

Wilmette Pet Center

"the place for people who love pets"

When people come in looking for certain brands of dog or cat food, they're often surprised that we don't carry the common "grocery store" brands. We're very selective about the foods we do carry – a great deal of thought and research goes into each brand we select. Our basic belief is that providing a biologically appropriate diet that most closely matches your pet's wild diet, the healthier and happier they will be.



We do not carry any food we don't recommend, and, in fact, these are the foods that we feed to our own pets.

Who regulates pet food?

The Association of American Feed Control Officials (AAFCO) is the body that regulates the animal feed industry. Their original focus was on feed for farm animals, but took on the task of regulating pet foods. AAFCO sets the definitions of ingredients and sets nutritional minimums for cat and dog food.

What do we look for in foods we carry?

- ✚ North American sourced ingredients, made in trusted facilities. Nothing in our foods comes from dubious sources like China.
- ✚ No corn, soy, or wheat. These are used as fillers, to displace the meat content. While regulation is minimal on this, these ingredients are not, we believe, something that cats and dogs should ever eat. These ingredients are known to increase probability of obesity, diabetes, and allergies.
- ✚ Human grade ingredients. This simply means that there are no re-rendered ingredients in our foods; every meat is something that could have been served to people, that has been deemed "table ready". Every food we have contains real, named meat and high quality meat meal .

What does re-rendered mean? Simply put, re-rendering is the heating of waste animal tissue to convert it into usable material. They can take all the pieces and parts of animals that they cannot feed to us, cook them down, and add them to cat and dog food. This lower quality protein is used to make the cheaper brands



Real meat should always be the first ingredient in your pet's food.

of dog food. The one phrase that worries us the most is “meat by-product”; they’re not specifying *what* animal the protein came from, so it could be *anything*. That’s why we look for “named” meats – we want to see chicken, salmon, duck, lamb, or rabbit as the main source of protein. Re-rendered meats are a lower quality product and can be used to produce a cheaper food.

Diet is the foundation of your health, and you are what you eat. High quality proteins lead to a healthier, happier pet with fewer vet visits.

The difference between meat and meat meal. We like to see whole meats listed on the ingredient panel. Using whole ingredients helps your pet absorb the natural nutrition better. You will notice a lot of our foods have meal listed, such as lamb meal and salmon meal. The word meal simply means that the meat has been gently dehydrated; this concentrates and increases the protein by weight. Fresh meat can be from 55% to 75% water; removing this lets you put more meat in the kibble, increasing the protein content.

You can see a long list of definitions set by AAFCO [here](#) (the actual list is not shown by AAFCO, as they make you purchase the publication, as a source of revenue for the organization.¹)

Why are there so many types of meat in dog and cat foods?

You’ll notice a lot of foods made with what we call novel or alternate proteins. Why have a dog food made with buffalo or a cat food made from rabbit? Most dog and cat foods, pretty much since World War I, have been made with chicken as the source of protein. It is thought that constantly eating chicken, not only meal after meal but generation after generation, has made a lot of dogs sensitive to it.



Nature’s Logic comes in several formulas, to make it easy to give your pet variety.

Alternate proteins tend to not carry that risk. Something savory like duck or lamb is rarely eaten, therefore, fewer animals have sensitivities to them. They often really like the new flavors, so it makes a great way to get a finicky dog to eat their food.

We’re big fans of rotational feeding. Each bag you get, try a different protein. Wholistic vets believe this helps prevent allergies to any one ingredient. When you’re staying in one brand of food, you usually don’t need to transition to the new flavor, and can quickly switch to something new.

Additional ingredients

¹ <http://www.aafco.org/Directory/CommitteePages/IngredientDefinitions.aspx>

You'll see a lot of ingredients listed in dog and cat foods. Here are some of the more common ones, what they are, and why they're in there.

