

68 Commercial Dog Food Ingredients You Should **NEVER** Feed Your Dog

★ Includes "The 60-Second Dog Food Label Checklist" ★

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Introduction

We'll immediately say it out right. We prefer home cooked meals for dogs over commercial dog food. And there is a very good reason for our bias.



Figure 1 - Homemade meals straight from your kitchen is best for your dog

While the FDA has strict labeling requirements on people food in place, the same is not true with dog food labeling. The relaxed regulations on dog food labeling might make for a good mystery tale, but for sure dog owners just like you and I do not want any mystery when it comes to our dog's well-being.

Yes, it is true there are federal standards put in place by the FDA's Center for Veterinary Medicine and additionally some states also enforce their own labeling regulations for commercial dog food plus many manufacturers adopt the pet food regulations established by the Association of American Feed Control Officials, the information made available to pet owners tends to be vague and often misleading.

Nutritionally speaking, a homemade diet allows for flexibility and purity. You get to have full control over your pet's nutritional needs plus

it's the only way to know for sure that all of the ingredients are of the highest quality and that they add up to a balanced and toxin-free diet.

We know you're here because you want the very best for your dog and we want the same thing. It would be great if at the end both you and I agree that homemade meals straight from the kitchen is what is best for your furry loved ones. If not, at the very least, we aim to provide you the real lowdown on what exactly it is that you are feeding your dog.

In our book [Click to see how we feed our own dogs](#), we provide facts to help you decipher dog food labeling schemes as well as homemade recipes with photos to try at home and a whole bunch more.

The following pages offer a detailed analysis of common dog food ingredients, categorized and characterized in our usual concise fashion.

Quite possibly, the information provided here will convince you to eliminate commercial dog foods from your dog's repertoire. But, if not, at the very least you can shop discerningly and with confidence.

Chapter 1: Check Your Dog's Food in 60-Secs



Below is a check list that will help you figure out in just 60-seconds if the dog food you have picked out is good or bad for your loyal companion.

After going through this handy checklist, jump on to the next chapters and find out why we have given such classification to each ingredient listed.

60-Second Dog Food Label Checklist

Ingredients to Avoid At All Cost	Ingredients Acceptable in Moderation	Harmless But Useless Ingredients
Glyceryl Monostearate (GMS)	Apple Pomace	Phosphoric Acid
Propylene Glycol	Citrus Pulp	Wheat Gluten
Artificial Colors (Blue 2, Red 40, Yellow 5, Yellow 6)	Cereal Food Fines	Titanium Dioxide
Animal Digest	Grain Fermentation Solubles	Brewer's Rice
Flavor	Ground Whole Grain Sorghum	Feeding Oat Meal
Glandular Meal	Beef Tallow	Cracked Pearl Barley or Barley Flour
BHA	Lard	Potato Product
BHT	Ground Corn	Soy Flour
Ethoxyquin	Rice Gluten Meal	Vegetable Oil
Propyl Gallate	Soybean Meal	Cellulose
Grape Pomace	Cane Molasses	Corn Bran
Animal Fat	Corn Syrup	Corn Cellulose
Fish Oil	Fructose	Oat Hulls
Poultry Fat	Sorbitol	Peanut Hulls
Beef & Bone Meal	Sugar	Rice Hulls
Blood Meal		Soybean Mill Run
Chicken Byproduct Meal		Wheat Mill Run
Dried Egg Product		Corn Germ Meal
Fish Meal		Corn Gluten Meal
Liver Meal		Bone Phosphate
Meat and Bone Meal		Salt
Pork and Bone Meal		Mineral Oil
Poultry Byproduct Meal		Yeast Culture
Poultry Meal		DI-Alpha Tocopherol Acetate
Menadione Sodium Bisulfate		
Dried Beet Pulp		
Corn and Corn Products		
Soy and Soy Products		

Chapter 2: Which Ingredients To Avoid at All Cost and Why



In this chapter, we will discuss the ingredients you want to avoid at all cost. These ingredients either have been tested and proven to be harmful, are suspected of being harmful, or they belong to the "mystery" classification. Regarding the latter, we live by the credo "what you don't know CAN hurt you" and in this case your dog.

So before you hand your money at the cash register, check the ingredient label first. And if you see any of these ingredients listed here, it is wise to move on to the next product.

List of Ingredients to Avoid At All Cost

Glyceryl Monostearate (GMS)



Figure 2 - Always check the ingredients

Here's why we listed Glyceryl Monostearate in our list of ingredients to avoid at all cost.

Toxnet or The Toxicology Data Network lists a study of GMS tested in rats (with concentration of up to 14% showing damaging effects of this food additive including weight loss and growth retardation.

Another concerning fact is that GMS can contain BHT, which is known to be toxic and has been banned in baby products.

Seeing the potential toxicity of GMS, we absolutely advise you to avoid this ingredient at all cost.

Propylene Glycol

Would you feed your dog anti-freeze?! It's appalling that a dog owner should even be confronted with such a question. Well, guess what? Propylene Glycol, which is actually used as an anti-freeze, is a common ingredient in commercial dog food as a moisture preservative.

And here's another fact that will probably make you curse out loud. The FDA has banned Propylene Glycol in cat food because of its proven risk of blood toxicity. Yet, it is still used in dog food!

