



DR. JOSIE'S

5 ELEMENT ANIMAL WELLNESS

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DR. JOSIE'S FAVORITE PET FOODS FOR 2024

How I came up with my List

- listening to reputable sources in the industry who investigate pet food manufacturers and formulate food, references found in footnotes
- investigating pet food companies in terms of sourcing, organic, nonGMO, sustainability, free-range, pasture-raised vs feedlot/agribusiness.
- experience from clients and personal experience feeding the foods to my own pets
- this list is ever-evolving as the marketplace changes

General Feeding Recommendations:

- There is no 100% perfectly balanced pet food.
- No one knows exactly what nutrients domestic dogs and cats need. The closest resource is the National Resource Council's recommendations but they are not perfect.
- AAFCO requirements are based upon processed kibble, not whole food diets.
- There is research indicating that the more fresh, unprocessed food dogs are fed, the healthier their microbiome is and their health in general, including increasing their lifespan.
- To achieve a balanced diet:
 - a. rotate between several different brands
 - b. rotate protein sources to get a full spectrum of nutrients
 - c. add a whole, pasture-raised egg several times a week
 - d. add in as much fresh food as you are able

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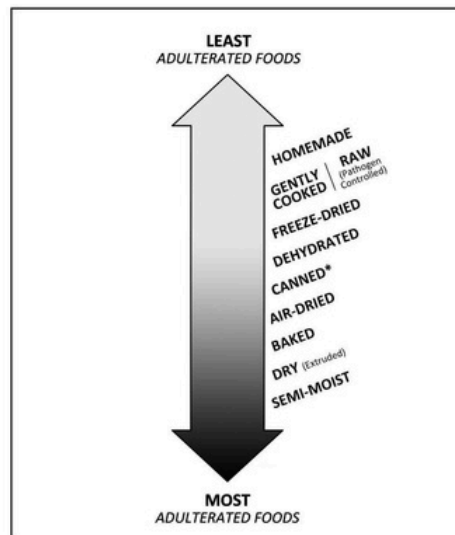
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Degree of Processing:

Try to feed as much whole, unprocessed or minimally processed food as possible. Fresh whole foods improve the microbiome, minimize inflammation and provide nutrients in a bioavailable form that the body more readily recognizes and utilizes.

Here is a diagram from the book *the Forever Dog*. If you want more information on dog nutrition and the research behind it, I highly recommend you get a copy of [the Forever Dog](#) and [the Forever Dog Life](#) by Dr. Karen Becker and Rodney Habib. well as [“Feeding Dogs”](#) by Dr. Conor Brady.

Look at the ingredient label to get an idea of how many times the ingredients have been processed using heat. If the food must be kept frozen (is not shelf stable), that’s your best indication of freshness. If the food is shelf stable (freezing not required), some process was used to stabilize the food. Freeze-drying is the least harmful to nutrients, followed by low-temp dehydration. If you have questions about whether the ingredients are fresh or preprocessed (dried), call the company and ask. The lower the adulteration score, the healthier the food.



Dry food/Kibble:

For the past 20 years I have encouraged clients to transition from a highly processed dry food to a fresh, species-appropriate whole food diet.

In January, 2024 I was alerted to a deadly situation arising in kibble-fed dogs. I am a veterinary moderator on a Facebook group. We began noticing a dramatic increase in severe reactions, i.e. hemorrhagic gastroenteritis, pancreatitis, seizures, sudden death, that were coinciding with pet owners feeding a new bag of kibble. This quickly expanded to multiple brands, dry and canned food, cat and dog food.

After months of pet owners reporting illnesses and deaths, gathering information, and toxicology testing of multiple samples, we believe it is related to a fumigant used to kill pests in dry food products. Due to the nature of the fumigant, it is extremely difficult to test for and to link directly to the deaths.

Due to the nature of the processed pet food industry, the low quality of ingredients they use, i.e. 4D animals - dead, dying, diseased, disabled, plus remnants from the GMO grain/corn industry, and the high potential for toxins from pesticides, antifungals, aflatoxins, and heavy metals, I cannot conscientiously recommend kibble for any animal.

If you absolutely have no other choice, these 2 brands may be ok to hold them over for a short time period.



