



# Dog Food for Thought.

Proper nutrition is important in maintaining a happy and healthy dog. Here at Even Chance, we strive to feed our dogs the best and encourage you to do the same.

Pit bulls, like all dogs, require a healthy and balanced diet. Protein and carbohydrate sources are the most important factors to look for when choosing a proper dog food. Check out these tips to help you make excellent feeding choices for your best friend.

**Does the bag draw you in?** Although that bag of inexpensive dog food has real chicken, carrots and grains on the bag, you may want to double check what is actually being used to produce the food. You might be surprised that many of these enticing bags can't back up their product labeling with actual ingredients.

Are the pieces of kibble colored to represent the vegetables, fruit and protein in the food? If so, steer clear! Your dog does not have a preference on food color, so remember that color alone does not reflect a healthy, well balanced food. Processed foods that include dyes are for the sole purpose of tricking you into thinking that a particular brand is healthy for your pet.

## Check the label!

When shopping for dog food, read the label carefully. Look for the protein source to be the first one or two ingredients listed and the carbohydrate source should follow after protein sources listed.

**Yum!** Ingredients: Salmon, ocean fish meal, canola oil, sweet potatoes, potatoes, salmon meal, smoked salmon, potato fiber.<sup>1</sup>

**Yuck!** Ingredients: Corn, soybean meal, ground wheat flour, beef and bone meal, animal fat [BHA used as preservative], corn syrup, wheat middlings, water sufficient for processing, beef, animal digest.<sup>2</sup>

**Tricky tip:** If the first ingredient listed is "chicken" or another whole meat, remember that this ingredient is really over 70% water, and is therefore more likely the fourth or fifth ingredient on the list. Protein meals are more concentrated, so if one of these is listed as first, this likely really is the first ingredient!

## Do you know what these ingredients mean?



### Meal

Meat that has been cooked, dried, and ground, its still meat, and has not had any added blood, hair, hoof, horn, hide trimmings, manure, stomach and rumen contents except in such amounts as may occur unavoidably in good processing practices.<sup>1</sup> Look for products that explicitly state where the meal is from, such as 'lamb meal'. Note that the percentage of protein in this cooked meal will be higher in the food since the water has been removed.<sup>3</sup>



### Meat

Meat is the clean flesh derived from slaughtered animals and is limited to that part of the muscle which is skeletal or that is found in the tongue, diaphragm, heart, or esophagus; with or without the accompanying and overlying fat and the portions of the skin, sinew, nerve, and blood vessels which normally accompany the flesh. When companies use meat as their first ingredient, it is measured as a pre-cooked weight percentage and will actually be lower after the meat is processed for the kibble.<sup>3</sup>



### By-Product

The non-rendered, clean parts, other than meat, derived from slaughtered mammals. It includes, but is not limited to, lungs, spleen, kidneys, brain, livers, blood, bone, partially defatted low temperature fatty tissue, and stomachs and intestines freed of their contents. It does not include hair, horns, teeth and hoofs. It shall be suitable for use in animal food. If it bears name descriptive of its kind, it must correspond there too.<sup>3</sup>



### Animal Fat or Digest

Obtained from the tissues of mammals and/or poultry in the commercial processes of rendering or extracting. It consists predominantly of glyceride esters of fatty acids and contains no additions of free fatty acids. If an antioxidant is used, the common name or names must be indicated, followed by the words 'used as a preservative'. In actuality the animal source is not specified or required to give the origin of slaughtered animals.<sup>3</sup>

## Gross Fact!

In a recent FDA testing, it was concluded that parts of euthanized and rendered dogs and cats might be ingredients in pet food. "There appear to be associations between rendered or hydrolyzed ingredients and the presence of pentobarbital in dog food. The ingredients Meat and Bone Meal (MBM), Beef and Bone Meal (BBM), Animal Fat (AF), and Animal Digest (AD) are rendered or hydrolyzed from animal sources that could include euthanized animals.<sup>4</sup>" (Pentobarbital is a drug used to euthanize dogs and cats)

The only way pet owners can possibly avoid using pet foods that include ingredients sourced from rendered dogs and cats is to read ingredients. Until pet food regulations provide conscientious pet owners with classification of the ingredients' origin, we have no option but to assume any dog food, cat food, or pet treat that contains Animal Fat, Animal Digest, Beef Tallow and/or Meat and Bone Meal does indeed include rendered dogs and cats. You might be surprised, but some of the nation's most popular brands are testing positive for Pentobarbital in their ingredients.<sup>5</sup>



### Consider this!

Dehydrated raw diets made by The Honest Kitchen are a happy medium between a raw and commercial diet.

Photography by [www.jessedhein.com](http://www.jessedhein.com)

## Isn't a raw diet best?

Some argue that canines are true carnivores and maintain a healthier lifestyle when fed a raw diet. Modern day canines do not have the proper digestive tract to handle such high amounts of meat and bone as do animals in the wild. Also, when not properly prepared or balanced, a raw diet can actually be quite harmful to your pet. Salmonella poisoning, bone obstruction, broken teeth and pancreatitis are a few of the most common disorders seen when improperly feeding the raw diet.

**Remember! Any diet change should be gradual over 5-7 days to decrease gastrointestinal upset.**

## Top brands we feed and endorse.

- ✓ Acana
- ✓ Artemis
- ✓ Blue Buffalo
- ✓ Castor and Pollux Organix
- ✓ Canidae
- ✓ Chicken Soup for the Dog Lover's Soul
- ✓ Dog Whisperer
- ✓ Earthborn Holistic
- ✓ Evanger's
- ✓ Great Life
- ✓ Halo Spot's Stew
- ✓ Honest Kitchen
- ✓ Innova
- ✓ Instinct
- ✓ Merrick Pet Care
- ✓ Mulligan Stew
- ✓ Natural Balance
- ✓ Nature's Variety Instinct and Prairie
- ✓ Orijin
- ✓ Pinnacle Holistic
- ✓ Pure Vita
- ✓ Sojos
- ✓ Solid Gold
- ✓ Timberwolf Organics
- ✓ Taste of the Wild
- ✓ Wellness Brand

## Brands we reject.<sup>6</sup>

- ✗ Alpo
- ✗ Authority
- ✗ Beneful
- ✗ Iams
- ✗ Kibbles n' Bits
- ✗ Ol' Roy
- ✗ Pedigree
- ✗ Purina
- ✗ Royal Canin
- ✗ Hill's Science Diet

<sup>1</sup> Taste of the Wild Pacific Stream Canine Formula

<sup>4</sup> FDA: [www.fda.gov](http://www.fda.gov)

Special thanks for contribution by Dr. Suzanne Sutton, DVM

<sup>2</sup> Del Monte Foods Kibbles n' Bits Beefy Bits

<sup>5</sup> FDA: [www.fda.gov](http://www.fda.gov)

<sup>3</sup> Definitions from [www.aafco.org](http://www.aafco.org)

<sup>6</sup> The Whole Dog Journal