Artificial Colors

Artificial dyes and coloring agents have been known to cause cancer and allergies which is the reason why we highly advise you to not be swayed by the pretty colors of kibbles. For sure, after knowing the dangers they present to your furry loved one, you would not find these colors pretty anymore. Besides, your dog does not even care about colors.



Figure 3 - Artificial dyes can cause cancer and allergies

Let's go deeper into these food colors.

Food color that is used in the United States is either artificial or natural, with artificial food color being the most widely used. Each batch of artificial color that is produced as food color or for drug or cosmetic use in the United States must be submitted to the Food and Drug Administration for "certification" to ensure that it meets the governments predefined standards.

If it meets the standards, it is deemed a "Certified Color."

They are classified into:

- FD&C Colors - means they can generally be used in Foods
- Drugs and Cosmetics or D&C Colors - means they can be used in Drugs and Cosmetic, but not in foods.

There are only 7 Certified Dyes that can be currently used as artificial food colorings in the United States. They are:

- FD&C Red 3 ----- Pink Shade
- FD&C Red 40 ----Red Shade
- FD&C Yellow 5 -- Yellow Shade
- FD&C Yellow 6 -- Orange Shade
- FD&C Blue 1 ---- Blue Shade
- FD&C Blue 2 ---- Dark Blue (Indigo) Shade
- FD&C Green 3 -- Blue-Green Shade

But these 7 certified dyes are not free from concerns and controversies. Here's what's alarming:

The FDA receives compensation for every pound of food dye it certifies (not inspects), which many see as a conflict of interest in regard to the safety of these dyes.

Artificial Color FD&C Blue 2

FD&C Blue 2 is principally used in pet foods, but is also widely used in candies, confections, beverages, dessert powders and bakery goods. It has a more limited use in ice creams, sherbets, dairy products and cereals.

In 1985, Blue 2 was the subject of an FDA Administrative hearing as a result of the Public Citizen Health Research Group's objections to its designation as a Certified Color. Public Citizens demonstrated a "statistically significant increase in the number of brain tumors in animals fed Blue 2."

The FDA concluded there was a "reasonable certainty of no harm." Perhaps most distressing: in 1984, the FDA certified 101,223 pounds of Blue Dye #2. In 2005, twenty years *after* the effort to ban it, 642,246 pounds were certified. *That is an increase in use of more than 500%!*

The Public Citizen, incidentally, is a national, nonprofit consumer advocacy organization founded by Ralph Nader in 1971, "to represent consumer interests in Congress, the executive branch and their courts."

Because of the uncertainty and the serious nature of its health risks, combined with the fact that it has absolutely no nutritional value, we deem Blue Dye #2 as an ingredient to avoid at all cost.

Artificial Color FD&C Red 40

Red Dye #40 is by far the most used coloring additive. The FDA certified 6,541,368 pounds in 2005. It is used primarily in beverages, candy, desserts and pet food.

Red Dye #40 is also one of the most tested food dyes, but much of the testing has been dismissed as flawed and inconclusive. Among the toxicity findings are earlier lymphomas. Some references allude to a report in which an FDA review committee, "acknowledged problems," with Red Dye #40, but concluded evidence of harm was, "not consistent or substantial." As of this writing, though, we have been unable to locate supporting evidence for that beyond the rumor mill.

An Internet search unearths a plethora of anecdotal evidence from parents who eradicated various emotional and behavioral problems with their young children (ADHD, hyperactivity, OCD, etc.), simply by systematically eliminating Red Dye #40 from their diets. While we can find no scientific studies which further explore this link, the stories themselves are certainly enough to make us think twice about introducing this entirely unnecessary toxin into our dog's (or anyone's!) diets.

And, equally bothersome, while the US FDA doesn't consider the problems, "substantial," Red Dye #40 is banned in the European Union (EU). All of this is enough for us to consider this an ingredient that should be avoided at all cost.

Artificial Color FD&C Yellow 5

Yellow Dye #5 is the second most used coloring additive, with 4,231,420 pounds certified by the FDA in 2005. Its primary uses include pet food, beverages and baked goods.

Otherwise known as Tartrazine, this lemon yellow color additive appears to cause the most allergic and intolerance reactions, particularly among asthmatics and those with an aspirin intolerance. Reactions include migraines, blurred vision, itching, rhinitis (chronic or acute irritation and inflammation of the nose), hives and purple skin patches.

Per the Public Citizen Health Research Group, the toxicity findings for Yellow Dye #5 comprise thyroid tumors, lymphocytic lymphomas and chromosomal damage, along with the previously mentioned allergies. Also disturbing is that Yellow Dye #5 is currently banned in Norway.

For us, it is an easy decision to place this ingredient directly into the category **To Avoid At All Cost**.

Artificial Color FD&C Yellow 6

This sunset yellow dye lags only slightly behind Yellow Dye #5 in annual use, with 4,156,408 pounds certified by the FDA in 2005. It is used mainly in beverages (including, oddly enough, *hot chocolate*), candy, desserts and sausage.

Like its lemon yellow cohort, Yellow Dye #6 is known to cause allergic or intolerance reactions, particularly among those with an aspirin intolerance. Reactions include gastric upset, vomiting, hives and skin swelling.

Yellow Dye #6 is one of the colorants that the Hyperactive Children's Support Group (HACSG) recommends eliminating from the diet of children. The HACSG is a registered charity which has been successfully helping children labeled ADHD and hyperactive for over 25 years. The HACSG is Britain's leading proponent of a dietary approach to the problem of hyperactivity.

