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PIJAC, PIDA LAUNCH NEW ZOOBOTIC DISEASE PREVENTION PET STORE PRO® CHAPTER

Resource seeks to help protect human and animal health by improving animal care practices and reducing spread of zoonotic diseases

LAS VEGAS – August 21, 2019 – The Pet Industry Joint Advisory Council (PIJAC) and the Pet Industry Distributors Association (PIDA) previewed a new Pet Store Pro Zoonotic Disease Prevention chapter during the SuperZoo pet industry trade show today in Las Vegas. Zoonotic diseases, also known as zoonoses, are diseases caused by bacteria, viruses and parasites that can be transferred between animals and humans. Pet Store Pro is a free online training resource for independent pet retailers on pet store best practices.

“The pet care community’s role as partners in pet care together with companion animals and their loving owners means we also have a responsibility to do everything we can to deter the spread of zoonotic diseases,” said Mike Bober, president and CEO of PIJAC. “This new Pet Store Pro Zoonotic Disease Prevention chapter further demonstrates PIJAC, PIDA and the responsible pet care community’s commitment to taking proactive steps to protect human and animal health and helping foster lifelong relationships between people and their pets.”

“It is essential that a retail pet store’s employee training program include best practices to maintain their own health and safety and those of the pets they care for,” said Celeste Powers, CAE, president of PIDA. “This new Zoonotic Disease Prevention chapter is a welcome addition to the Pet Store Pro training suite that helps independent retailers be conscientious pet caretakers as well as run successful, profitable businesses that provide exemplary customer service.”

The new chapter describes proper hygiene and handling practices inside retail stores to help reduce the transmission of germs and bacteria. These include cleaning guidelines, cautions for staff or customers with existing health conditions and hand washing protocols. The chapter also outlines recommendations for sanitizing enclosures and handling animals and their food, bedding and waste.

Lessons are designed to help store associates identify and explain human symptoms and clinical signs of specific diseases that may occur in dogs, cats, small animals, fish, birds, reptiles and amphibians, as well as how to respond to and report suspected zoonotic disease in both animals and humans.

“We at PIJAC and PIDA worked with Dr. Tom Edling, DVM, MSpVM, MPH, along with other specialists and experts across the pet care, veterinary and health care communities to develop this chapter,” said Savonne Caughey, PIJAC’s director of government affairs. “Their input, along with content from fact-based resources such as the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention’s Healthy Pets, Healthy People initiative, makes this an outstanding resource that will help protect human and animal health for years to come.”

The Pet Store Pro Zoonotic Disease Prevention chapter will be available on petstorepro.com in September.

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ABOUT PIJAC:

Since 1970, the Pet Industry Joint Advisory Council (www.pijac.org) has protected pets, pet owners and the pet industry – promoting animal well-being and responsible pet ownership, fostering environmental stewardship, and ensuring the availability of healthy pets. PIJAC members include retailers, companion animal suppliers, manufacturers, wholesale distributors, manufacturers’ representatives, pet hobbyists, and other trade organizations.

ABOUT PIDA:

The Pet Industry Distributors Association (www.pida.org) was organized in 1968 to promote progress within the pet industry and to conduct programs and activities on behalf of the wholesaler-distributor. PIDA’s mission is to enhance the well-being of the wholesaler-distributor, to promote partnerships with their suppliers and customers, and to work cooperatively with other organizations in fostering the human/companion animal bond. Members include pet product wholesaler-distributors, livestock wholesalers and pet product manufacturers.

Pet Store Pro was developed by PIDA to provide independent retailers with consistent, reliable training resources. Launched in 2008 with a focus on business basics and pet care for entry-level employees, the online program now offers 30 associate- and management-level courses and remains 100-percent free, thanks to continued full funding by PIDA’s distributor members.