

## FEEDING GUIDELINES

*READ LABELS...READ LABELS...READ LABELS...READ LABELS...READ LABELS...*

In the feeding of dogs and cats, the first thing we have to remember is that we are feeding carnivores. That means they need lots of good quality meat protein, and very little grain protein. The only place you can find that information on the bag or can is in the ingredients label.

The label for both dogs and cats shows quantity of ingredients in descending order. We need to look at the first 5 ingredients (on canned food, the first 6, because one will be either water or broth). Out of the first 5 or 6 ingredients at least three, hopefully four will be a named meat or meat meal. There should be no meat by-products. There should be no BHA, BHT, or ethoxyquin preservatives. All dry foods have at least one grain or starch. Hopefully it will be a whole grain, or potato. It does not matter whether you feed canned or dry – a combination of both is great. To this diet you can add some meat from the table. Vegetables are also very good, but must be chopped in a food processor in order to get all of the nutrients of them. Adding an egg a day is excellent, either raw or cooked.

Some of the food companies that I like are: Innova EVO, Wellness Core, Merreck, and Barking at the Moon, but ALWAYS READ THE LABEL. For dogs, I especially like the EVO food. There are red meat, white meat and reduced fat diets, both canned and dry. EVO also has treats made the same way as the food. Natural Balance has a very nice Duck and Potato treat for dogs. I also like to slice raw sweet potatoes in round discs as treats, as well as frozen green beans.

For cats, I really like the Wellness Turkey, Salmon, and Herring oil food. The EVO for cats is great as well.

Whenever you change foods, DO IT SLOWLY! Start with adding just a small amount of the new food. It should take about two weeks to make the transition. If your pet has a little loose stool, you can add some canned pumpkin to the food. About a teaspoon or so for cats, and 1 to 2 tablespoons for dogs. Or you can go to your health food store and pick up “Daily Fiber Capsules” by Yerba Prima. Start with 1/2 capsule for cats and 1 to 2 caps for dogs, twice daily.

Feeding table food, but not from the table, is great. What could be better for our pets than the good quality food that we eat? Just remember to chop those veggies in a food processor. Call me if there are any questions or problems.