The Public Citizen Health Research Group lists allergies, kidney tumors and chromosomal damage among the toxicity findings for Yellow Dye #6.

Animal Digest

Animal digest is added in commercial dog food to improve flavor and palatability. But what exactly is animal digest? A goopy broth made from unspecified parts of unspecified animals. Doesn't sound too appealing right?

You might say that we are just being too picky or finicky. But here's the main reason why we have listed animal digest in our list of ingredients to avoid at all cost - 4D animals (dead, diseased, disabled or dying prior to slaughter), roadkills, animals that were euthanized in shelters or even vet clinics, rats, restaurant and supermarket "refuse" meat can be used as raw materials for animal digest.

There is no quality control and monitoring for contamination at play and a lot can go wrong in such a situation. Your dog definitely deserves better!

Flavor

Many commercial dog foods have Flavor added. Flavor can be an extract or spice that as the name suggests add flavor to the dog food.

Here's why we are concerned about this ingredient. Manufacturers may choose to provide or not provide what specifically is the source of the flavor and whether it is derived naturally or chemically.

Again, we live by the credo "What you don't know CAN hurt you" - well in this case your beloved four-legged.

Glandular Meal

Used to give a source of liver flavor in dog foods, glandular meal can be from livers and other glands of various unspecified animals. Again, another mysterious ingredient.

The fact that glandular meal has been banned from livestock feed also gets us reeling as to why we are still seeing glandular meal in a number of dog foods. The reason why glandular meal was banned by the FDA for use in livestock feed because the cow parts used were most likely to contain the proteins that cause mad cow disease.

We'd rather not keep guessing if the parts used to make the glandular meal are free of contaminants which can cause potentially deadly diseases. It is always best to err on the side of caution with any mysterious ingredient.

BHA

BHA or ButylatedHydroxyanisole is suspected to cause cancer in humans. You may say that humans are a different story with dogs. But here's a very alarming fact. The National Institute of Health stated that BHA in animals' diet has been found to consistently produce certain types of tumors in laboratory animals. The Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment of the state of California actually includes BHA in their list of chemicals known to the state to cause cancer or reproductive toxicity.



Figure 4 - BHA and BHT are toxic to dogs

So why does the FDA still allow BHA in commercial pet foods even with these facts? Let's hear their side.

The FDA allows BHA in commercial pet foods as a fat preservative under the assumption that BHA is generally safe in low doses (0.02% or 200 parts per million).

So let's assume that the BHA used in commercial pet foods are indeed in low doses. However, we are still greatly concerned because many dogs on commercial pet food diet with BHA in them are fed every single day of the year with even some getting twice a day feeding. Day after day and year after year, they are fed BHA and this dangerous chemical keeps on accumulating in their bodies.

BHT

BHT or ButylatedHydroxytoluene is another ingredient you should avoid at all cost. The sad thing is BHT is a common preservative added in commercial pet foods. BHT is derived from petroleum. How appetizing does BHT sound to your now? The United States and a number of other countries have banned the use of BHT in baby products because of its potential toxicity. Sadly, we are still seeing BHT in many dog food brands.

Ethoxyquin

Here's what's startling and saddening about ethoxyquin. It is a chemical regulated by the FDA as a pesticide, yet it is allowed to be fed to pets. This chemical has been banned for use in human products as it is believed to cause cancer.



Figure 5 - Ethoxyquin is believed to cause cancer

Another thing that dog owners should know is the fact that pet food companies can get away with not listing ethoxyquin in the ingredient panel of their products.

How is this possible?

Here's a loophole. Ethoxyquin is usually found in meat and fish based ingredients as a preservative. If the supplier used ethoxyquin to preserve the raw materials, the manufacturer is not required to list ethoxyquin in the ingredients panel since the addition of this harmful chemical happened before the manufacturing process.

This same rule applies in all other chemicals and preservatives.

Propyl Gallate

Like BHA, BHT, and Ethoxyquin, Propyl Gallate is used as a preservative. To be fair, Propyl Gallate has not raised a snowstorm of controversy like BHA, BHT, and Ethoxyquin did regarding its questionable safety.

The truth is there is not much documentation at all regarding its safety, toxicity, interactions or chronic use in pet foods that may be eaten every day for the life of the animal. However, there have been vague references of it being linked to liver disease and cancer, but with little backing.

It can be that Propyl Gallate is a harmless chemical preservative but we don't know for sure. Any time of the day, when it comes to the safety of dogs, we choose to be safe than sorry, and for sure this is exactly your sentiment when it comes to your furry loved one.

And since the FDA has not been exactly diligent in questioning the safety of other chemical preservatives used in pet foods, we take the necessary precaution and placed Propyl Gallate in our list of ingredients to avoid at all cost.

Grape Pomace

Grape pomace is the solid remains of the fruit after pressing it for juice or wine. In short it is the pulp, peel, seeds and stalks after pressing out the oil, water, or other liquid.

Here's why we are advising dog owners to avoid grape pomace. Recently, grapes (as well as raisins) have been confirmed to potentially cause kidney failure in dogs. At present, it's not yet clear as to why they are causing kidney failure.

