

For Immediate Release

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The Merial *Paws to Save Pets*SM Program Continues To Help Pet Shelters Prepare for Natural Disasters

Pet Shelters Nationwide Awarded Grants Totaling \$130,000

Duluth, Ga., July 19, 2008 – Petfinder.com Foundation recently awarded 31 well-deserving shelters a total of \$130,000 to prepare for natural disasters. The funds were made possible through the *Paws to Save Pets* program by Merial. Through this program, Merial – the maker of HEARTGARD[®] (ivermectin) and FRONTLINE[®] brand products – has continued to support the good work of Petfinder.com Foundation and the American Veterinary Medical Foundation (AVMF) as part of its ongoing commitment to the health and safety of pets. The recent grants will pay for items such as generators, emergency lights, back-up communication equipment, repairs and replacements of storm shelters, storage units for emergency supplies, and much more.

The Virginia Beach Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (VBSPCA), one of the recipients of the grants, is actively coordinating a series of disaster preparedness efforts for pet owners affected by the recent tornado devastation in that region. “This grant could not have come at a better time,” said Karla Campbell, development director, Virginia Beach SPCA. “This generous grant will assist us in finalizing the preparations needed to sustain our shelter operation and perform essential functions in the event of a hurricane or a similar disaster in the Virginia Beach area.”

The grant recipients were selected by the Foundation from a pool of more than 100 applicants. Betsy Saul, president of the Petfinder.com Foundation board, said it was a difficult task reviewing all of the applications and determining which

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organizations should receive the grants. "All pet shelters do such important work to help and care for pet victims of natural disasters," said Saul. "We hope these grants will help the recipients be better prepared for a natural calamity, and generate interest among other agencies and individuals to be better prepared."

The Foundation encourages pet owners to always have a disaster plan and a checklist of important information, such as the pet's vaccination records and medical history, veterinary information and medication regimen, as well as extra doses of parasite protection products. A complete emergency checklist is available online at www.pawstosavepets.com.

"We are extremely grateful for the support of thousands of veterinary clinics across the country that have helped us raise funds and spread the message about the *Paws to Save Pets* program, said Hal Little, DVM, director of Veterinary Field Services at Merial. "These clinics are true partners with us in ensuring the health and safety of pets affected by natural disasters."

Paws to Save Pets, through its partner agencies, Petfinder.com Foundation and AVMF, provides emergency relief to pet victims of disasters. Since its inception in 2005, the *Paws to Save Pets* program has raised over \$3 million in cash and products for emergency medications, disaster preparedness, treatments and shelter for pets injured or displaced during times of crisis, and to help reunite pets with their families. To learn more about *Paws to Save Pets* visit www.pawstosavepets.com, www.petfinder.com or www.avmf.org.

Merial is a world-leading, innovation-driven animal health company, providing a comprehensive range of products to enhance the health, well-being and performance of a wide range of animals. Merial employs more than 5,000 people and operates in more than 150 countries worldwide. Its 2007 sales were nearly \$2.5 billion. Merial Limited is a joint venture between Merck & Co., Inc. and sanofi-aventis. For more information, please visit www.merial.com.

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