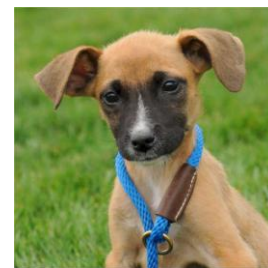
- ✦ Yucca schidigera – the yucca plant comes from the desert south west. It contains vitamins and minerals including vitamin c and iron, and naturally helps reduce stool smell. It is also thought to reduce inflammation and balance insulin levels.
- ✦ Tomato pomace – This is a mixture of tomato skin, pulp, and crushed seeds, and is added to some foods for high levels of antioxidants like lycopene, and as a source of soluble fiber, which helps form regular stools.
- ✦ Tocopherols – Natural form of vitamin E from olive and sunflower oils, used as a natural preservative. Mixed tocopherols are vitamin E combined with vitamin C.
- ✦ Zinc proteinate, copper proteinate – It can be difficult for the body to absorb all the minerals in the food. They trick the body into taking them up by chelating, or binding, the mineral to amino acids and/or partially hydrolyzed proteins. This ensures that they are getting complete nutrition.
- ✦ Enterococcus faecium, lactobacillus plantarum, trichoderma longibrachiatum (often listed as fermentation product) are beneficial gut bacteria, called probiotics. It's thought that a major portion of the immune system is located in the gut, and a healthy population of beneficial bacteria out-competes pathogenic organisms. They also help break down and absorb nutrients from food.
- ✦ Inulin or chicory root, or fructo-oligosaccharide – Chicory root is a source of inulin, a type of dietary fiber often used as a prebiotics. Prebiotics are food for probiotics, helping them establish a healthy colony in the gut.



The differences between different “stages” of food²:

All life stages – these foods meet or exceed the minimum requirements from AAFCO for being both a “growth” and a “maintenance” food nutrient profile, so they have the proper nutrition for both growing and adult dogs.

Puppy – The puppy stage is when your dog put on all their growth, so they need nutritional support. Puppy food generally contains a little more protein and a little more fat than adult versions, plus a slight increase in vitamin and mineral content.



Large breed puppy – This food actually contains less protein and fat than regular puppy food. Large breed dogs have a slower growth rate, and a controlled calorie intake helps them grow at the right speed. It usually contains high levels of glucosamine, chondroitin, and vitamin C; it is thought that the earlier these joint supplements are used, the better they help later in life.

² <https://suite.io/ian-shoust/57tx23e>

Adult – Standard formula, meant for non-lactating females and dogs that have finished their growth. Most breeds are considered grown at one year, larger breeds can take a full two years to finish growing.

Small breed adult – a lot of small dogs have higher metabolism than medium dogs, so their food has a little more protein to give them energy. The kibble is also smaller, to fit their smaller mouths.

Large breed adult – Larger dogs have lower energy requirements than small breeds, and the food stays in their digestive tract longer. This lower protein and fat food helps prevent them from gaining weight. Added prebiotics (like inulin) help keep their digestion on track. Large kibble size helps ensure they chew their food instead of gulping it, preventing gas and digestive upset. Large breed adult also contains more vitamin C, glucosamine and chondroitin to keep their joints health and supporting their weight.



A big boy like this needs a food to meet his special needs.

Senior foods generally are lighter on protein and fat and have added glucosamine and chondroitin to help support aging joints.

Cat and kitten foods:

While kittens are growing quickly, their nutritional needs are not significantly different than adult cats, except you may want to feed them more often. Kitten foods do contain a little more protein and fat than adult cat food, but it's slight (for Wellness Kitten it's 11% protein and 7% fat, adult is 10% and 5%, respectively). Kitten food can contain higher amounts of vitamins and minerals, especially calcium and phosphorus to support healthy bone and teeth growth. We feel that most foods labeled for "kitten" is more of a marketing move, and a lot of people simply provide several meals throughout the day to help support their kitten's growth.



"Are you talking about me?"

Her needs are similar to an adult's needs.

Indoor cat – Several of our recipes come in "Indoor cat" formulas. Indoor cats can be a little less active, so they contain a little less fat and protein. They're also higher in fiber, to help manage hairballs.

Cat food differs in one major way from dog food: the inclusion of taurine. Taurine is an essential amino acid, meaning that it is not made in a cat's body, so it must be supplied through their diet. Long term deficiency can lead to problems with their eyes and will eventually lead to heart disease.

Water is an overlooked problem with cats and is vital for urinary health. Check out our [caresheet](#) on how feeding raw and canned food can help prevent kidney problems in cats.

You can see all the foods we carry, including links to each manufacturer's site, on our [dog food](#) and [cat food](#) pages. Always consult with your vet regarding your dog

or cat's nutritional needs. Stop by, check out samples of our favorite foods and discuss our recommendations for your furry family member.