

American Pet Parents Can Join Canadian Class Action Suit Against Menu Pet Contributed by

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Canadian Pet Owner Finds Way to Help American Victims of Tainted Pet Food

April 20, 2007 (Toronto, Canada) Pet owner Karen Fraser of Toronto Ontario responded to the tainted pet food scandal by founding Petitionz.org with Ron Smith. The web site has provided a constructive way for angered and grieving pet owners to respond to the ongoing pet food crisis. People from around the world have signed the petition and voted in the polls.

While trying to keep up on the recall and reaction information that seemed to change by the hour Ms. Fraser came across articles by American media which indicated that U.S. pet owners would get little compensation if they won a lawsuit against Menu Foods. Few states recognize pets as anything beyond property.

She then checked the web site for the Canadian law firm Falconer Charney as they had filed class action lawsuits against Menu Foods Inc. and Canada wide distributors and producers of potentially contaminated pet food. On the site she found a court decision in Ontario granting damages to pet owners for emotional trauma. Under Ontario law a pet is not just another object that people own. A pet is an important part of people's lives and Ontario law recognizes that people can be emotionally traumatized if their pet is hurt or dies.

Ms. Fraser called the law firm to ask if Americans could join the Canadian class action lawsuit because the headquarters for Menu Foods is located in Ontario. Mr. Ted Charney called back promptly and offered this opinion, "Americans can file in Toronto because Menu Foods is headquartered in this province and made all material decisions in its operations from its head office."

Like many areas of the law this is not black and white. The Ontario judge may only grant Americans the compensation allowed by the U.S. state where they live but she/he might grant compensation under Ontario law. Mr. Charney suggests that pet owners should consider whether their state laws allow for compensation for emotional trauma before considering the Canadian lawsuit.

Falconer Charney is representing pet owners who wish to recover compensation and help prevent contaminated ingredients and poison from entering the pet food chain.

Ms. Fraser states, "While this is not a black and white solution I think the gray area is very promising. Many pet owners feel their loss and the cruelty have been trivialized. They would like this experience to have some meaning and lead to protection for pets and people from now on."