



PFAC DISCUSSES PET FOOD INGREDIENT MISCONCEPTIONS

Pet health and nutrition are important topics for pet lovers and were discussed recently on The Dr. Oz Show. A lot of information was shared during the segment, some of which provided misconceptions we would like to clarify.

- Many brands of pet food sold in Canada are manufactured in the USA. These foods are legally imported with the oversight of the Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA). Part of the import requirement is a rigorous inspection process defined by the CFIA. Members of the Pet Food Association of Canada are in the business of producing safe and nutritious food for the nation's pets. While there is no omnibus regulation of pet food in Canada, there is still significant oversight of pet food production, including inspections, HACCP programs and good manufacturing practices (GMPs) all aimed at producing safe and nutritious food.
- In the USA, there are laws and regulations in place to ensure safe production of animal food, including pet food. The Federal Food, Drug and Cosmetic Act (FFDCA) requires all animal food, like human food, be safe to eat, produced under sanitary conditions, contain no harmful substances and be truthfully labelled.
- In Canada, the members of the Pet Food Association of Canada adhere to the model regulation of the American Association of Feed Control Officials (AAFCO). This model requires scientific formulation, product testing and safe manufacturing practices. You can see more about AAFCO at www.aafco.org
- Ingredients used to develop an animal's diet are reviewed for safety and efficacy by federal and state agencies, including the U.S. Food and Drug Administration. It is said that this process is more rigorous than reviewing an ingredient for human food because the government requires the company to demonstrate the ingredient actually does what is claimed on the package.

- Pet food labeling is regulated by the Consumer Packaging and Labelling Act. Every printed word on the package must be truthful and verifiable and not misleading. Companies must be prepared to defend their package statements in the event of a complaint.
- The North American animal food industry takes great pride in providing healthy, safe animal food for pets. Decades of research into pet nutrition ensure that pet food is precisely formulated to ensure the animal is fed all the required nutrients for its particular life stage. Product testing confirms the availability of the nutrients. Supplemental feeding is not required if the diet is properly formulated.
- Pet food companies provide complete and balanced products, meaning each serving is a full meal for your pet providing its nutrition requirements. Each ingredient in a pet food recipe serves a function. There are no “fillers”.
- On occasion, your veterinarian may suggest a therapeutic food that is formulated to assist in the treatment of a particular illness. Therapeutic foods should always be fed with the oversight of your veterinarian.
- The production of animal food is not just a career for many who work for pet food companies. For the most part, these individuals are pet owners themselves and are dedicated to producing food for animals that is safe, nutritious and affordable. They not only feed their own pets the food produced, they take great pride in knowing that pet owners can go to their local pet store and purchase products that offer a safe, balanced diet for their furry family members.
- Pet obesity is generally a function of over feeding. Each pet food package contains a feeding guide. However, it is a GUIDE. You must adjust the amounts you feed your pet taking into account its age, activity level and its propensity to gain weight. Diet is a conversation to have with your veterinarian at every annual checkup. Your veterinarian can assess your pet’s overall health including its weight and make suggestions for adjustment if required.

For more on this subject, please click [here](#).