



**BOARD OF SUPERVISORS  
AGENDA LETTER**

**Agenda Number:**

**Clerk of the Board of Supervisors**  
105 E. Anapamu Street, Suite 407  
Santa Barbara, CA 93101  
(805) 568-2240

**Submitted on:**  
**(COB Stamp)**

**Department Name:** County Health Department  
**Department No.:** 041  
**Agenda Date:** December 16, 2025  
**Placement:** Administrative Agenda  
**Estimated Time:**  
**Continued Item:** No  
**If Yes, date from:**  
**Vote Required:** Majority

**TO:** Board of Supervisors  
**FROM:** Department Director: Mouhanad Hammami, County Health  
Contact: Sarah Aguilar, Animal Services Director (805) -698-0212  
**SUBJECT:** **Animal Shelter Pet Food Agreements with Mars and Central Pet Distribution**

Signed by:  
*Mouhanad Hammami*  
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**County Counsel Concurrence**

As to form: Yes

**Other Concurrence:** Risk Management

As to form: Yes

**Auditor-Controller Concurrence**

As to form: Yes

**Recommended Actions:**

That the Board of Supervisors:

- a) Authorize the County Health Director, or designee, to enter into an agreement with Mars Petcare US, Inc., in the form attached hereto as Attachment B (Mars Agreement), for exclusive purchasing of Mars and/or its Affiliates' pet food products to feed pets in shelter, and to provide certain data to Mars and its Affiliates in compliance with all applicable laws;
- b) Authorize the County Health Director, or designee, to (1) submit a wholesale account application to Central Pet Distribution (Vendor Number 227694) in the form of the Central Pet Distribution Mars Shelter Program New Account Application attached hereto as Attachment D, (2) enter in a purchasing contract with Central Pet Distribution in accordance with County purchasing guidelines, and (3) to submit orders under the Central Pet Agreement, in the form of the Central Pet Mars Shelter Food Order Form attached hereto as Attachment C, an aggregate amount not to exceed \$60,000 annually; and
- c) Determine that the recommended actions are not a "Project" within the meaning of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and are exempt per CEQA Guidelines section 15378(b)(5), because the recommended actions consist of organizational or administrative activities of governments that will not result in direct or indirect physical changes to the environment.

**Summary Text:**

This item is on the agenda to establish an agreement with Mars Petcare US, Inc. for exclusive purchasing of Mars and its Affiliate's pet food products distributed by Central Pet, to feed pets in the Santa Barbara County Animal Shelters. Mars Petcare US, Inc. has offered County Health a discounted rate for pet food products through their Shelter Plus Program. Agreement entails a purchasing contract with the local distributor, Central Pet, an Affiliate of Mars Petcare US, Inc. This action authorizes the County Health Director, or designee, to submit orders, in the form of the Central Pet Mars Shelter Food Order Form up to \$60,000 annually.

**Discussion:**

Mars Petcare US, Inc. (Mars) is a well-known manufacturer of pet food, but does not directly handle distribution. Through its Shelter Plus Program, Mars offers high-quality food to animal shelters at a significant discount, provided the products are purchased through an authorized distributor. Central Pet Distribution is the local Mars authorized distributor, and the vendor contract for product purchases would be with Central Pet Distribution. Participation in the Shelter Plus Program requires the County to enter into an agreement with Mars. Under this agreement, Mars will make food available through Central Pet. Although the Mars Agreement and the Central Pet Agreement are separate, they are interdependent and should be considered together.

The current proposed purchase order is two parts – one agreement with Mars for participation in their Shelter Plus program. Through this program, Mars agrees to discounted prices for specific food brands and items to be offered through a distributor. The second agreement is with Central Pet Distribution, who would be the vendor of product to the County.

It should be noted that Section 4.2 of the Shelter Plus Exclusive Agreement may trigger California Government Code § 26110 and County Code § 26-132, due to the exclusivity of product use and promotion. To ensure compliance with these codes, the department demonstrated necessity, avoided brand endorsement, and completed a Request for Proposal. In addition, Appendix A requires the sharing of certain pet owner data with Mars; for any data defined in Schedule 1, the County must obtain explicit consent prior to disclosure.

**Background:**

On December 18, 2024, a Request for Proposals was opened for bidding animal shelter pet food for Fiscal Year 2025-26. On January 15, 2025, the bidding was opened and yielded no responders. The process for generating a purchase order for Mars/Purina through Central Pet Distribution began in June 2025 to participate in the Shelter Plus program for discounted pet food products. Prior to FY 2025-26, Santa Barbara County Animal Services contracted with Hill's Pet Food, which currently exceeds the prices offered by Mars Petcare US, Inc. through Central Pet, a local distributor.

**Performance Measure:**

Performance will be measured through the following indicators:

- **Cost Efficiency:** Maintain annual pet food expenditures at or below the authorized \$60,000 purchase order amount, demonstrating cost savings compared to prior procurement methods.
- **Supply Reliability:** Ensure 100% continuity of food supply for shelter animals.

**Fiscal and Facilities Impacts:**

The Mars Shelter Plus Exclusive Partnership agreement will automatically renew on an annual basis until terminated in accordance with section 2 of the agreement. There is no dollar amount and no fiscal impact for the Mars Shelter Plus Exclusive Partnership agreement.

The initial Central Pet purchase order in the amount of \$60,000 is expected to be valid through the end of FY 2025-26, renewing annually with the same dollar amount until the Mars Shelter Plus Exclusive Partnership agreement is terminated. An annual renewal amount in excess of \$60,000 would require Board of Supervisors' approval.

Sufficient appropriations were included in the FY 2025-26 Adopted Budget and future fiscal year funding will be included in the department's requested budget, subject to Board approval. There is no additional cost to the General Fund.

Pet food purchases are an ongoing, budgeted cost for County Health Animal Services. Supporting the proposed actions would allow County Health Animal Services to purchase pet food at discounted rates. Not supporting the proposed actions would likely result in an unbudgeted increase to County Health Animal Services pet food costs.

**Special Instructions:**

Please email the minute order to the County Health, Contracts Unit at [phdcu@sbcphd.org](mailto:phdcu@sbcphd.org).

**Attachments:**

**Attachment A** – Pet Food Bid Opening Summary

**Attachment B** – Shelter Plus Program Agreement

**Attachment C** – Central Pet Mars Shelter Food Order Form

**Attachment D** – Central Pet Distribution Mars Shelter Program New Account Application

**Contact Information:**

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