

## What's In The News?

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**From: ProMED-mail <promed@promedmail.org>**

**Source: CNN [edited]**

**<<http://www.cnn.com/2005/US/12/22/dog.deaths/index.html>>**

One of the nation's largest dog food producers has recalled some of its products in 22 states after receiving reports that they caused death and illness, a company executive said Thursday.

In a letter to thousands of its suppliers, Diamond Pet Food announced it found aflatoxin in products made at its Gaston, South Carolina, plant, said Chief Operating Officer Mark Brinkmann.

Products made at the Gaston facility are shipped to Alabama, Connecticut, Delaware, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, Mississippi, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, North Carolina, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, South Carolina, Tennessee, West Virginia, Vermont and Virginia. 5 cat food products and 14 dog food products were recalled.

Aflatoxin is a poisonous substance produced by fungi that grow on grains, including corn.

Brinkmann said he wasn't sure how many animals fell ill from the toxin, but the 22 states' veterinarian's offices reported a total of 17 deaths and 24 illnesses believed linked to the tainted pet food.

Investigators were at the South Carolina plant Thursday trying to determine when the contamination began, state Agriculture Commissioner Hugh Weathers said. "We were pulling samples yesterday and this morning," he said.

In its recall announcement, Diamond states that its in-house analysis has determined that "shipments were definitively clear of aflatoxin after 1 Dec 2005."

Clinical signs that an animal may have ingested aflatoxin include yellowing of the whites of the eyes or

gums, bloody vomiting or stools, lethargy, loss of appetite and increased water consumption. Since other illnesses can cause the same symptoms, it is important for a veterinarian to check any suspected cases, experts said.

Brinkmann said the company was alerted to the problem last Friday by a veterinarian in New York State who said he had seen 3 dogs that were exhibiting symptoms associated with liver disease.

"They were all 3 on one of our foods," Brinkmann said.

The company issued the recall Wednesday for foods containing corn produced at the South Carolina plant between 1 Sep and 10 Dec 2005.

The suspect items are marked with "best by" date codes of between 1 Mar and 10 Jun 2007. They contain an 11th or 12th digit, "G," signifying the Gaston facility.

The plant routinely takes samples of each half hour of production and is sending those samples to laboratories as part of an investigation into how the contamination occurred, Brinkmann said.

He urged consumers to check any product they may have before feeding it to their pets.

Diamond Pet Food, a family-owned company, is based in Meta, Missouri, outside Jefferson City.

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**<http://www.foxnews.com/story/0,2933,180914,00.html>**

**Flu Pandemic Guide: Stock Up on Basics**

**Friday, January 06, 2006**

**By Todd Zwillich**

The federal government on Friday urged Americans to stockpile food and medicine in an effort to prepare for what officials warn could be widespread disruptions in the event of an influenza pandemic.

A flu pandemic is a global outbreak that occurs when a new influenza A virus causes serious human illness and spreads easily from person to person, according to the CDC.

Experts inside and outside the government have warned of a medical crisis if, for example, a highly pathogenic virus like the H5N1 bird flu virus begins to infect large numbers of humans. But they have also warned that a flu pandemic would likely interrupt nearly every aspect of normal life, as schools, workplaces, grocery stores, and even utilities shut down.

What is a Pandemic?

Gaining 'Peace of Mind'

Personal stockpiles of food, water, and basic medicine would do little to stop the spread of a pandemic virus, experts acknowledge. But it could help lessen the social impact if services and institutions are debilitated, officials say.

"Our goal here is to help people prepare, not to panic," says Christina Pearson, a spokeswoman for the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), which urged the actions Friday. "Through preparation people can gain peace of mind knowing they've done what they can do."

The recommendations in many ways echoed calls in 2003 by Tom Ridge, then the Secretary of Homeland Security, for families to prepare for a potential terrorist attack. The campaign faced some ridicule when Ridge called on Americans to purchase duct tape and plastic sheeting to seal their homes against biological or chemical weapons.

The HHS on Friday issued a checklist that calls on individuals to plan for transportation disruptions as well as work and school closings. It also calls on households to store supplies of nonperishable food, water, and medicines for use in the event of an outbreak.

When Come Bird Flu Come to the U.S.?

Opposing View

Michael T. Osterholm, PhD, director of the Center for Infectious Disease Research and Policy at the University of Minnesota and a federal government advisor, criticized the new guide.

He tells WebMD that stockpiling supplies of food and water could help individuals isolate themselves from

sick people, but that supplies of "a month or months" would be needed to ensure adequate distancing.

The plan also calls on people to "talk to their doctor" about obtaining supplies of prescription medications that could be in shortage during a pandemic, a scenario that Osterholm says is "effectively impossible."

