



Mark Johnson, regional president of Pet Nutrition North America for Mars Petcare, believes the environment today is the most dynamic he's ever experienced, and that is impacting how Mars does business. | Courtesy Mars Petcare

Cargill acquires AnimalBiome pet gut health company

Alyssa Hardt July 26, 2021

Microbiome science used to resolve pet digestive and skin issues.

Adapted from a press release:

Pet owners and veterinarians increasingly want more options to ensure the health and well-being of pets including a growing interest in allergy and gastrointestinal support, diagnosis and treatments. To accelerate the introduction of new products and insights in the pet microbiome modulation space, Cargill announced an investment in AnimalBiome, the Oakland, California-based start-up using microbiome science to restore pet digestive and skin issues.

Research has shown that a balanced gut microbiome (the digestive system and how it handles food for nutrition and energy) is essential to overall health and longevity. When a pet's microbiome is unbalanced, diarrhea, skin, immune system and weight problems occur, and managing unpleasant symptoms can affect the quality of life for pets.

"At Cargill, we share AnimalBiome's goal to help pets live healthier lives," said Jamie Dolynchuk, vice president of Cargill's health technologies business. "AnimalBiome's world-class microbiome sequencing and database make it an ideal partner in the development of our microbiome insights platform for Cargill's health technologies business and we are thrilled to improve our ability to do new product development and product research together."

AnimalBiome provides personalized health products and services rooted in the science of the microbiome to assess, restore, and maintain gut health of cats and dogs. Twenty years of research on animal-microbe interactions conducted by Holly Ganz, PhD., AnimalBiome cofounder and Chief Science Officer, drove AnimalBiome's insights into the interconnectedness of the gut microbiome and pet health.

"Today we provide better solutions to restore balance to the gut microbiomes of companion animals through our in-home microbiome tests, personalized recommendations for diet and supplements, and next generation probiotics to restore key groups of bacteria lost as a result of antibiotic exposure," Ganz said.

"This expansive partnership with Cargill advances our clear leadership position in an exciting, growing market and will enable us to create novel products that will have meaningful impacts on cat and dog health," said Carlton Osborne, AnimalBiome co-founder and CEO. "Restoring and maintaining gut health is the key to resolving many acute and chronic animal health conditions that are costly, heart-breaking, and often avoidable."

AnimalBiome has a database of over 12,500 DNA samples (from 10,000 individual animals). Using advanced genomic sequencing and data analytics, AnimalBiome has developed a healthy microbiome reference database for cats and dogs enabling a personalized approach to microbiome restoration and guideposts for future product development.

Cargill's move into the digestive and immune health space began in 2017 with its acquisition of Diamond V, an animal health company, and investment in Delacon's, phytogenic health solutions.

More news about Cargill in the pet food industry

From previous reporting by Roy Graber, senior reporter for Poultry International: Cargill is promoting its The Chompery brand as butcher-quality premium dog treats, so much so that it is marketing them in the meat aisle at grocery stores across the United States. It may seem unusual for a company to have its pet treats marketed in the meat aisle where meats for human consumption are sold, instead of the pet food aisle. But Tom Windish, president of Cargill Protein's retail channel, said it was a move that made sense.

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401 East State Street, 3rd Floor, Rockford, IL 61104, USA

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