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## **MGP Ingredients' Wheat Gluten Not Linked to Major Pet Food Recall**

ATCHISON, Kan., March 21 /PRNewswire-FirstCall/ -- Tim Newkirk, president and chief operating officer of MGP Ingredients, Inc. (Nasdaq: MGPI), a leading U.S. producer of wheat gluten, today issued a statement emphasizing that the company has no link to the pet food recall involving Canadian-based Menu Foods. Although tests are still underway, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration has reported that it suspects contaminated wheat gluten to be the possible ingredient that has led to the recall.

"I want to assure pet owners, our customers, stockholders and employees that the safety and quality of wheat gluten produced by MGP Ingredients is not in question and that our product is not associated with this sad and unfortunate situation," Newkirk said. "MGP Ingredients, which manufactures wheat gluten at plants in Atchison, Kansas and Pekin, Illinois, is among a small handful of domestic producers of gluten. This, combined with the fact that the gluten supplier to Menu Foods has not yet been disclosed and because certain media reports have fueled speculation and concern that a 'Kansas supplier' may be the source of the gluten in question, have caused people to inquire whether MGPI is involved. The answer is a definite no."

Newkirk acknowledged that MGPI has done business with Menu Foods in the past, noting that the company's last shipment of wheat gluten to Menu occurred over 18 months ago. "We have gone through periods in recent times where we have been forced to curtail our production and sales of wheat gluten due to economic and trade factors that have not allowed us to compete effectively with lower cost gluten imports," Newkirk said. "MGPI has produced gluten since the 1950s and we pride ourselves in our expertise and our high standards of quality," he added.

The company's wheat gluten is sold for use mainly as an ingredient for improving the rising ability and textural qualities of bread and other bakery products. MGPI has also pioneered the development of a number of specialty wheat proteins and starches for use in multiple food systems, as well as pet treats, biopolymers and personal care products. The company additionally produces food grade alcohol for beverage and industrial applications, as fuel grade alcohol, commonly known as ethanol.

SOURCE MGP Ingredients, Inc.