Most drug manufacturers keep low inventories of drugs and instead sell them about as quickly as they make them, he says. Also, most private insurance plans don't allow patients to obtain more than a 30-day drug supply for current use.

"You can't go out and buy a 60-day supply and if you did that the inventory would dry up overnight," says Osterholm, who has been encouraging the government and businesses to come up with emergency supply plans for the U.S. economy.

Bird Flu May Be More Contagious Than Thought

Improving Preparedness

Pearson says the latest call was in direct response to requests for guidance from thousands of individuals and that the guide was part of an overall government effort to boost private and government preparedness.

"It would be incomplete to do one part and not the other," she says.

The guide comes as drug manufacturers continue federally funded early production of a still-experimental H5N1 vaccine. Officials say they plan on eventually producing up to 300 million doses of the vaccine but that such large supplies would take years to produce.

Meantime, the World Health Organization confirmed the deaths of three siblings from bird flu in Turkey. The news made that country the sixth to record human bird flu deaths and the first one outside Southeast Asia.

The disease has caused 145 known infections with about a 50 percent fatality rate. Scientists say H5N1 has not shown an ability for efficient human-to-human spread, a condition necessary to make the virus a direct pandemic risk.

By Todd Zwillich, reviewed by Brunilda Nazario, MD

SOURCES: Department of Health and Human Services: "Pandemic Influenza Planning: A Guide for Individuals and Families," Jan. 6, 2006. Christina Pearson, spokeswoman, Department of Health and Human Services. Michael T. Osterholm, PhD, director, Center for Infectious Disease Research and Policy. World Health Organization: "Avian influenza update," Jan. 5, 2006.

[Editor's note: At this time it does not appear that avian flu is as deadly as being reported. There are many factors that flu viruses are dependent upon that determine their virulence. Avian flu's indicators do not predispose this strain to be any more virulent than mild flu strains. Reports of it's deadliness have been greatly exaggerated it is speculated in an attempt to use as a scare tactic in order to pass unlawful legislation like NAIS and sections of the mis-named PATRIOT ACT. Individuals should stock up and be ready in case engineered bio-weapons are released to simulate a pandemic.]

### **NAIS: What Does it Take to Raise an Alarm These Days? by Ken Anderson of "All Maine Matters"**

Over the past couple of years, we've been subjected to a series of media scares relating to our meat supply. From Mad Cow, to swine flu, to e.Coli, to mutant flesh-eating viruses, and now the Avian flu, we've been led to believe that if we don't act immediately, we're all going to die.

Enter the National Animal Identification System, a governmental program which utilizes public-private partnerships in an attempt to identify and track every animal in the United States. And despite the fact that we haven't had a single case of Mad Cow or the Avian flu transmitted to humans in the United States, and that the NAIS couldn't possibly do a thing to prevent contaminations of our meat supply occurring after the meat has been processed, we're all expected to expel a deep sigh of relief. Uncle Sam has come through for us again.

But at what cost?

The National Animal Identification System will force farmers, hobbyists, and even pet owners to register each animal they own, and tag that animal with an identifying tag, band, or implanted electronic chip, for the purpose

of tracking that animal through the food chain whether or not it even enters the food chain.

When fully implemented in January of 2009, the NAIS will require two types of mandatory registration: registration of the premises, and registration of the animal. Anyone who owns even one horse, cow, pig, sheep, chicken, pigeon, or any other livestock animal will be required to register their home, including the owner's name and other identifying information, along with the address of your farm or home, to be keyed to global positioning system (GPS) coordinates in a federal database under a 7- digit "premises ID number."

Additionally, each animal will have to be identified with a 15-digit ID number, also to be kept in the federal database. Even if you are raising your own food, your animal will be required to have an ID number if it is to be sent to a slaughterhouse. Animals that do not have an ID number cannot be bought or sold, or used to obtain stud service.

Any animal that leaves the owner's premises for any reason will be required to have an ID number, and be tagged. This includes animals that are shown, as well as horses that may be ridden off of the owner's property. The costs of this program are to be shared by the animal owners and the larger base of taxpayers, meaning that there are likely to be significant fees connected with full implementation of the NAIS program.

Large-scale meat producers are on board with the program, perhaps because they'll be given a break. Large herds of cattle, pigs, or other animals raised and processed together can be identified by a single group ID number, while farmers and ranchers with small groups of animals will, in most cases, have to identify each animal individually for purposes of breeding, sale, or slaughter.

If you own two cows, a horse, and twelve chickens, each would require an individual ID number if the animal is ever to leave your property for any reason, or have any contact (commingling) with any other animal.