Open Farm: <https://openfarmpet.com/>

- human-grade food ingredients, feed-grade supplements
- certified humanely raised

Carna4: <https://carna4.com/>

- oven dried at low temperatures vs. extruded
- organic sprouted seeds
- no meat meal

Freeze-dried/Dehydrated:

There are many options available in this category that may sound good but there are some issues.

1. Freeze-drying and dehydrating food does create nutrient losses, for example 10-15% of B vitamins are lost due to freeze-drying and 25-30% lost due to dehydrating.
2. Rancid fats are a large concern. Once a package of freeze-dried or dehydrated fat is opened it should be stored in a cool, dry space with the bag folded up to minimize oxygen exposure. Do not store it in the refrigerator.
3. Buy smaller single serve packages or the smallest package possible so it is used up quickly.
4. AAFCO has not defined freeze-dried vs air dried so there are no manufacturing standards in place.
5. These foods must be rehydrated with water and not fed as dry food, as intestinal impactions have occurred, especially in small dogs.
6. Not recommended for cats due to potential loss of vitamins and lack of moisture.

Green Juju: <https://greenjuju.com>

- complete and balanced
- limited ingredient for dogs with food allergies or protein rotation
- responsibly sourced, pasture raised proteins
- bison, beef, pork, rabbit

The Simple Food Project: <https://simplefoodproject.com/>

- all ingredients human-grade, certified organic
- no synthetic supplements
- 3 different sized bags, so can use up to avoid rancidity

Small Batch: <https://smallbatchpets.com/>

- human-grade, verified organic
- certified humanely raised, fish oil sustainably sourced
- supplements human- grade

Side by Side: <https://sidebysidepet.com/>

- nonGMO, whole foods
- no synthetics or additives

Gently cooked:

Some people feel "safer" with gently cooked foods over raw, although both are safe and have had fewer pathogenic bacteria recalls than dry food in the past 10 years. Some older dogs or animals who are finicky eaters do better on gently cooked. It is more expensive to feed above all the other categories.

All Provide: <https://allprovide.com/>

- ships direct
- human-grade ingredients, non-GMO, sourced USA
- Dr Judy Morgan's Puploaf

Evermore: <https://www.evermorepetfood.com/>

- all ingredients human-grade, certified organic, humanely raised
- only 1 synthetic supplement - zinc
- USDA - inspected facility
- small company, ships direct

Goodness Gracious: <https://www.goodnessgracioustreats.com/>

- all ingredients human-grade, no synthetic vitamins and minerals
- cat and dog gently cooked, treats and recipes
- USDA - inspected facility
- small company, ships direct

Raised Right: <https://www.raisedrightpets.com/>

- ships direct
- human-grade, supplements food-based
- formulated by Dr. Karen Becker
- USDA-inspected facility

Small Batch: <https://smallbatchpets.com/>

- human-grade, verified organic, gently cooked cat and dog
- certified humanely raised, fish oil sustainably sourced
- supplements human- grade
- USDA-inspected facility

Frozen Raw Commercial Foods:

I used to hand clients recipes for pet food, but now we have many high quality options available on a commercial basis.

Feeding raw food is as safe, and sometimes safer than feeding dry kibble. Freezing actually kills off pathogenic bacteria. It just needs to be thawed out in the refrigerator and handled like we handle our own raw meat before we cook it.

I have been feeding raw to my own animals since 1993 when I made my own. Now I feed commercial with fresh food additions from my kitchen.

I do recommend allowing the thawed out raw to come to room temperature before feeding by either allowing it to sit out for 30 min or placing the container in a hot water bath for 15 minutes. I just fill my sink up with hot water to create a quick 10-15 hot water bath.

