



## Merrick Pet Care, Inc. Company Background

### A Legacy of Quality & Innovation

Since its humble beginnings in 1988, Merrick Pet Care, Inc. has demonstrated its ongoing commitment to meeting the needs of discerning pet parents and their canine and feline family members. By evolving with emerging trends and innovating to not only meet, but exceed, quality nutrition and production standards, Merrick Pet Care understands that feeding time is more than pouring high-quality kibble into a bowl or opening a can of protein-rich canned food. High quality whole food nutrition is a part of our promise.

Pet parents look to support the health and well-being of their four-legged family members by feeding the very best diets possible. Merrick Pet Care's goal is to provide pet parents with every opportunity to meet their desires for improved pet nutrition and high-quality diets through every pet food category – including dry, canned and treats – and with special formulas to meet specific needs.

Merrick's ongoing attention to developing and producing better foods for pets is summarized in Merrick's Five Promises:

- **Local growers:** Ingredients grown by local farmers not only support local communities, but also ensure freshness and food safety.
- **Nutritious, real whole foods:** No artificial additives, sweeteners, colorings or preservatives are used. No glutes are used in grain free recipes. No ingredients from China are used.
- **Balanced nutrition:** Recipes have 30-to-38 percent proteins from meat, poultry and fish ingredients, plus veggies, whole grains and fruit.
- **Health you can see:** Industry-leading levels of protein, healthy fats, glucosamine and chondroitin and highly digestible meat proteins.
- **Cooked in Merrick's own kitchens:** Cooked in small batches in the company's Safe Quality Food (SQF) Level 3-certified kitchens in Hereford, Texas.

### Merrick's Real, Whole Pet Food Revolution of 2012: The Shot Heard 'Round the Bowl

Prior to 2012, Merrick Pet Care had been quietly innovating and reformulating its recipes and production processes based on the latest nutrition research, consultations with farmers and suppliers, and conducting quality assurance with its expert panel of pet taste-testers.

The result of this effort was the beginning of Merrick's Real Whole Food Revolution of 2012.

This "revolution in a bowl" was a part of Merrick's mission to take their portfolio of recipes to the highest standards of nutritional excellence and make the finest product possible in its own kitchens. The company sought out the best regionally sourced ingredients and evaluated all aspects of their manufacturing operations

-more-

to ensure the highest standards of food safety and quality. The Whole Food Revolution produced 12 new or reinvented recipes under the Classic and Grain Free brands, providing balanced nutrition and featuring natural real food ingredients. Merrick's newest recipes complemented its wide variety of additional dry and wet food products.

### **The Revolution Momentum Energized the Organization**

As a part of Merrick's planning for its Real, Whole Food Revolution, all aspects of the business were evaluated and optimized for quality, nutritional integrity, and growth.

Under the leadership of Merrick CEO Greg Shearson in 2011, the company pursued a new approach and mindset based on his consumer packaged goods (CPG) experience in brand building, new product innovation and commitment to mining consumer insight. A veteran of various leading CPG businesses at several Fortune 100 companies including: PepsiCo, Sara Lee, and Procter & Gamble, Shearson began to position Merrick Pet Care for transformational growth and added other experienced executives to the company's leadership team.

During this time, Merrick sought and earned significant quality certifications – important to the organization as it manufactures its own product. In 2012, Merrick Pet Care extended its participation in the super premium category by acquiring the leading organic pet food brand, Castor & Pollux. To accommodate this move into organic products, Merrick's 195,000 square foot production facilities located in Hereford, Texas, became the world's only known Organic certified manufacturer for both dry and canned food for pets under the USDA National Organic Program (NOP). A year later, Merrick facilities earned the Safe Quality Food (SQF) Level 3 certification, which distinguishes Merrick as successfully completing a stringent food safety auditing process and verifies that its facilities are in compliance with Certified HACCP (Hazard Analysis, Critical Control Points) food safety plans. Merrick is the only known self-manufacturer of pet food to have earned this designation.

### **Leading a Growing Pet Food Category**

As the trading up phenomena continues to change the face of the pet food industry, the super-premium and natural/organic pet food segments are estimated to become a \$9.7 billion dollar business within the next five years. More than 16.2 million households are feeding natural or organic foods to their pets, according to Packaged Facts, with estimates that 40 percent of dog-owning households purchase some type of natural/organic pet foods, treats or supplies.

Merrick's legacy includes further investment in the growing grain free category building on its leading share in grain free dog food cans, and posting a #6 share in grain free dry dog food. As of 2013, Merrick's natural and grain free growth is pacing 212% over 32% category growth. In short, Merrick is growing seven times faster than any other grain free brand.

-more-

## **Garth Merrick & the Founding of Merrick Pet Care, Inc.**

Garth Merrick, founder of Merrick Pet Care, Inc., began his family-owned business in 1988 with an idea and the support of his family and friends. Together with his wife, Susie, and their four children, Garth built the company from their home in Hereford, Texas, near Amarillo.

The family first entered the pet care business when Garth created prototype dog treats and made an appointment to “pitch” them with a potential account. The account placed an order for a few varieties of Garth’s dog treats and the family continued to perfect the treats and go beyond. Since then Merrick has been recognized for the all-natural, teeth-cleaning and delicious Flossies Dog Treats, as well as its innovative and “humanized” canned food recipes like Grammy’s Pot Pie, Wingaling, Smothered Comfort and Brauts N Tots.

Today, the company Garth founded with his family has grown to become Merrick Pet Care Inc., a leader in the super-premium pet food category. Its mission is to create the most nutritious and wholesome food that it can, to help families take better care of their pets. According to Garth, that clarity of purpose has helped drive them from the beginning. Over the years, hundreds of employees have helped grow Merrick Pet Care in to a national favorite and a world-class operation.

“The secret to our products is the efforts we make to retain the natural goodness and nutritional integrity of the whole food ingredients we use,” Garth says. “We use the fewest steps we can. We stay away from artificial colors, flavors or preservatives. We believe this approach keeps our customers — and most importantly, their pets – satisfied that our diets are contributing greatly to their pet’s happiness and well-being. We’ve been doing that since the beginning, and we’ll continue to do that in the future.”

###

### **About Merrick Pet Care, Inc.**

Founded in 1988, Amarillo-based Merrick Pet Care, Inc. is a leader in the natural and organic pet food category. With a mission to create the most nutritious and wholesome food, Merrick helps families take better care of their pets by cooking up nutritious, real whole foods for pets. All foods are made in the USA using only the freshest ingredients grown by local farmers. The company offers a wide variety of dry and wet foods, as well as treats, that are available nationally at independent pet specialty stores, Petco and online via select retailers. In April 2012, Merrick Pet Care Inc. acquired Castor & Pollux and its Organix®, Natural Ultramix®, and Good Buddy food and treats for pets. For more information about Merrick or Castor & Pollux, visit [www.merrickpetcare.com](http://www.merrickpetcare.com) or [www.castorpolluxpet.com](http://www.castorpolluxpet.com)

### **Media Contact**

Betsy Berger, Communications Manager  
Merrick Pet Care  
[bberger@merrickpetcare.com](mailto:bberger@merrickpetcare.com)  
847-865-9723

###