The form of identification will most likely be an ear tag or implanted microchip containing a radio frequency identification device (RFID) which can be read from a distance. In addition to RFID tags, some industries may require the use of retinal scans or DNA identification for

all animals.

The costs associated with this program may well be beyond the reach of small farmers and hobbyists, and make it impractical, from an economic standpoint, for people to raise their own meat. The costs are not only economic, but time consuming as well. Within the system, animal owners will be required to report the birth date of each animal, including chickens, as well as the application of the animal's ID tag. Every time the animal enters or leaves the premises, this will have to be reported. When a tag is lost or replaced, this will need to be reported. If an animal dies, or goes missing, there will have to be a report. These events will have to be reported to the government within 24 hours.

With full implementation of this program in 2009, the USDA intends to ensure compliance with NAIS regulations in a manner not yet specified, but which could be expected to include fines or seizure of animals.

Another possible reason for the enthusiastic support of the NAIS program by large-scale meat producers is that, as stakeholders in the program, they will likely have control over much of it, perhaps putting them in a position to exert economic pressures on competing small farmers and homesteaders.

Will implementation of the NAIS make our meat supply safer? Probably not, and it's not likely that we'd know if it did. It's not like people are dropping like flies from Mad Cow disease, as it is. The NAIS might be compared to using a cannon to hunt black flies in February.

The NAIS is likely to drive small meat producers out of business, placing an unfair economic burden on the traditional American businesses that have fed us since we've existed as a nation. Once the program is established, animal owners will bear the costs associated with the requirements for registration, identification, and reporting.

Costs to large-scale producers of meat will be absorbed by consumers, raising the cost of living for all of us. The NAIS will prevent many people from raising animals for their own food. The NAIS is said to be necessary in order to make our food supply secure against disease or terrorism, yet what can be more secure than raising your own food or buying from a local farmer who you actually know?

What of those, such as the Amish in Smyrna, who may have a religious objection to participating in a system of electronically numbering and identifying their animals? When fully implemented, the NAIS is a compulsory registration with the government of all people who wish to raise their own animals for food. As written, the NAIS will force these people to make a choice between abandoning their livestock or violating their religious beliefs.

As I read the documentation put out by the U.S. Department of Agriculture, and as I have searched for additional information on this program, I was struck by the fact that so little has been said about it in the media. Search engine results yield almost exclusively web sites put out by various federal and state agencies, and associations of large-scale meat producers, all of whom are enthusiastically supporting this program. Sadly, it seems that opposition to the program appears to be limited to the Countryside & Small Stock Journal, published in Wisconsin, and someone in a forum on the Mother Earth News site.

Further information about the National Animal Identification System can be found online at [www.usaip.info/](http://www.usaip.info/). Please read it through for yourselves, but the scariest stuff that I found came from the USAIP's own FAQs. You'll find that when they ask a question and answer it no, the text often goes on to explain that, when the plan is fully implemented, the answer will be yes.

Never one to pass up federal funds or to neglect an opportunity to make government bigger, the State of Maine has implemented its own program, funded in part by a grant from the U.S. Department of Agriculture. Its web site can be found at [www.maine.gov/agriculture/idme/](http://www.maine.gov/agriculture/idme/).

Although it seems to be slow in coming, there is yet time for an outcry over this program to have some effect. Small farmers and landowners can take action to oppose implementation of this plan.

First, do not participate in the "voluntary" state program to register either your farm or your animals, as they'll use your willingness to participate in the program as justification for making it mandatory for everyone in the near future. If state or federal officials urge you to

register either your premises or your animals, ask them whether your participation is voluntary or mandatory.

Ask to see a copy of any legislation that gives them the authority to require compliance. More importantly, contact any farming, breeding, or other associations that you might be a member of, asking them to oppose the NAIS. Ask these organizations to sponsor letter-writing campaigns to elected officials, both state and federal. Individually, you can write to your state and federal legislators.

Letters sent via the postal service carry more weight than emails or form letters, but anything is better than nothing. The United States Department of Agriculture plans the issuance of a NAIS rule for public comment in July of 2006. Be aware of this when the time comes, and be prepared to submit an individual comment opposing this rule.

Also, you should be aware of any state rules that might mandate earlier compliance. For example, Maine farmers are already being encouraged to voluntarily join the state's ID program, and it intends to implement mandatory registration of livestock premises by March 7, 2005.