Green Juju: <https://greenjuju.com>

- complete and balanced
- limited ingredient for dogs with food allergies or protein rotation
- responsibly sourced, pasture-raised proteins
- beef, pork, rabbit/duck, goat, lamb

Raw Bistro: <https://rawbistro.com/>

- ships direct east coast
- formulated by Steve Brown, detailed, quality
- human-grade food and supplements, free-range beef, humanely raised
- no HPP, no bacteriophages

Savage raw cat food: <https://savagecatfood.com/>

- Cat only
- well formulated for cats specific nutrient needs
- human-grade food and supplements
- no HPP, no bacteriophages

All Provide: <https://allprovide.com/>

- ships direct
- human-grade ingredients, non-GMO, sourced USA
- Dr Judy Morgan's Puploaf plus TCVM 5 Element Constitutional diets

Small Batch: <https://smallbatchpets.com/>

- Dog and cat
- meat blends for DIY and adding to base mixes, ie Dr. Harvey's and Honest Kitchen
- only use humanely raised and harvested meats that are hormone and antibiotic-free from start to finish
- they strive to use organic meat whenever possible. Beef and lamb are always pasture raised and poultry and rabbit are always free-range.
- fresh whole vegetables and herbs that are certified organic, non-GMO and free of pesticides
- no synthetic vitamins
- no HPP, no bacteriophages

Solutions Pet Products: <https://solutionspetproducts.com/>

- Dog and cat, with some modifications
- sourced from regenerative farms, a holistic land management practice that produces healthy microbe-rich soil for healthy plants, animals, humans and the environment.
- using fermentation as a food preservation method and to increase the foods impact on the gut microbiome
- several proteins, raw goats milk formulations, raw cheese with herbal supplements
- in terms of cost:benefit ratio, this food is well worth the cost, and actually costs less to feed a 30 lb dog than many other fresh foods on the market
- Personal note: this food has been the only food I have witnessed actually reverse disease processes in my patients
- local retailers, store finder on website, distribution increasing



Pre-Mixes:

Dr Harvey's: <https://drharveys.com/products/dogs>

- Paradigm: veggie and herb low carb premix for ketogenic diets
- Raw Vibrance: mix of 21 whole foods for a balanced diet
- Simply add hot water to the base-mix, add your choice of protein and oil for a complete diet.
- Non-gmo certified, made in USA
- a simple way to create a balanced diet, with cooked or raw protein you source and add in.

Puppy food:

Growing puppies have unique requirements, especially when it comes to the calcium:phosphorous balance in their food.

The ratio of calcium to phosphorus for healthy bone and joint development is a very narrow range of 1.1 to 1.4. Most pet foods formulated for “all life stages” do not have the narrow calcium: phosphorus ratio to build strong bones and joints.

The following 3 brands have specific formulations for puppies to achieve the proper ratio:

Solutions Pet Products: <https://solutionspetproducts.com/>

- by following the feeding calculator on their website and combining with raw milk and bone broth products, the proper CA:P ratio can be easily fed
- sourced from regenerative farms, a holistic land management practice that produces healthy microbe-rich soil for healthy plants, animals, humans and the environment.
- using fermentation as a food preservation method and to increase the foods impact on the gut microbiome
- several proteins, raw goats milk formulations, raw cheese with herbal supplements
- in terms of cost:benefit ratio, this food is well worth the cost, and actually costs less to feed a 30 lb dog than many other fresh foods on the market

All Provide: <https://allprovide.com/>

- specific PUPPY recipe
- ships direct
- human-grade ingredients, non-GMO, sourced USA

Raised Right: <https://www.raisedrightpets.com/>

- PUPPY specific formula
- human-grade, supplements food-based
- formulated by Dr. Karen Becker
- USDA-inspected facility



TREATS:

Good quality treats are just as important as good quality food.
Here are 2 of my favorite treat companies:

Real Dog Box: <https://www.real.dog>

- air dried treats with no additives, preservatives or sugars
- hand-packed, made in San Diego in FDA registered facility
- have treats for small, medium and large dogs

Farm Hounds: <https://www.farmhounds.com>

- air dried treats, jerky with no additives, preservatives or sugars
- sourced from American regenerative farms, supporting local, small farmers and ranchers

References

- Susan Thixton's The Truth About Food 2023 "The List"
- reviews by Steve Brown, formulator for the very first commercial raw diet
- Dr. Karen Becker/Rodney Habib "The Forever Dog"
- "Feeding Dogs", Dr. Conor Brady
- my own dog and cats for being test subjects
- all of my patients who have received the gift of good nutrition from their caregivers