

Food Even a Dog Shouldn't Eat - Killing Our Pets with Every Meal

By Jackie Alan Giuliano, Ph.D.

Each year, Americans spend \$10 billion on pet food for our beloved companion animals, animals we treat like members of our families and whom we love as our closest friends. Yet 95 percent of the food fed to these treasured creatures is made up of materials that are unfit for human consumption and contain little nutritional value. Banshee as a puppy. As a result, "man's best friend" has skin disorders, arthritis, obesity, heart disease and a variety of cancers. Without speech, our animal companions cannot tell us of the insidious, often life threatening ill health they experience.



A large percentage of commercial pet food is made up of meat by-products, a toxic brew containing diseased and contaminated meat from slaughterhouses, animal heads, toenails, chicken feathers, feet and beaks. It also includes dead animals picked up from the nation's roads, rancid kitchen grease and frying oil from the nation's kitchens, and millions of pounds of dead animals from the country's animal hospitals and shelters.

Meat Packing Plant.

The meat industry produces a tremendous amount of waste. Half of every cow and one-third of every pig butchered is wasted. Add to that the millions of tons of dead animals each year and you have an incredible waste problem.

In the United States alone, rendering is a \$2.4 billion industry with 286 rendering plants disposing of over 100 million pounds of dead animals, meat wastes and fat EVERY DAY.



A few years ago, Baltimore reporter Van Smith visited a rendering plant in his city and found that the large vats that collect and filter the animals prior to cooking contained a vast array of animals including dead dogs, cats, raccoons, opossums, deer, foxes, snakes, a baby circus elephant and the remains of a police department horse. This one rendering plant alone processes 1,824 dead animals every month. Every year this one plant turns 150 million pounds of decaying, diseased and drug filled flesh and kitchen grease into 80 million pounds of meat and bone meal, tallow and yellow grease. This nutritionally dead, often toxic material provides the base for most pet foods and is found in a vast array of products used by humans as well.



Shredding before boiling at the rendering plant.

This meat and bone meal is used to augment the feed of poultry, pigs, cattle and sheep destined for human consumption.

The deceptive product label names to watch out for that indicate the presence of this deadly soup include meat meal, meat by-products, poultry meal, poultry by-products, fish meal, fish oil, yellow grease, tallow, beef fat, chicken fat and fatty acids.

Fatty acids can be found in lipstick, inks and waxes and other rendering products such as tallow and grease go into soaps, candles, tires, many drugs and gummy candies. The health conscious consumer should avoid all these ingredients in human and pet foods.





Downed dairy cow waiting to be picked up by the rendering plant.

Many toxic chemicals make their way into the rendered products. In addition to the unused meat from the livestock slaughtering process, dead, dying, diseased and disabled animals are also included. These animals are known as "4D meat" in the trade. Along with the meat comes disease, antibiotics and other drugs used during the animals' lives, pesticides, cattle ID tags and surgical needles.

Unsold supermarket meats, still in their plastic and Styrofoam wrappings, go into the mix as well as the plastic bags they are delivered in.

The millions of dead dogs and cats from veterinarians and animals shelters go into the rendering pots, including their flea collars containing toxic pesticides, ID tags and a variety of powerful drugs.

The city of Los Angeles sends 200 tons of euthanized cats and dogs to West Coast Rendering plant every month. This is just from the city's animal shelters and does not include animals from private veterinarians.



Euthanized dogs.

A common drug found in the rendering brew is phenobarbital, commonly used to euthanize sick animals. The American Journal of Veterinary Research did a study in 1985 that showed there was virtually no degradation of this drug during the typical rendering process and that measurable quantities of it remain present in the rendered material used for pet foods and for feeding cattle destined for human consumption.

The grains in pet food bear little resemblance to the nutrient rich cereals we assume are present. Pet food grain consists of the leftovers after the grain has been processed for humans. It also contains moldy grain that has been declared unfit for human consumption. Some of the mold is toxic and potentially deadly.

The preservatives added to pet foods, and human foods, are highly toxic. Sodium nitrite, a coloring agent and preservative, ethoxyquin, an insecticide, BHA and BHT have all been linked to cancer. Your dog could be consuming as much as 26 pounds of preservatives each year if it is fed these foods.

The state of ill health that these non-foods generate is responsible for a host of health problems and can cause a hypersensitivity to flea and insect bites. Many flea allergies would go away in animals if their diets were changed.





8,000 gallon fat boiler. The pet food industry is unregulated by government bodies. An organization called the Association of American Feed Control Officials sets the standards. Its membership includes a few state agency representatives, but it is mostly run by commercial pet food industry workers.

Don't be fooled by pet food sold at a veterinarian's office. Depending upon the brand, this food can contain most of the same ingredients as commercial pet foods sold in supermarkets. The corporations that own these brands are simply very clever with their advertisement and product placements and begin courting vets during their training with free food, lectures and even clothing.

Fortunately, there are alternatives and some are presented below, but you will need to pay more. Rather than paying 15 cents a pound for toxic commercial pet food, you may need to spend a dollar a pound. But the thousands of dollars you could save in treating your pet's food-caused illnesses could more than make this up.

As always, larger issues loom. We must cast off the comfortable assumptions we have lived with all our lives, discover the truth and act on it. Change your pet's food today. And change your own, while you are at it!