I am surprised, and discouraged, that there isn't already an outcry over this program. " ... and he provides that no one will be able to buy or to sell, except the one who has the mark, either the name of the beast or the number of his name." -- Rev. 13:17 (NASB)

National Animal Identification System Timeline . April, 2005 -- The USDA issued its Draft Strategic Plan & Draft Program Standards for public comment, which ended in July of 2005. . July, 2006 -- The target date for the USDA to issue a proposed rule setting forth the requirements for NAIS premises registration, animal identification, and animal tracking. There will be a limited public comment period after publication of the rule. . Fall, 2007 -- The USDA will publish a final rule to establish the requirements of the mandatory NAIS. . January, 2008 -- Premises registration and animal identification become mandatory. January, 2009 -- Animal tracking becomes mandatory, including enforcement of the reporting of all animal movements. This article was reprinted "All Maine Matters" which can be found online at [www.allmainematters.com](http://www.allmainematters.com).

**From**  
**[http://bellacio.org/en/article.php3?id\\_article=9995](http://bellacio.org/en/article.php3?id_article=9995)**

Bank Of America and Compass Bank managers (probably all other U.S. banks too) have been instructing their employees in the last few weeks on how to respond to customer demands in the event of a collapse of the U.S. economy - specifically telling the employees that only agents from the Department Of Homeland Security will have authority to decide what belongings customers may have from their safe deposit boxes - and that precious metals and other valuables will not be released to U.S. citizens. The bank employees have been strictly prohibited from revealing the banks new "guidelines" to anyone. (however, employees have been talking to friends and family)

The next time you visit your bank, ask them about it - then ask yourself, why is this information being kept secret from customers and the public - what s really going on?

Collapse of U.S. Economy Imminent  
Saturday 21st January 2006

In its attempt to establish a world empire dominating every nation on the planet, the U.S. has exhausted its ability to finance the expansion and the country now faces imminent financial collapse. From all indications, it looks like 2006 will spell the end for America. Consider these five important points: Point #1 The U.S., Great Britain and Israel are preparing to attack Iran. As it appears the main reason for invading Iraq was to stop it from selling oil in Euros, likewise Iran has plans to dump the dollar come March 2006. Point #2 U.S. Treasury Secretary John Snow issued a warning recently that the U.S. Government is on the verge of collapse - as the statutory debt limit imposed by Congress of \$8.184 trillion dollars would be reached in mid-February - the government would then be unable to continue its normal operations. Considering the current total U.S. debt stands at \$8.162 trillion dollars, once the official debt ceiling (\$8.184 trillion) is reached, the U.S. government's credit abroad (its borrowing power) is gone. Those countries (mainly China) who presently keep America afloat by holding U.S. Treasury Notes, will most likely no longer continue doing so. Point #3 Bank Of America and Compass Bank managers (probably all other U.S. banks too) have been instructing their employees in the last few weeks on how to respond

to customer demands in the event of a collapse of the U.S. economy - specifically telling the employees that only agents from the Department Of Homeland Security will have authority to decide what belongings customers may have from their safe deposit boxes - and that precious metals and other valuables will not be released to U.S. citizens. The bank employees have been strictly prohibited from revealing the banks' new "guidelines" to anyone. (however, employees have been talking to friends and family) The next time you visit your bank, ask them about it - then ask yourself, why is this information being kept secret from customers and the public - what's really going on? Point #4 FEMA has activated and is currently staffing its vast network of empty internment camps with armed military personnel - unknown to most Americans, these large federal facilities are strategically positioned across the U.S. landscape to "manage" the population in the event of a "terrorist" attack, a civilian uprising, large-scale dissent, or an insurrection against the government. Some of these razor-wired facilities have the capacity of detaining a million people. Point #5 The Patriot Act and the US Senate's vote to ban habeas corpus (Nov 14th) - along with George W. Bush having signed executive orders giving him sole authority to impose martial law, suspend habeas corpus and ignore the Posse Comitatus Act, have together pretty much destroyed any notions of freedom and justice for Americans.

Summary: The U.S. economy is broken, the United States is bankrupt - the unchecked spending by this administration, the illegally waged wars against Afghanistan and Iraq, the cost of unprecedented weapons and military build-up - have all contributed to an irreversible emergency which is threatening our nation's existence and our very lives. Hospitals are closing, major corporations are declaring bankruptcy and/or moving their companies overseas, the monopolized news media spews nothing but lies, and our fearless leaders have turned out to be only ruthless criminals hell-bent on destabilizing our country and robbing us all. Be aware - we stand at the threshold of total ruin - the international bankers and war profiteers care little for our lives and families - these demons worship money and all things vile and evil - they have very much to gain from war, misery, disease, famine, chaos and death (our deaths). We are right on the edge - the Treasury is already overextended - the U.S. government cannot (and will not) care for its own citizens' needs, nor secure our borders against illegal

