FRESHPET BECOMES FIRST DOG FOOD TO EARN CLEAN LABEL PROJECT CERTIFICATION

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Only pet food brand to earn certification of their Purity award across entire U.S. & Canadian portfolio

BEDMINSTER, N.J., Feb. 12, 2026 /PRNewswire/ -- Freshpet, Inc. ("Freshpet" or the "Company") (NASDAQ: FRPT), the leader in fresh food for pets, today announced that its entire U.S. and Canadian product line has earned Clean Label Project™'sPurity Award for ingredient quality and safety. This certification is awarded by the nonprofit Clean Label Project™, that tests products for contaminants consumers will not see on a label, such as heavy metals, pesticides, and environmental contaminants, to evaluate ingredient quality and safety. Certification of Freshpet recipes began in early 2025, and today its full portfolio meets the Clean Label Project's stringent thresholds for heavy metals, industrial and environmental toxins.

Freshpet is the first and only pet food brand to be Clean Label Project Certified and have its entire product line recognized with the organization's Purity Award, a distinction reserved for the top third of performers in a product category. This third-party validation underscores the Company's longstanding commitment to premium quality, food safety, sustainability, and minimally processed, fresh ingredients.

To earn the Clean Label Project™ Certification, products must undergo extensive independent lab testing that tests for more than 100 environmental and industrial contaminants, including heavy metals (lead, cadmium, arsenic, and mercury), bisphenols (BPA, BPS), phthalates (CBP and DEHP), acrylamide, pesticides, and more. These chemicals are known for their potential health risks for humans - and pets.

"Twenty years ago, we set out to create a fundamentally different kind of pet food, made from real, simple ingredients and prepared in our own kitchens," said Scott Morris, Co-founder and President of Freshpet. "We believed that by doing things differently, we could deliver cleaner, higher-quality nutrition for pets. Clean Label Project's Purity Award validates that belief and reinforces our commitment to raising the standard for pet food."

The announcement follows the release of Clean Label Project's new Dog Food Category Report, which found that many popular dry dog foods contain significantly higher levels of heavy metals and industrial contaminants than both fresh and frozen dog foods, as well as higher levels than more than 3,280 human consumable products tested over the past decade. By contrast, the Clean Label Project found that fresh and frozen dog food products, including all Freshpet recipes, had the lowest heavy metal levels of any segment tested and were lower on average than the organization's benchmark for human consumables across arsenic, cadmium, mercury, lead, acrylamide, and DEHP, an industrial plasticizer.

In the study of 79 top-selling dog foods with more than 11,000 individual tests, traditional dry dog food averaged 13.3 times more arsenic, 20 times more lead and mercury, as well dramatically higher levels of DEHP and acrylamide (a chemical that can form in foods during high-heat cooking and is classified as a probable human carcinogen) than fresh dog food.

"Most pet owners assume the food they buy for their dogs is held to the same safety standards as human food, but that's simply not true," said Molly Hamilton, Executive Director of Clean Label Project. "Our findings show that many dry dog foods contain significantly higher levels of toxic heavy metals than fresh or frozen dog food and the average human-consumable product. Given that dogs often eat the same food every day, this raises important questions about long-term exposure and the need for greater transparency and stronger safety standards."

Freshpet's fresh, refrigerated recipes are formulated around real, gently cooked ingredients prepared in Freshpet-owned kitchens with:

- **Fresh, recognizable ingredients** like real chicken, beef, salmon, vegetables, and whole grains, without rendered meat meals or fillers.
- **Gentle steam-cooking methods** that help preserve nutrients and ingredient integrity rather than being extruded at high temperatures, a process that can contribute to acrylamide formation in many traditional dog foods.
- **Strict safety checks** at every step, including 20+ quality and safety tests.

"Contaminants like heavy metals and industrial chemicals do not show up on a traditional ingredient list, yet they are what many health-conscious pet parents worry about for themselves and their pets," added Dr. Lisa Weeth, Board Certified Veterinary Nutritionist and Head of Veterinary Research and Communications at Freshpet. "Independent verification from the Clean Label Project gives veterinarians and families data to help them make informed decisions when choosing a fresh diet over conventional options."

About the Clean Label Project
The Clean Label Project is a nonprofit organization on a mission to reveal what labels do not show by testing consumer products for contaminants such as heavy metals, pesticides, plasticizers, and industrial chemicals. Using independent, ISO 17025–accredited analytical laboratories, the Clean Label Project evaluates product safety and ingredient quality, recognizing leading brands through its Certification and Purity Award programs and advocating for stronger standards across industries.

About Freshpet
Freshpet is the leading fresh food for dogs and cats, feeding fresh to over 15 million pet households. For the last 20 years, Freshpet has been on a mission to transform the lives of dogs and cats through the power of fresh, nutritious food, while pushing the boundaries of sustainable practices. The recipes are developed by Veterinarian Nutritionists and made with natural whole ingredients, like fresh meats, vegetables and fruits, which are cooked in small batches at lower temperatures to preserve their natural goodness. Made in the United States, Freshpet foods and treats are kept refrigerated until they arrive at Freshpet fridges in local markets or are delivered directly to consumers.

Freshpet is available in a growing number of mainstream grocery, natural food, club, and pet specialty retailers across the United States, Canada and Europe, as well as online in the U.S. From the care taken in partnering with farmers whose values align with theirs, to how each recipe is made, Freshpet's commitment to integrity, transparency and social responsibility is a point of pride.

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