It is important to note that while there are some dogs that can eat grapes (and raisins) and come out without any harm, there are also some dogs who after eating just a tiny amount of grapes and raisins get life-threatening conditions. There have also been cases recorded of dogs eating grapes and raisins without getting any ill effects but after eating them later on in their life, get really, really sick.

Knowing that there is a possibility for a dog to get sick and even die from eating grapes which is essentially what grape pomace is made of, it is best to avoid this ingredient. Besides, grape pomace is an unnecessary additive to pet foods plus when it comes to nutritional value, it provides little to none.

Animal Fat

When you see animal fat listed in the ingredients panel of a commercial dog food, you should keep in mind that it's not the same as the fat you see around the meat per se.

Here's why we want dog owners to avoid this ingredient. The materials used for animal fat can be any kind of animal which means it can include 4D (Dead, Dying, Diseased or Disabled) animals, roadkill, goats, horses, rats, and even grocery and restaurant refuse.

Again we always choose to err on the side of caution when it comes to ingredients that fall under the imprecise source umbrella.

Fish Oil

Produced from rendering whole fish, fish oil is among the ingredients we have listed to avoid at all cost because of its imprecise origin. As per the AAFCO guidelines Fish Oil can contain cannery refuse, damaged, defective, or superfluous edible material produced during or left over from a manufacturing or industrial process. It is also worth noting that this generic oil is an inferior source of nutrients.

Poultry Fat

Poultry fat is another ingredient to avoid since its origin is not specific. This means that any kind of poultry animal can be used therefore control over quality or contamination is non-existent.

Beef & Bone Meal

The fact that beef & bone meal is a byproduct made from beef parts which are deemed unfit for human consumption is enough to get our alarm bells ringing and put it in our list of must avoid ingredients at all cost. Additionally, beef is a common cause of skin allergies in dogs.

Blood Meal

The name itself is not appetizing at all. But this is not the reason why we advise dog owners to stay away from this ingredient. Just like glandular meal, blood meal has been banned from livestock feed by the FDA because it can be an avenue of infection for mad cow disease.

It's origin is also vague and as we have been saying, what you don't know CAN hurt your dog.



Figure 6 - Byproducts are animal parts deemed unfit for human consumption

Chicken Byproduct Meal

By definition, byproducts are animal parts deemed unfit for human consumption. Some consider that the use of byproducts in dog food is perfectly fine but we beg to differ. If it's not good enough for us then it's not going into the bowl of our furry loved ones.

Another thing to note is that the nutritional value of chicken by product meal is questionable.

Dried Egg Product

Egg waste is now also being added in commercial pet food. Egg products can contain underdeveloped eggs, shells, and other tissues deemed not fit for human consumption.

Again, why feed dogs garbage?

Fish Meal

Fish meal is derived from the waste of fisheries, after the human-consumable material is removed or from whole fish which themselves have been deemed unfit for human consumption.

Again, what is up with pet food companies adding byproducts or waste in pet feed? Another reason why fish meal is included in this list is the fact that ethoxyquin is used in preserving fish meal.

Per the US Code of Federal Regulations, the US Coast Guard mandates that Fish Meal be preserved with Ethoxyquin (<http://www.gpoaccess.gov/cfr/index.html>):

[Code of Federal Regulations]
[Title 46, Volume 5]
[Revised as of October 1, 2003]
From the U.S. Government Printing Office via GPO Access
[CITE: 46CFR148.04-9]
[Page 19]

TITLE 46--SHIPPING

CHAPTER I--COAST GUARD, DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY
(CONTINUED)

PART 148--CARRIAGE OF SOLID HAZARDOUS MATERIALS IN BULK--Table of
Contents

Subpart 148.04--Special Additional Requirements for Certain Material

Sec. 148.04-9 Fishmeal or scrap, ground or pelletized; fishmeal or scrap,
ground and pelletized (mixture). . . .

(c) At the time of production of the material, it must be treated
with at least 400 ppm antioxidant (ethoxyquin); in the case where the
material contains more than 12 percent fat by weight, it must be treated
with at least 1000 ppm antioxidant (ethoxyquin) at the time of
production.

[Code of Federal Regulations]
[Title 49, Volume 2]
[Revised as of October 1, 2005]
From the U.S. Government Printing Office via GPO Access
[CITE: 49CFR173.218]
[Page 544]

TITLE 49--TRANSPORTATION

CHAPTER I--PIPELINE AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS SAFETY ADMINISTRATION,
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

PART 173_SHIPPERS_GENERAL REQUIREMENTS FOR SHIPMENTS AND
PACKAGINGS
--Table of Contents

Subpart E_Non-bulk Packaging for Hazardous Materials Other Than Class 1
and Class 7

Sec. 173.218 Fish meal or fish scrap. . . .

(c) When fish scrap or fish meal is offered for transportation by
vessel in bulk in freight containers, the fish meal must contain at
least 100 ppm of anti-oxidant (ethoxyquin) at the time of shipment.

You can be sure that when fish meal is used in pet food, the harmful chemical Ethoxyquin is also present.

Liver Meal

Liver meal as the name suggests is made from ground liver of mammals. Whenever you see a name of an organ appearing by itself (sans species) on a pet food label, there is no telling where it came from. In the case of liver meal, the liver can be either from a horse, goat, duck, pig, skunk, or animals of questionable origin such as roadkill, 4D animals, or euthanized animals.

Again, if we are not certain where it comes from, we'll use our pass card on the guessing game and opt to take the safe route.

