

## PFI code: Early Warning System (EWS)

### 1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1. The purpose of the Early Warning System (EWS), is to provide the industry with an effective tool for information sharing, with regard to food safety. It is vital that members of the industry act responsibly toward the wellbeing of the industry and consumer, with regard to hazardous substances (e.g. melamine, mycotoxins etc.).
- 1.2. Many companies have their own GMP/food safety systems in place, and this EWS is aimed at compulsory reporting of hazards, to protect the consumers, industry and role-players in the food chain.
- 1.3. If there is a potential hazard, which cannot be controlled by the member, and which may cause damage to other members or consumers, then the member is **obliged** to inform the PFI, who will investigate and take further steps as deemed appropriate.
- 1.4. **The aim is to assure consumers that any contaminated or suspicious products are appropriately withdrawn from the market, and that preventive measures are in place to ensure they will not re-enter the food chain.**

### 2. OBJECTIVE

- 2.1. The objective of the EWS is the early detection and reporting of irregularities in raw materials and ingredients for use in pet foods, and the reporting of any potentially harmful finished product. This will enable a rapid response and efficient communication throughout the food chain, and in turn prevent or limit any harmful effects for the consumer.

### 3. WHO SHOULD REPORT

- 3.1. All members of the PFI are obliged to report.
- 3.2. A number of non-PFI members may also report e.g. veterinarians, feed companies, animal science practitioners, AFMA, pet food manufacturers, laboratories, provincial and national departments of agriculture, raw material suppliers, inspection agencies, or any other role player in the animal and pet industry.

### 4. WHEN TO REPORT

- 4.1. Where an incident/anomaly/hazard cannot be rectified internally by control measures and poses a direct threat outside of the bounds of the business, report must be made to the EWS reporting point.
- 4.2. As much information as possible must be provided, to enable efficient investigation and action.

### 5. WHAT TO REPORT

- 5.1. Any irregularities in ingredients or final products that may have a direct impact on food safety must be reported.
- 5.2. A list of undesirable substances in ingredients and finished feed is supplied in Act 36 of 1947. However, reports under EWS should not be limited only to substances in this list, as new/additional hazards may be identified by research and/or alerts in industry both locally and internationally.
- 5.3. Examples:
  - Macro/micro/organo-oleptic observation of contaminants/hazards (smell of petrol, discoloration etc.)
  - Analytical results falling outside of standards or specifications, or in the absence of standards, extremely high levels
  - Abnormal illness or death of animals

- Unusual or inexplicable occurrences

## 6. REPORTING POINT

Contact Person: Executive Director of the PFI  
Cell: +27 (0)82 903 4986  
Email: info@pfisa.co.za

## 7. METHOD OF REPORTING

7.1. As much information as possible should be reported. The following format is preferred:

- Date and time
- Contact details of person reporting
- Nature of the hazard/concern (including any lab reports, analysis methods etc)
- Details of ingredient or product (including source, lot numbers/identification marks, quantity/size of batch, information on additional ingredient/product if available)
- What measures have already been taken
- Risk to public/industry (unaccounted for product/ingredient)

## 8. WHAT WILL BE DONE WITH THE REPORT

- 8.1. An investigative agency may be appointed at the discretion of the PFI executive.
- 8.2. All reports will be treated in confidence with regard to anonymity of individuals that report. No business specific information will be provided to third parties without the permission of the reporting body.
- 8.3. Despite the requirements of point b, the requirement to report to the official body remains in force, where there is the possibility of legal infringement.
- 8.4. Information provided will only be available to the PFI executive director.
- 8.5. The reporting party will be informed of the outcome of any further investigation.
- 8.6. The PFI will only issue information to third parties in the form of an EWS report after prior notification to the reporter and any other involved third party. The reporter and/or any third party, have no authority to prevent such publication.
- 8.7. If deemed necessary, an EWS report will be published to all PFI members, as well as a public alert, that states:
  - What has been observed
  - Product/ingredient involved
  - Batch numbers
  - Quantity/size of the batch involved
  - Origin of the goods
  - Is the batch part of a larger unit, and if so how big/where the other products are
  - Other information deemed relevant