

Dead Cats and Dogs used to make Pet Food

We see pictures of whole grains, prime cuts of meat and human grade vegetables on the bag, and we assume there's some chef in a pet food kitchen cooking up the best for our loved ones.

Unfortunately, this is far from the truth. Most of what makes up dog and cat food comes from the rendering plant.

To render, as defined in Webster's Dictionary, is "to process as for industrial use: to render livestock carcasses and to extract oil from fat, blubber, etc., by melting." When chickens, lambs, cattle, swine, and other animals are slaughtered for food, usually only the lean muscle is cut off for human consumption. This leaves about 50 percent of a carcass left over. These leftovers are what become what we so commonly find on pet food labels, such as "meat-and-bone-meal" or "by-products."

So basically, what pets eat are lungs, ligaments, bones, blood and intestines. Some other things that go into rendering to make your Cat and Dog Food are:

*** Euthanized companion animals Cats and Dogs**

*** Spoiled meat from the supermarket, Styrofoam wrapping and all**

*** Road kill that can't be buried on the roadside**

*** The "4 D's" of cattle: dead, dying, disease and disabled**

*** Rancid restaurant grease**

When dead animals from cow pastures are picked up, they may not be rendered until up to a week after they are dead. Because of this, it is estimated that E. coli bacteria contaminate more than 50 percent of meat meals.

The rendering process destroys the bacteria, but it does not eliminate the endotoxins bacteria release when they die.

These endotoxins, which can cause sickness and disease, are not tested for by pet food manufacturers. When all this comes to the rendering plant, it's put in a huge vat and shredded. Then it's cooked at 220 to 270 degrees for 20 to 60 minutes. After it cools, the grease is skimmed off the top.

This is "animal fat." The rest is pressed and dried. This is "meat and bone meal." Dogs wouldn't eat this stuff in the wild, so why will they eat it out of their bowls? Their noses are tricked by the smell of it. The smell of animal fats for dogs and fish oil for cats is sprayed on the dry, bland kibble bits to make them appetizing.

These flavors usually come from rendered restaurant grease, animal fat, or other oils unfit for human consumption. Huge conglomerates use pet food companies as a cheap, and even profitable, way of disposing of the waste from their human food companies. Three of the five major pet food companies are owned by these huge corporations.

Who owns what? Corporation & Pet Foods:

Nestle: Alpo, Fancy Feast, Friskies, Mighty Dog, Purina One

Heinz: 9 Lives, Amore, Gravy Train, Kibbles-n-Bits, Nature's Recipe

Proctor & Gamble: Eukanuba and Iams

Mars: Kal Kan, Mealttime, Pedigree, Sheba, Waltham's

Colgate-Palmolive: Hill's Science Diet

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VETERINARIANS AND PET FOOD

So, why don't vets warn people? The question should be, what makes veterinarians think they can recommend food. In Food Pets Die For, Ann Martin says, Our family physician doesn't display weight loss products in the reception room So why is this going on in our veterinary clinics that do not specialize in nutrition. She says she considers it unethical for vets to sell pet food unless they are trained in pet nutrition. The reason your vet thinks so highly of the pet food they sell probably has more to do with money than nutrition. In vet school, the only classes offered on nutrition usually last a few weeks, and are taught by representatives from the pet food companies.

Vet students may also receive free food for their own dogs and cats at home. They could get an Iams notebook, a Purina purse and some free pizza. The companies also hire students to be representatives for the company and to promote their products to other students. This issue was even placed on the agenda for an Executive Committee meeting at the vet school at Colorado State University. According to the minutes discussion was held on how to handle dealing with pet food companies and their donations of pet food to the university. It was agreed to put together a task force to discuss this issue, investigate the possibilities, and make suggestions to the Executive Council on how to work with the numerous pet food companies that want to donate to CSU. There was no further mention of this topic in meetings since.

In May 2000, Purina made the announcement that in an effort to help university, veterinary hospitals provide optimal nutrition recommendations for dogs and cats, Ralston Purina is funding three new veterinary diet technician positions. They donated \$100,000 to support these positions for the first year. How would you feel about a company that paid your salary?

CHEMICALS IN PET FOOD

Because the ingredients in pet food aren't exactly as pure as consumers are made to believe, not only is the food unhealthy, it may also be poisonous. When the "food" comes out of the rendering plant, there's no way it would be bought by a consumer or eaten by a dog. To make it more pleasing to the eyes of owners and the mouths of animals, the producers of pet food add a myriad of chemicals. To keep the food fresh, the first thing added is a preservative. The bags of food must stay fresh through shipping and on the shelf. There are several synthetic preservatives out there:

- * Butylated hydroxyanisole (BHA)
- * Butylated hydroxytoluene (BHT)
- * Propylene glycol (also used as automotive antifreeze)
- * Ethoxyquin

There is little known about the effect these chemicals may have on an animal. Some experts and veterinarians claim ethoxyquin is the best and safest preservative on the market, others claim it is a potential carcinogen, causing skin problems and infertility in dogs. Some other things that may be added to your dog or cat food are:

- * Coloring agents
- * Drying agents
- * Flavoring agents
- * Lubricants
- * Nutritive Sweeteners
- * Texturizers

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IS THERE CAT AND DOG IN PET FOOD?

Reporter John Eckhouse was one of the first people to discover the practice of sending euthanized pets to the rendering plants. He quoted an employee of Sacramento Rendering as saying, "Thousands and thousands of pounds of dogs and cats are picked up and brought here every day." When a vet tells a grieving owner that they'll "take care" of their dead loved one, they usually mean sending it off with the disposal company for rendering. This is all perfectly legal. Many veterinarians and especially shelters don't have the money to bury or cremate animals. Although many in the pet food industry deny that they use euthanized animals, proof that the practice goes on continues to surface.

Also - Do you know what is in 'meat meal' - the major constituent of dry dog and cat food? Urine, fecal matter, hair, pus, meat (from animals, afflicted) with cancer and T.B., etc."