Meat and Bone Meal

Most people associate meat and bone meal with beef. But the truth is it could be any kind of meat. So when you see meat meal or meat and bone meal don't think beef. More precisely, think "mystery meat". It can include pigs, goats, horses, rabbits, roadkill, or rendered animals from shelters. Meat meal can also contain parts and animals rejected for human consumption, and 4D animals. Additionally it can include pus, cancerous tissue and spoiled tissue.

Here's a good rule to follow. NO Mystery Meat please.



Figure 7 - Are you feeding your dog toxic ingredients?

Pork and Bone Meal

Pork and bone meal is another byproduct (garbage) made from pork parts that have been deemed unsuitable for human consumption. Because of its cheap price, regardless of its low quality, pork and bone meal is used in commercial pet feed to boost protein percentage.

Dogs deserve better than this garbage. For sure, you agree.

Poultry Byproduct Meal

You probably can already guess why poultry byproduct meal is included in this list. Again, its imprecise origin is concerning. Poultry byproduct meal can come from any fowl instead of a single source. The preferred ingredient would be Chicken Meal as it is more digestible, and far more nutritionally sound.

Poultry Meal



Figure 8 - Mystery meat ingredients can include 4D animals and euthanized pets

The term "poultry" is very vague opening the door to a multitude of fowls (pun intended). Again its imprecise origin is alarming as it can be any kind of bird including roadkill, euthanized birds, and the dreadful 4D animals.

Chicken Meal would be the preferred ingredient as it is more digestible and more nutritionally sound than poultry meal.

Menadione Sodium Bisulfate

This is the synthetic form of Vitamin K also referred to as vitamin K3. This is a controversial substance with one side saying that it is safe to be added in commercial dog food since the toxic levels are a thousand times higher than the recommended daily use and the amount added in commercial pet feed is very little, while another side cites its potential toxicity.

Here's what you should know. Menadione Sodium Bisulfate has been banned by the FDA from over-the-counter supplements because it has been shown to cause dangerous effects such as the following:

- Liver cell toxicity
- Weakened immune system
- Potential mutagenic effects
- Damage to the natural vitamin K cycle
- Hemolytic anemia and jaundice
- Direct toxicity in high doses
- Irritation of the skin and mucous membranes
- Allergic reactions and eczema

While it is true that the amount of menadione added in commercial dog food is very little and such trace amounts is almost certainly safe here's what's concerning. Dogs, fed with a commercial dog food diet are fed the same food every single day, meal after meal.

This means that dogs on commercial food diet with menadione are continuously exposed to this potentially toxic substance. It is that cumulative exposure that worries us much.

Checking on the nutrient profiles established by the AAFCO (Association of American Feed Control Officials) you'll find that Vitamin K is not even required as a dog food ingredient.

Here's the bottom line. This ingredient is banned for human use, so why gamble feeding it to dogs? The fact that it is potentially harmful and unnecessary, warrants its inclusion in our list of must avoid ingredients at all cost.

Dried Beet Pulp



Figure 9 - Beet pulps can cause diarrhea, bloody stools and intestinal damage

Dried beet pulp is a common filler found in commercial pet feed. What is it exactly? It's the leftover residue of sugar beets from the process of producing table sugar.

From the description, this seems like a rather harmless ingredient. However, beet pulps like soy contain saponins which can cause diarrhea, bloody stools and other signs of intestinal damage.

Beet pulps also harden stools consistently and this is quite alarming. Your dog's stool is a good indicator of health problems. But because beet pulps will harden your dog's stool artificially, it can hide signs of digestive stress and other health problems.

Corn and Corn Products

Corn products are commonly used in dog foods as the primary protein source. And there are a number of things that do not sit well with us with this picture.

Firstly, corn itself is not a complete source of protein needing animal proteins to create an amino acid profile that is usable for pets. Muscle loss is a possible consequence if corn protein is the exclusive source of protein in your dog's diet.

Secondly, corn is very high in carbohydrates and a high-carbohydrate diet can cause obesity, diabetes, chronic inflammation, and even cancer.

There is also the issue of the quality of the corn used. Low quality ones can contain toxins and molds which can cause damage to your pet's liver and kidneys.



Figure 10 - GMO crops have serious negative effects on dogs' health

There is also the issue of GMO corns being used. According to the Encyclopedia Britannica Advocacy for Animals about 61% of corn crops are genetically engineered. You should be alarmed because genetically engineered foods have been found out to affect our own health negatively and this is true for our loyal companions too.

There have been studies on GMO crops documenting that laboratory animals fed with GMO crops had significant increase in tumor growth, are infertile, and had shorter life span compared to those animals fed with organic crops.

Another issue is that corn is among the most common allergens in pets.

And some of the corn sourced for use as protein is the low quality corn deemed unfit for human consumption because it's damaged and moldy. Mold contains mycotoxins which cause liver and kidney damage in dogs.

So it's only reasonable that our alarm bells start sounding off when we see corn or their corresponding meals in the ingredients panel. And which is why we recommend that you avoid this ingredient at all cost.

Soy and Soy Products

Soy is commonly used as a cheap substitute for protein meat. Just like corn, soy is among the most common allergens in pets. But our concern does not stop here.

About 89% of soy crops are genetically engineered according to the Encyclopedia Britannica Advocacy for Animals. And as mentioned genetically engineered crops according to studies have negative impacts on animals including increase in tumor growth, infertility, and shorter life span.