aliens - plus, the whole "terrorist" thing is a cruel hoax perpetrated against a trusting citizenry - and only designed to instill fear and garner support for the genocide taking place in Iraq. Should America (along with British & Israeli forces) launch a war against Iran, or another country, without yet paying for, or even recovering from the current losses in Iraq and elsewhere - the costs of such of an invasion will overwhelm an already crippled economy and push the U.S. over the edge into oblivion. Question: Considering the U.S. Treasury Notes that China currently holds (which keeps the U.S. economy going)... Do you think China will continue to support a country's economy (the U.S.) whose military launches a nuclear strike against its neighbor (Iran) - thus delivering a blanket of radioactive fallout over western Chinese provinces - killing hundreds of thousands, if not millions of its citizens? I think not. Factoring in the aforementioned points of "preparation" engineered by U.S. authorities, I'd say there's a stinking rat in the woodpile ...can you smell it too?

**Unfathomed Dangers in PATRIOT Act Reauthorization**  
**by Paul Craig Roberts**  
**January 24, 2006**

A provision in the "PATRIOT Act" creates a new federal police force with the power to violate the Bill of Rights. You might think that this cannot be true, as you have not read about it in newspapers or heard it discussed by talking heads on TV.

Go to House Report 109-333 USA PATRIOT Improvement and Reauthorization Act of 2005 and check it out for yourself. Sec. 605 reads:

"There is hereby created and established a permanent police force, to be known as the 'United States Secret Service Uniformed Division.'"

This new federal police force is "subject to the supervision of the Secretary of Homeland Security."

The new police are empowered to "make arrests without warrant for any offense against the United States committed in their presence, or for any felony cognizable under the laws of the United States if they have reasonable grounds to believe that the person to be arrested has committed or is committing such felony."

The new police are assigned a variety of jurisdictions, including "an event designated under section 3056(e) of title 18 as a special event of national significance" (SENS).

"A special event of national significance" is neither defined nor does it require the presence of a "protected person" such as the president in order to trigger it. Thus, the administration, and perhaps the police themselves, can place the SENS designation on any event. Once a SENS designation is placed on an event, the new federal police are empowered to keep out and arrest people at their discretion.

The language conveys enormous discretionary and arbitrary powers. What is "an offense against the United States"? What are "reasonable grounds"?

You can bet the Alito/Roberts court will rule that it is whatever the executive branch says.

The obvious purpose of the act is to prevent demonstrations at Bush/Cheney events. However, nothing in the language limits the police powers from being used only in this way. Like every law in the U.S., this law also will be expansively interpreted and abused. It has dire implications for freedom of association and First Amendment rights. We can take for granted that the new federal police will be used to suppress dissent and to break up opposition. The Brownshirts are now arming themselves with a Gestapo.

Many naïve Americans will write to me to explain that this new provision in the reauthorization of the "PATRIOT Act" is necessary to protect the president and other high officials from terrorists or from harm at the hands of angry demonstrators: "No one else will have anything to fear." Some will accuse me of being an alarmist, and others will say that it is unpatriotic to doubt the law's good intentions.

Americans will write such nonsense despite the fact that the president and foreign dignitaries are already provided superb protection by the Secret Service. The naïve will not comprehend that the president cannot be endangered by demonstrators at SENS at which the president is not present. For many Americans, the light refuses to turn on.

In Nazi Germany, did no one but Jews have anything to fear from the Gestapo?

By Stalin's time, Lenin and Trotsky had eliminated all members of the "oppressor class," but that did not stop Stalin from sending millions of "enemies of the people" to the Gulag.

It is extremely difficult to hold even local police forces accountable. Who is going to hold accountable a federal police protected by Homeland Security and the president?

<http://www.antiwar.com/roberts/?articleid=8434>

## Humor

Children and religion are a curious mixture. Children are so innocent that their questions about our beliefs must truly make God laugh!

James was 4 years old. He was listening to a Bible story read to him by his dad. His dad read: "The man named Lot was warned to take his wife and flee out of the city but his wife looked back and was turned to salt." Concerned about all life, James asked: "What happened to the flea?"

A church pugh can be as warm as--- well you where in the summer.... this particular Sunday sermon was long and the morning was hot... Church was about to end, but the minister's sermon went on. "Dear Lord," the minister continued, with arms extended toward heaven and a rapturous look on his upturned face. "Without you, we are but dust."

He would have continued but at that moment the very young daughter of a worshiper who was listening intently leaned over to her mother and asked quite audibly in her shrill little girl voice, "Mom, what is butt dust?"

The sermon ended on a good laugh. I'm sure God was laughing too.