

# **Rendered Products are Safe**

## **NRA Statement on the Melamine Incident**

**June 2007**

### **Issue**

The recent melamine incident has raised concerns about the safety of pet food, and by extension, meat and poultry by-products. The rendering industry has very effective ways to ensure product quality and safety—process controls that are proven throughout industries worldwide to be more effective than continuous end product testing.

### **Background**

It is important to put the unfortunate pet food contamination in perspective—melamine and/or cyan uric acid were illegally added to wheat gluten and rice protein concentrate imported from China—not to rendered products. More than 95% of pet food grade rendered products are made from portions of USDA inspected and passed carcasses. A small percentage of materials come from animals that die in transit to market or on farms. These animals had been raised for human food in safe conditions and fed wholesome feeds and renderers use various forms of certification to insure such animal mortalities did not die from exposure to pesticides and other recognized toxic materials. Renderers cook these materials to kill bacterial and viral pathogens yielding cost efficient wholesome proteins and fats.

### **Quality and Safety Control Systems Used in Rendering**

Nearly all renderers have quality and safety control systems in place via formal programs such as the Rendering Industry Code of Practice, Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point (HACCP) Program, Safe Feed/Safe Food, or Good Manufacturing Practices. In these programs, a concerted effort is made to foresee any hazard likely to occur and to build prevention of risk into manufacturing.

### **The Role of Testing in Rendering**

Testing of protein meals is used to check the system, not to check every load made. Renderers routinely test batches of rendered fats for commonly used pesticides and contaminants before they are released for feed use. Widespread testing of rendered ingredients for the presence of melamine is not necessary, cost efficient or practical. In addition, commercial labs are not yet able to test for the presence of cyan uric acid. The type of risk management offered by preventive systems is much more flexible and able to anticipate problems than a rigid testing program for one or a few specific possible contaminants.

### **The World Needs Rendering and Rendered Products**

Renderers are dedicated to capturing value from food byproducts and producing pet, livestock, and fish feeds that are safe and nutritious. The melamine incident in pet food triggered an industry-wide re-evaluation of hazards. Every effort is made to ensure that contamination does not occur in the rendering process and that incoming material meet safety criteria.

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