



Nutrition News from Nature's Variety

CHOOSING A SAFE AND HEALTHY DIET FOR YOUR PETS

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For pet “parents” and veterinarians alike, the past few months have been difficult ones when the question is asked: “How can I select a safe pet food?”

The majority of pet foods utilize ingredients that are produced as a result of “processing”. These ingredients are labeled “by-products” which include wheat and corn glutes and rice protein concentrates..

Pet food companies have been struggling to keep up with the growing list of recalled foods, and many companies have found their sales flagging in the wake of this widespread tragedy that has struck so many of our beloved pets.

Yet a few pet food manufacturers are seeing their sales increase substantially. This is because these are the manufacturers of the “natural” and “holistic” diets who have made their mark in the pet food industry by NOT using either processed grain by-products or processed animal by-products.

The Association of Animal Feed Control Officials (AAFCO) is a pet food industry organization created to help regulate and oversee the nutritional standards, quality and safety of pet foods.

Although this organization uses the most recently-accepted standards in animal nutrition, the livestock feed industry, which is where the pet food industry finds its roots, it does not recognize an advantage to the feeding of wholesome ingredients. As long as ingredients contain the desired nutrients for a pet food recipe, nutritionists feel it doesn't matter if those materials are derived from by-products or from wholesome ingredients.

Many pet guardians disagree with this. By feeding pet foods with wholesome ingredients, they have seen a difference in haircoat and stool, as well as attitude, energy, and sometimes an improvement in chronic disease problems.

The best way to ensure that your pet is receiving a diet that contains ONLY wholesome ingredients is to read the label. AAFCO regulates the language that can be used on pet food labels to protect you, the consumer. Do not buy foods that contain words indicating that the ingredients are by-products. Look for words like: by-product, mill run, digest, gluten, and middlings to indicate that these are foods that contain by-products.