

Nutritional Recommendations

- Many pet foods start out with ingredients that will not provide your pet with optimal nutrition. It is important to read the first five ingredients on the packaging and stay away from foods that include corn as one of the first ingredients or that list two or more grains prior to a protein. It is also important to note that even pet foods that start out with excellent ingredients in some cases will not provide optimal nutrition as they can often go through chemical, heat, and pressure processing that causes the nutritional value to be depleted.
- Before the last 140 years, there were no commercial pet foods; most pet foods were not developed until the last 60 – 70 years. How did dogs and cats evolve for the past 10,000 years? By eating what they caught (their prey) or what we gave them of our food. We carry a raw diet called Nature's Variety that has been designed with this in mind. It is composed of raw muscle meat, organ meat, ground up bones, and fruits and vegetables. This is a fresh frozen raw diet that you simply thaw in the refrigerator and feed to your pet. This food may be fed either as a stand-alone diet, or in conjunction with other foods. When feeding Nature's Variety, it is also best to rotate proteins so as to decrease the likelihood of your pet developing a food allergy or sensitivity.
- The majority of a pet's diet should be meat including beef, lamb, poultry, fish and eggs, and ground or chopped vegetables including broccoli, cauliflower, brussel sprouts, squash, zucchini, dark leafy greens, and sweet potatoes. This diet may come from a food such as Nature's Variety and/or from a home-prepared diet. Fruits, grains, and dairy may also be fed depending on your pet's nutritional needs and/or sensitivities.
- It is important to note that there are some foods that may be toxic to your pets and, therefore, should not be fed to them: grapes, raisins, macadamia nuts, chocolate (or anything else with caffeine) and onions. In addition, cats should not be fed garlic.
- If you are going to feed your pet more traditional (dry, canned) pet foods, please select from those that are truly better quality. A list of these is provided for you on the next page. Also included on this list is a variety of options for fresh frozen raw foods. Finally, you will find a listing of web sites that provide excellent information on transitioning your pet to a raw diet.

The following grid provides information on what I consider to be “better quality” commercial pet foods. Please note that the foods are listed in no particular order and that the list is not exhaustive as the number of more highly nutritious foods grows constantly. As you can see, the foods come in the form of either dry (i.e. kibble), canned, fresh frozen raw, and/or freeze dried. You will also note that with some of the foods, there are grain and grain free varieties available.

Name	Grain	Grain Free	Dry/Kibble	Canned	Raw	Freeze Dried
Taste of the Wild		X	X			
Evo		X	X	X		
Instinct (Nature's Variety)		X	X	X		
Core (Wellness)		X	X	X		
Merrick	X	X	X	X		
Canine Caviar	X	X	X	X	X	
Feline Caviar	X		X	X		
Timberwolf Organics	X	X	X	X		
Wellness Super 5 Mix	X		X	X		
Wysong	X		X	X		X
Natural Balance	X	X	X	X		
Blue Buffalo	X		X	X		
Evanger's	X	X	X	X		
Canidae	X	X	X	X		
Felidae	X		X	X		
California Natural	X		X	X		
Prairie (Nature's Variety)	X		X	X		
Solid Gold	X	X	X	X		
Premium Edge	X		X	X		
Bravo					X	X
Oma's Pride					X	X
Primal						X
Honest Kitchen						X
Nature's Variety					X	X

It is important to note that prices for these foods range from approximately \$1.50 – \$3.00/pound. While this may seem expensive, your pet will be eating less and processing food better. Healthier pets = less visits to the vet!

For more information on feeding your pet a raw diet, please visit the following web sites:

www.naturesvariety.com

www.rawmeatybones.com

www.catinfo.org

www.dogtorj.net

www.skylarzack.com/rawfeeding.htm

www.natural-akita.com/NaturalCanine/NCindex.html