

Recall -- Firm Press Release

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Merit Bird Company, LLS Recalls Vitae Because of Possible Health Risk

Contact:

Consumer:

(818)727-1655

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE - April 18, 2013 - Merit Bird Company, LLC of Chatsworth, California is recalling the following items with lot codes; Vitae Cockatiel with Sunflower 2lbs, (#2840081), Vitae Cockatiel with Sunflower 4lbs, (#2840090), Vitae Small Hookbill 4lbs, (#2840225), Vitae Small Hookbill 20lbs, (#2840234), Vitae Hookbill with Sunflower 4lbs, (#2840252), Vitae Large Hookbill 4lbs, (#2840279) shipped between May 2012 to February 2013, because it has the potential to be contaminated with *Salmonella*, an organism which can cause serious and sometimes fatal infections in young children, frail or elderly people, and others with weakened immune systems.

Healthy people infected with *Salmonella* should monitor themselves for some or all of the following symptoms: nausea, vomiting, diarrhea or bloody diarrhea, abdominal cramping and fever. Rarely, *Salmonella* can result in more serious ailments, including arterial infections, endocarditis, arthritis, muscle pain, eye irritation, and urinary tract symptoms. Consumers exhibiting these signs after having contact with this product should contact their healthcare providers.

Animals with *Salmonella* infections may be lethargic and have diarrhea or bloody diarrhea, fever, and vomiting. Some animals will have only decreased appetite, fever and abdominal pain. Infected but otherwise healthy animals can be carriers and infect other animals or humans. If your animals have consumed the recalled product and have these symptoms, please contact your veterinarian. "Vitae bird food was distributed through Southern California retail pet stores.

The bags in question are packaged in a factory sealed plastic bag or a white bulk bag for the 20# size.

No illnesses have been reported to date.

This recall was the result of a routine testing performed by Specialty Commodities, which revealed that the finished products, which include parsley that is on recall from Specialty Commodities, contain *Salmonella*. The company has ceased the production and distribution of the product as FDA and the company continue their investigation as to what caused the problem.

If you still have any bags on hand, please return them immediately to the place of purchase or Merit Bird Company for a full refund.

Information on what consumers should do with the product and where they can get additional information (e.g., consumers) who have purchased Vitae Bird Food are urged to return it to the place of purchase for a full refund.

Consumers with questions may contact the company at 1-818-727-1655. Monday-Friday 9am-4pm, Pacific Standard Time.