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4/14/2012

MPC 670, Spring 2012

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News Release: DeFence is Not the Likely Cause of SOND

SALT LAKE CITY, UT (2011) – Following the recent outbreak of Sudden Onset Nervous Disorder (SOND) among dogs, researchers have been working to uncover the cause. The original onset was thought to have been triggered by a chemical used in Hatu Environmental's pet deterrent product, DeFence. However, in a recent study performed by Cornell University School of Veterinary Medicine, research indicates that Hatu's DeFence is not verifiably linked to SOND.

In 2010, research by local veterinarian groups uncovered a potential link between DeFence and SOND. This link was found to involve exposure to a specific chemical used as an active ingredient in DeFence. The same chemical has been used in numerous other products and, while DeFence was not directly identified as a cause for SOND, the correlation was quickly noted by veterinarians.

To help in uncovering the cause for SOND, Hatu Environmental has begun its own efforts at researching and testing the ingredients used in DeFence to ensure that no harmful side effects are being caused. No evidence has been found yet to indicate this correlation. Hatu's mission has ever been to deliver quality products that would help protect property against animal trespassing, albeit through non-harmful means.

Cornell University, known as one of the most prestigious veterinary schools in the country, has uncovered notable evidence in the battle to uncover the true cause of SOND. Their study concludes that the link between the actual cause of SOND and the chemical used in Hatu's DeFence is highly unlikely. Though the results of this proof are by no means definitive, the evidence heavily supports the safety of DeFence for use as an animal deterrent.

Cornell further states in their research that the cause of SND may actually be linked to a new anti-tick medication that entered the market at approximately the same time as Hatu's DeFence. No specific medical product has been identified from this research. It is the hope of Cornell that additional research will be identified on this topic before any future accusations are made regarding an animal product.

Hatu Environmental has been providing homes with protection against not only dogs, but deer, raccoons, cats and other animals through the use of their animal deterrent, DeFence. Since 2010, the company has grown exponentially due to not only the effectiveness of their product, but also their competitive pricing. DeFence simply provides an uncomfortable odor detectable only to animals to keep your property free of animal invaders.

Hatu Environmental Spokesperson: *Paul D. Pion, DVM, DipACVIM*

Dr. Paul D. Pion graduated from Cornell University and later went on to found the Veterinary Information Network in 2005. He has worked at numerous veterinary institutes and has helped uncover numerous medical conditions on animals. While much of his focus has been in the feline field, he is still a well-known professional and thought leader in the veterinarian industry.

1. Hatu Environmental will use him as an industry expert, someone whose well-known academic background will lend itself to the weight of his opinion.
2. Dr. Pion has been published extensively in the veterinary field and would be commissioned/asked to present additional research findings regarding SOND and its potential cause. These findings will be published through various veterinarian sources and made available to the public.
3. He would be used to interact with local and national veterinary groups to provide a statement regarding the effects of the chemicals used in DeFence. His status in the veterinary community would allow him to give credibility to claims that DeFence is not to blame for SOND.
4. Once additional research has been performed (if necessary), we would request that Cleveland Amory speak with Dr. Pion to write another article about this story that would (ideally) be more favorable about Hatu Environmental.
5. He would help Hatu Environmental to start up a fund raiser to further contribute to the research around SOND.
6. If possible, Hatu Environmental would essentially adopt him as the company's "mascot," to create a face for DeFence and increase sales for the product among veterinarians (seeing as how most non-veterinarians would not know who Dr. Pion is).

Opinion Influencing

Propose on one page the actions you would take to a) influence opinions and improve sales or b) to further advance the position of the veterinarians.

Hatu Environmental would either start up its own charity foundation or else contribute to charities with the goal of furthering research on animal illnesses like SOND. The company needs to demonstrate that it is concerned for the safety and wellbeing of house pets, and these yearly/monthly donations could help set the company in a more positive light.

In order to gain additional confidence from the community, Hatu Environmental should seek out testimonials from pet owners. The product may be used to keep pets off property, but it could also be used to keep pets within a certain property limit. Pet owners are less likely to use a product if they perceive it to be harmful, which will make a campaign of testimonials powerful. This can be done through video, audio, and written media.

Humanizing Hatu Environmental's employees will be key to establishing the verifiable safety of DeFence. The company should highlight pet owners within its own company and use that to relate the quality of DeFence and the standards they hold to the product. These highlights could simply appear on the company website and entail interviews with pet owners at the company and how their work is influenced by their status as a dog or cat lover.

The company should attempt to gauge public opinion through the use of polls, on its website, through social media outlets and included on the product (in the form of a telephone number). Polls can also be given by the company's support department as well as salesmen. The goal of this poll would be to truly understand how the public perceives the company and if the research regarding SOND is actually influencing product sales. If it is, then these poll results will be used to influence the focus and direction of future marketing and PR efforts.