Soy also has estrogenic properties that can start messing up your dog's hormonal system.

Just like with corn, anytime we see soy, soy products, or its corresponding meals in the ingredients label of a pet food product, our alarm bells start ringing and yours should too.

Chapter 3: A Little Amount of These Ingredients (Probably) Won't Hurt, But Don't Overdo It



This list consists of ingredients that are not specifically harmful when consumed in moderation. However, we want to point out that though these ingredients may not explicitly cause harm, they are not healthful either. Most of these ingredients are unnecessary and added as cheap filler ingredients which provide little nutritional value for your dog.

List of Ingredients That Are Okay In Moderation

Apple Pomace

This is the waste product from juicing apples. It is essentially the pulp, peel, seeds and stalks of fruit after the water or other liquid has been pressed out.



Figure 11 - Apple Pomace is used as a cheap source of fiber in dog food

It would not seem that Apple Pomace would be a hazardous additive, and it is mainly used as an inexpensive source of fiber. It does not, however, contain the whole complement of nutrients contained in the whole fruit, which would be the preferable ingredient here.

Citrus Pulp

Citrus Pulp is the dried residue of peels, pulp and seeds from oranges, grapefruit and other citrus fruit. It is mainly used as a bulk carbohydrate concentrate in cattle feed, but it is also added as a source of fiber in dog food.

Since the peel and some twigs and leaves are also included, there is the possibility of some residue from pesticides and synthetic fertilizers being present in the final product. The pulp also lacks the nutritional value of the whole fruit itself. Again, the preferred ingredient here would be the whole fruit.



Figure 12 - Most dog food brands have additives of little nutritional value. Why? Because it's a very cheap way to add volume that doesn't raise consumer suspicions that they're getting ripped off

Cereal Food Fines

Cereal Food Fines are byproducts of breakfast cereal production. They are an inexpensive filler of unknown source, nutritional value and quality. There is the potential for chemical residue, sweeteners and other unlisted additives.

Cereal Food Fines is an ingredient that would be best kept to a minimum.

Grain Fermentation Solubles

These additives are an inexpensive byproduct of human food and beverage production, but add little or no nutritional value to dog food. The preferable ingredient would be whole, unaltered grains to provide the essential carbohydrates.

Ground Whole Grain Sorghum

Sorghum is a ground grain of the Sorghum plant. While it is a good source of carbohydrates, it is not easily digested by dogs. As such, it would primarily be an unnecessary, though relatively harmless filler ingredient. It would best be kept to a minimum because it lacks nutritional value.



Figure 13 - Most dog food brands use additives to improve palatability

Beef Tallow

Although Beef Tallow (aka Beef Fat) is a very palatable source of fat, it is lacking in linoleic acid which is necessary for promoting good skin coat and health.

The preferred ingredient is the chicken fat because it is nutritionally superior. The second best choice is a good quality vegetable oil. But because beef tallow is a cheap substitute, many pet food companies opt to use beef tallow.

Lard

Lard is the rendered fat of swine. It is very palatable, so it is often used to make a poor quality food more appealing. It is essentially harmless, but its nutritional benefit pales in comparison to Chicken Fat, which would be the preferred ingredient in your dog's diet.

Ground Corn

Ground corn is the entire corn kernel ground or chopped. Corn products are commonly used in commercial dog food as the primary protein source. The thing is, nutritionally speaking corn is not a complete protein source. Dogs also have a difficult time digesting grains such as corn because of their short and simple digestive tracts. Their systems are much more conducive to breaking down animal proteins and fat. So dogs are able to absorb and retain animal based protein better.

Aside from this, animal based proteins also contain high amounts of essential amino acids such as methionine, arginine, and taurine - all of which are not found in plant based proteins such as corn.

Rice Gluten Meal

Rice Gluten is a poor quality protein filler. The "Crude Protein" analysis on pet food labels is only a measurement of the amount of nitrogen in a food, not the quality of the protein. Because of this, pet food companies can use the cheaper by-products of human food production, such as Rice Gluten Meal.

Meat-based proteins are always the preferable source. Meat protein is better absorbed and retained and is higher in essential amino acids like methionine, arginine, and taurine. Rice Gluten Meal has a biologic value less than 50% of Chicken Meal.

Soybean Meal

Soybean meal is another poor quality protein source and usually added as a filler. Protein fillers such as soybean meal can affect the Crude Protein Analysis on food label and make it seem like your dog is getting high quality protein. But what dog owners should realize is that Crude Protein Analysis only measures the amount of nitrogen in a food and not the quality of the protein.

As mentioned earlier meat protein is always the better source for dogs since they can absorb and retain this type of protein better and is also higher in essential amino acids. You should know that Soybean meal has a biological value less than 50% of chicken meal.

Cane Molasses

Cane Molasses is a byproduct of the manufacture of sucrose from sugar cane. Any sugar or sweetener is absolutely unnecessary in pet foods, added only to make the (likely low grade) product more palatable.

Continuous intake can promote hypoglycemia, obesity, nervousness, cataracts, tooth decay, arthritis and allergies. Dogs can also get "addicted" to foods that contain sugars, and it will be tough to redirect their palates towards healthier fare.

