant Nutrition® diet with extremely tight controls in the ingredient selection and testing, and in the end-production results. Purina offers over one-hundred different grain-based diets some of which contain fish meal.
2. The fish meal used in LabDiet® products is only produced from a single species, the Menhaden, which are routinely tested for mercury or other environmental toxins with non-detectable levels reported continuously. The fish meal in our diets is derived from short-lived, surface-feeding Menhaden with little to no bioaccumulation of methylmercury. An alternative fish meal, which may contain other aquatic species like tuna or swordfish has never been used in any LabDiet® product.
3. Recently published data by an independent research group discussed the varying total mercury concentrations in LabDiet® 5001 and indicated concentrations may be too high despite our minimum and maximum levels of detection of 25 to 200 ng/g. However, it was reported that another diet contained non-detectable (ND) levels of mercury. Differences in mercury concentrations between the two diets could be a result of completely different ingredient profiles which is vital when choosing a control diet. Importantly, authors mentioned mercury was not detected in LabDiet® 5001 when used in an experiment prior to the most currently published.
4. Mercury profiles have also been conducted by an independent laboratory on a number of LabDiet grain-based diets that are similar in composition to 5001, such as Certified LabDiet® 5002. Within the past 4 years, not a single sample of Certified LabDiet® 5002 has had a mercury level greater than the level of detection of 25 ng/g, which is not in agreement with that published recently. Again, this may be a result of the different

sampling and analytical techniques used by our contract laboratory and that used by the authors.

5. Purina LabDiet® offers a large number of grain-based, purified and modified diets that are designed for very specific research interests like methylmercury's effect on neurodevelopment or phytoestrogens' effect on reproduction. Choosing a diet that will adequately serve as a control for experiments of all types is extremely important and should always be taken into consideration prior to the onset of a study. Without the proper control, confounding outcomes and altered data can result.

When considering both control and experimental diets for experiments, it is imperative to evaluate both the ingredients within the diet as well as the nutrient profiles of these diets. Purina has a number of nutritionists and scientists on board that are trained to assist you with finding a diet that will adequately meet your objectives so that data are precise and free of confounds. Please do not hesitate to contact us at Labdiet@purinamills.com for questions about all of our many grain-based rodent products.

We appreciate your business,

Thank you

Purina LabDiet®