



Pet Food Caution

or: why our animals are as sick as us these days

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As responsible breeders, we do our best to ensure that our breeding stock and the puppies or kittens they produce are healthy and vibrant. A large part of this responsibility lies in what we feed them. The old adage "You are what

you eat" applies to our animals too!

Science suggests that for millennia, dogs ate a diet mainly composed of raw meat and bones, along with eggs, some grains and fresh foods. Recently a trend has started among pet owners of making home-made raw dog food with these ingredients; but for most of us, feeding that ancestral diet simply isn't a viable option.

With the plethora of commercial dog foods available today, each making a different health claim, it can quickly become confusing and frustrating to try to choose a feed that will benefit our animals without breaking the bank. Yes, pet chow has become a high dollar product, which makes it even more susceptible to the corrupting influence of greed.

Adding to the confusion is the issue of pet food safety. So far this year, the FDA recalled 9 pet food products, for issues as diverse as salmonella, plastic pieces, vitamin deficiency, unapproved antibiotics in food, and aflatoxin contamination. The last issue made headlines throughout the pet industry in 2013. Aflatoxins are metabolic waste products of the fungus *Aspergillus flavus*, and are considered to be among the most cancer-causing agents on the planet.

Some of the most disturbing problems with pet food, however, are those for which there is no recall. More people are becoming concerned about the risks of genetically modified (GM) foods, both to ourselves and our animals.

Some GM foods are engineered to produce their own built in pesticide in every cell which generates a poison that splits open a bug's stomach and kills it when the bug tries to eat the plant. This represents the first time "cell-interior toxicity" is being sold for human – and therefore canine – consumption.

There is little knowledge of the potential long-term health impacts; but the initial research is disturbing. Studies on animals fed GM crops show significant problems with reproduction and life expectancy. Unfortunately, the most common GM foods – corn, soy, cottonseed and canola – are found in abundance in most commercial pet foods.

Another area of concern is the meat by-products often found in pet food. In many cases the rendered meat used in these products came from condemned animals that may have been decayed or that were euthanized, thus giving your dogs small doses of the lethal euthanizing drug pentobarbital every time they chow down on their feed.

So how can we feed our dogs for optimum health and vitality, protect them from possible food hazards, and do it without dedicating our lives to grinding up raw bones or buying ultra-expensive specialty feed? Here are a few suggestions most every expert agrees upon:

- Feed a wet food if possible. These usually contain more animal protein and less fillers like corn and wheat. If that's not an option,
- Carefully study the ingredients list of any dry dog food you buy. Choose one that's low in corn or grain in any form and high in animal protein – some type of meat should be listed in the first 3 ingredients.
- Keep up-to-date with pet food recalls. The FDA makes them public on its website:
<http://www.fda.gov/animalveterinary/safetyhealth/recalls/withdrawals/default.htm>.

We are intimately involved with dogs 24/7. As breeders, we have the insider view of what's happening to pets in the 21st century...

obesity, arthritis, allergies, diabetes, cancer and dental disease are COMMON in dogs and cats these days. The quest for quality animal feeds has become central to our livelihood and the endurance of our breeds.

Tools / Links:

[INVESTIGATE PET FOODS with DOG FOOD ADVISOR.COM](#)

[MORE ON GM FOOD by DR. MICHAEL FOX](#)

[AFLATOXIN INFO from DR. KAREN BECKER](#)

[RETAILERS PULL CHINESE -MADE TREATS FROM SHELVES \(last month\)](#)

[A CLEARINGHOUSE FOR PET FOOD INFO](#)

[FDA Video on Pet Food Safety in Your Home](#)