



OPTIMUM CHOICES, LLC
Healthy choices for people and pets

Newsletter Article

What Pet Food Companies Don't Want You to Know but Things You Should Know

50 years ago people did not feed dry kibble and canned food was only used by those well-off and those that chose to pamper their pet. Today most people feed dry kibble or canned food to their dog and cat owners routinely leave free-feeders full of those delicious cookies down all day for their cat. Pet food advertising claims dry kibble provides a complete and balanced diet for your beloved pet. So, are our pets healthier than they were 50 years ago?

50 years ago pets rarely got cancer, diabetes, chronic renal failure and auto-immune diseases. 50 years ago pets routinely lived to 15-20 years and it was not uncommon for cats to live to be 20+ years old. In 2005, a Morris Animal Foundation study found nearly 50% of older pets WILL GET CANCER. Today, the average life span of a Golden Retriever is only 7-8 years old. Golden Retrievers are reported to have a 63% chance of contracting cancer.

When trying to explain these appalling statistics, one must absolutely consider this change to a dry kibble diet as a probable cause. Join Wendy, on April 8, as she explores with Russell, What Pet Food Companies Don't Want You to Know but Things You Should Know.

HealthyLife.Net Radio Show

**Wendy's Animal Talk, Host Wendy Nan Rees
Guest Russell Louie**

**What Pet Food Companies Don't Want You to Know
but Things You Should Know
April 8, 2008, 1-2:00 PM PDT**

1. Are commercial dog and cat foods both safe and healthy?

If one considers the billions of pounds of pet food purchased annually and the rate of illness attributed to this pet food, I think one can conclude that pet food is almost as safe as people food.

When I consider the question of how healthy this same pet food is, I would have to say, no, standard dry kibble food purchased at most grocery, big-box stores and warehouses are not relatively healthy for our pets.

2. Why are there so many pet food recalls?

I think there are two reasons. One is that a lot of the ingredients used in standard pet food are ingredients that are unsuitable for human consumption. If you look at who owns the large pet food manufacturers, it is large conglomerate companies that manufacture people food. To



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save costs, they funnel all the sub-standard ingredients, not fit for human consumption, to their pet food subsidiaries. A really good article with specifics, should be a must read for your listeners is, the Animal Protection Institute's ***What's Really in Pet Foods*** article. API goes into the whole evolution of the pet food industry and explores the food chain for pet food ingredients. Direct link to this article on our home page:
www.OptimumChoices.com/Click here for pet food recall information. Just click on the API logo in the middle of the page.

3. Is this just a recent phenomena?

No, I don't think so. I believe pets have gotten sick from food before but the widespread nature and the visibility has not been as great. I see two modern-day reasons for this. One is the viral nature of the Internet. Within a matter of days, the whole world can learn about a developing trend just beginning to take shape in one corner of the world

The other reason is society's value of pets has dramatically increased in the last 50 years. According to Dr. Kevin Fitzgerald (Animal Planet) a survey was conducted in 1957 posing the question: Do you consider your pet(s) a part of your family? The same survey was repeated in 2004. Here are the results.

Do you consider your pet(s) a part of your family?

1957 = 43% answered "yes"

2004 = 97% answered "yes"

Clearly, society's value of pets has changed. Illness or death of a pet to some people is like the death of a child.

4. What are my holistic alternatives for safe and healthy pet food?

There are many smaller premium pet food manufacturers that are either family owned or small enough to place a high priority on quality pet food. I would investigate every brand that one buys pet food from and ask them some direct questions about where they get their ingredients and what kind of testing and quality controls they have in place.

We prefer NOT to feed our pets any form of dry kibble since grains (especially wheat and corn) have been the major culprit in the last two pet food recalls. We feel grains are an inappropriate ingredient in a carnivore's diet. We personally feed a raw food diet to our cats and dogs, occasionally supplemented with premium canned food.

5. Won't premium food cost me more money?

Yes, but there is an old saying from a commercial: "You can pay me now or you can pay me later." The money you spend on healthy, premium food today will be saved on medical bills when your pet gets to be a senior. More important to me, is the fact that I will extend the life of my pet from the modern-day standard life span of 8-15 years to a healthy 15-20 years.



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6. Can you give me some safety guidelines?

That's actually part of the topic for our next show: What Pet Food Companies Don't Want You to Know but Things You Should Know. But let me give you a few guidelines until next month.

A. Buy premium quality foods that do not have any wheat, corn or soy products. Soy is especially bad for our pet's hormonal system, especially the thyroid gland.

B. Don't buy any foods that contain meat by-products or by-products of any kind. By-products can contain feet, heads, beaks, hides, hooves and other indigestible animal parts.

C. Don't buy any pet food with chemical preservatives in it, especially ethoxyquine which has been linked to cancer in research studies.