Corn Syrup

Corn Syrup is prepared from cornstarch, used in the pet food industry and a million other food products as a sweetener. As mentioned before any sugar or sweetener ingredient is not necessary in pet foods/ The reason for its addition is solely for the purpose of making the (likely low grade) product more palatable.

As with Cane Molasses, continuous intake can promote hypoglycemia, obesity, nervousness, cataracts, tooth decay, arthritis and allergies.

Again it is possible for dogs to get hooked on sugar, and getting them interested in sugar-free or sweetener-free healthy diet will be tough. And in the end, it's your dog who will suffer the consequences.



Figure 14 - Continuous intake of sugar can lead to obesity

Fructose

Fructose is a very sweet sugar, used as a preservative for food, as well as an intravenous nutrient.

Fructose is found naturally in fresh fruit and honey. Used in small quantities, it serves as a nutrient for probiotics, which are dietary supplements containing beneficial bacteria or yeast.

Probiotic bacterial cultures are intended to assist the body's naturally occurring flora within the digestive tract to reestablish themselves. Claims are made that probiotics strengthen the immune system.

It's best to keep this ingredient at minimum because of the addicting nature of sugar.

Sorbitol

Sorbitol is a white, sweet, crystalline alcohol. It occurs naturally in various berries and fruits, or is prepared synthetically and used as a flavoring agent, as a sugar substitute for diabetics, and as a cosmetic moisturizer.

Again, this is an unnecessary ingredient added in pet foods to make them more palatable.

With continuous intake, your dog can suffer from hypoglycemia, obesity, nervousness, cataracts, tooth decay, arthritis and allergies.

Your dog may also get addicted with the sugary or sweet taste, making it hard for you to get them on a healthy diet.

Sugar

Used on a pet food label, the term sugar can include sucrose, cane sugar, caramel and corn syrup, among other sweeteners.

You probably are guessing what the consequences are for continuous intake of this ingredient. If you thought hypoglycemia, obesity, nervousness, cataracts, tooth decay, arthritis and allergies, then you are spot on.

The addicting nature of sugar can have serious effects on your dog. They may start snubbing healthier diet in favor of the sugary or sweet taste.

Chapter 4: Harmless But Useless Fillers (Or How Dog Food Companies Rip You Off)



In this chapter, we listed down ingredients commonly found in pet foods that are harmless but at the same time are worthless, offering no nutritional value.

So why do pet food companies bother adding these ingredients in their products?

Because these useless fillers are extremely cheap to the manufacturer and make your dog feel full...as far as you can tell, your dog is satisfied. But since there is almost zero nutritional value, the true effect is empty calories without nutrition. Your dog's body get hungry for nutrition, for the proteins, vitamins, minerals etc that it needs...if that isn't delivered than your dog will be hungry again too soon.

But hey, that's great news for these shady pet food manufacturers because to keep up with your dogs seemingly insatiable appetite, you're buying 5 cans a week instead of 3!

List of Ingredients That Are Harmless But Of ZERO Value

Phosphoric Acid

Phosphoric Acid is a clear, colorless liquid used in fertilizers, detergents, food flavoring and pharmaceuticals. It is considered a harmless, but superfluous ingredient, used in inexpensive, poor quality dog food as flavoring, emulsifier and discoloration inhibitor. It is also used as a flavoring for Coca Cola.

Wheat Gluten

Wheat Gluten is the tough, thick and adhesive nitrogenous substance remaining when wheat is washed to remove the starch. It is a cheap byproduct of human food processing with almost no nutritional value. It is added to dog food primarily as a binder.

Titanium Dioxide

Titanium Dioxide is a natural food coloring, called Titanium White or Pigment White 6. It is the most widely used white pigment because of its brightness. It is popularly used in products such as paints, coatings, plastics, papers, inks, foods and most toothpastes to give whiteness and opacity.

In cosmetic and skin care products, Titanium Dioxide is used both as a whitener and a thickener. It is found in almost every sunblock with a physical blocker, both because of its refractive index and its resistance to discoloration under ultraviolet light. This advantage enhances its stability and ability to protect the skin from ultraviolet light.

Titanium Dioxide is nontoxic and harmless, but adds no value to the dog food product, and could just as well be left out.

Brewer's Rice

Brewer's Rice is the small milled fragments of rice kernels that have been separated from the larger kernels of milled rice. It is a processed rice product that is missing many of the nutrients contained in whole ground rice and brown rice, which would be the preferred ingredients. It is used in low grade pet foods primarily because it is cheaper than whole grain rice.

Feeding Oat Meal

Feeding oat meal is a fractionated grain which results from processing oats for human consumption. It is missing the nutritional value of whole oats. The preferred carbohydrate source would be Oatmeal, which is a natural, healthy grain, rich in B vitamins.



Figure 15 - Although harmless, many dog foods are filled with useless additives

Cracked Pearl Barley or Barley Flour

Cracked Pearl Barley and Barley Flour are fractionated grain ingredients, which are leached of much of their nutritional value.

The preferred, quality carbohydrate source would be Ground Barley, which is the entire barley kernel, ground or chopped. By using the entire kernel, ground barley contributes additional protein, barley oil, bran, vitamins and minerals to the diet, all of which are lacking in Cracked Pearl Barley and Barley Flour.

Potato Product

Potato Product would be potato pieces, peeling, culls, obtained from the manufacture of processed potato products for human consumption. It is a cheap byproduct of human food processing that has been stripped of much of the nutritional benefits that whole, fresh potatoes offer.

Soy Flour

Soy Flour is the finely powdered material resulting from the screened and graded product after removal of most of the oil from selected, sound, cleaned and dehulled soybeans by a mechanical or solvent extraction process. Most of the nutritional value is already lost during the process of turning the grain to flour.

Vegetable Oil

Vegetable Oil is the product of vegetable origin obtained by extracting the oil from the seeds or fruits which are processed for edible purposes. While harmless, it is a nutritionally inferior fat source to Chicken Fat or Herring Oil.



Figure 16 – Some manufacturers opt for nutritionally inferior ingredients to save cost

Cellulose

Cellulose forms the primary structural component of green plants. It is often referred to as "dietary fiber" or "roughage."

Cellulose is cleaned, processed into a fine powder and used to add bulk and consistency to cheap pet foods. It's value as a fiber in the dog's diet is minimal.

We're thinking this one is better left on the shelf.

Corn Bran

The outer coating of the corn kernel is the corn bran. Many dog food manufacturers make use of corn bran as a source of fiber as they are inexpensive. Your dog gets very little nutritional value from corn bran since the processing of corn bran leeches out most of its nutritional value. They serve mostly as a filler to add bulk to cheap and low quality dog foods.

Corn Cellulose

Through a chemical process done on cell walls of corn, corn cellulose is produced. The problem with corn cellulose is that it has no nutritional value. Primarily, it is used in cheap and poor quality dog food to add bulk and consistency.

Oat Hulls

Oat Hulls are the remaining product from dehulling the whole oat kernels after harvesting. It is not the same as Oat Bran, which is a quality source of dietary fiber and removed prior to rolling and/or flaking.

Oat Hulls have no nutritional value, and are used primarily as a filler ingredient in low grade pet foods.

Peanut Hulls

A Peanut Hull is the outer covering of the peanut shell. They are completely lacking in nutritional value. Their only use is as a cheap filler ingredient in low grade pet foods.

Rice Hulls

A Rice Hull is the outer covering of rice. This is an inexpensive byproduct of human food processing, serving only as a filler ingredient in low grade pet foods.

Soybean Mill Run

This is a byproduct - mostly just the hulls of soybeans remaining after the beans have been processed into meal. Soybean mill run is nothing but a cheap and low quality filler. They are actually commonly found in cattle feeds.

Wheat Mill Run

Here's the only thing you need to know about wheat mill run. It is an inexpensive filler, completely lacking in any nutritional value for your pet.

Corn Germ Meal

A wet or dry milling manufacturing process of corn meal, corn grits, hominy feed, or other corn products produces corn germ meal. Corn germ meal is ground corn germ made up of corn germ along with other parts of the corn kernel from which part of the oil has been removed.

Corn germ meal only holds a fraction of the nutrients found in the whole grain. Although it is actually rich in protein, it has little value to your dog since corn is a poor protein source for dogs. We've mentioned before that corn is an incomplete protein source and needs animal proteins to create an amino acid profile that is usable for dogs.

Although this is a harmless ingredient, it is mainly used to up the protein content in poor quality dog food. The problem is corn germ meal itself is a poor protein source.

Corn Gluten Meal

Corn Gluten Meal is the dried residue from corn after the larger part of the starch and germ had been removed, and the bran had been separated by the process employed in the wet milling manufacture of corn starch or syrup, or by enzymatic treatment of the endosperm.

Although Corn Gluten Meal contains some protein it is low in nutritional value. It is used mainly to bind the food together.

Bone Phosphate

Bone phosphate is the residue of bones that have been treated first in a caustic solution then in a hydrochloric acid solution, and thereafter precipitated with lime and dried. It is a highly processed feed-grade supplement used to balance the calcium and phosphorous content of a product.

There is no good reason that a dog's diet should require this supplement.

Salt

On dog food ingredients labels, salt may appear as the chemical compound Sodium Chloride or as Iodized Salt (iodine supplement added), or as Sea Salt (differentiating it from salt mined from underground deposits).

It is used extensively in ground or granulated form as a food seasoning and preservative.



Figure 17 - Too much salt intake is bad for dogs

While Salt is a necessary mineral, it is also generally present in sufficient quantities in the ingredients already present, and should not be necessary to supplement.

Just as for humans, too much sodium intake is unhealthy for dogs. In poor quality foods, Salt is often used in large amounts to add flavor and make the food more palatable.

Mineral Oil

Mineral oil functions as a laxative and stool softener. We find no good reason as to why this ingredient is a necessary supplement for a dog's diet.

Yeast Culture

This is an unnecessary, feed-grade ingredient in pet foods, added primarily as a flavoring to make the low grade food more palatable. It lacks the nutritional value of higher quality yeast supplements.

DI-Alpha Tocopherol Acetate

DI-Alpha Tocopherol Acetate is synthetic Vitamin E. It is only about half as effective as natural Vitamin E, and is not as readily available to the body. This supplement is of little use to your dog.

Conclusion



If roles were reversed, our dogs would consider no task too great to ensure our health and well-being.... look in your dog's eyes and you'll know this to be true.

They are our angels on Earth.

Use this book to do the right thing for your furry-family-member.

But if you seriously want the best for you dog, then this book alone isn't enough.

[Click here to see how my team and I feed our own dogs](#)

May your dog have a long and happy life,

Andrew Lewis

Andy Lewis