

Bought to you by SpeedyDogTraining.com helping all dogs and dog parents to live longer, healthier lives!

Introduction:	1
Dog Food Reports.....	2
Commercial Dog Food Info.....	2
Canned, Refrigerated or Frozen Cooked Foods.....	11
Dry Foods (Kibble and Dehydrated)	13
Dehydrated Foods.....	17
SUPPLEMENTS.....	17
ADDING FRESH FOODS TO DIETS.....	22
RAW FOOD PRODUCTS.....	25

Introduction:

Your dog's nutritional health is in your hands. One hundred percent, completely in your hands. Only you can control and provide the nourishment he needs for a smooth, shiny coat, dental health, bone growth, muscle tone, energy requirements and proper digestive function.

A dog's loyalty, love and trust in you make him an easy target for substandard care. We are all guilty, from time to time, of not treating our dogs as well as they deserve. But since they aren't likely to complain, we in turn can find it easy, too often, to turn a blind eye to his blind trust.

After all, isn't it a betrayal of trust and a void in our personal integrity to knowingly feed our dogs food that is nutritionally inferior? Would you feed yourself or any other member of your family from a can, for every meal, day after day? And you do consider your dog a member of your family, don't you?

This is one time you don't want to let yourself off the hook. Don't take your dog's silence as absolution. Their final act of innocence may be a slow, painful and tragic death. The guilt you will feel will be insurmountable.

I fed my dog substandard food and he did die a slow painful and tragic death, don't make the same mistake.

And the real kicker of it all -- giving your dog the best possible diet is easy! It can seem daunting, at a glance. But, in reality, it doesn't take a whole lot of time, effort or brainpower to do the right thing.

While the loose regulations on dog food labeling leaves us somewhat in the dark as to what exactly we are feeding our pet when we use commercial dog foods, good home cooking allows for flexibility and purity. It also gives us total control over our dog's nutritional needs. We can be assured that all ingredients are of the highest quality, and add up to a balanced, toxin-free diet. We can also maintain complete caloric discretion, modifying as necessary to accommodate our dog's ever-changing demands.

And, let's not diminish the importance of the one ingredient that only we can add, and which most certainly will be lacking in any commercial dog food -- love.

Don't you owe it to yourself, and to your "best friend" to give him the best possible chance at a long, healthy life? We think so, too.

The names of the companies listed below were know to be in business and their phone numbers accurate.

Dog Food Reports

Commercial Dog Food Info

Selecting the best commercial foods

Here are the things that I look for in a commercial food::

- * No generic fats or proteins (e.g., animal fat or meat meal) -- instead, look for named sources such as beef fat, chicken fat or lamb meal (the generic term indicates a mixture coming from a number of sources, a sign of a very poor quality food). I don't consider poultry fat as bad as animal fat, but chicken fat is better. Never feed a food that uses the generic ingredients "meat meal", "meat and bone meal", or "animal fat".

- * Human grade ingredients (USDA approved). This item is somewhat controversial, as dog foods by law cannot be labeled human grade, but I look for companies that use human grade meats (not meats that were rejected by the human food industry).

For even higher quality, look for hormone- and antibiotic-free meats, especially those that are free-range or pasture-raised (**note** that all poultry is hormone-free, as it is against regulations to give hormones to poultry).

* Avoid foods that use corn gluten meal, a cheap waste product from the human food industry that provides incomplete protein for dogs. I consider this ingredient to be one of the hallmarks of poor quality foods. Wheat gluten meal, one of the ingredients that caused illness and death due to contamination in the recent Pet Foods recall, is similar -- a cheap source of poor quality protein used primarily by the lower-quality foods. Rice protein concentrate, which was also involved in the pet food recalls, is a little better quality than the other two, but still provides incomplete plant protein rather than the more desirable animal protein. Soy protein has the same problem.

* No meat by-products or digest (meal is OK). There is some disagreement whether whole meat is preferable to meal. Meal has been rendered, but it is also dried, so if a meal is listed as the first ingredient, there is greater likelihood that the food contains more meat than grains. When whole meats such as chicken, lamb, turkey, etc. are listed as the first ingredient, there may actually be much less meat due to the weight of the moisture in the meat. Both whole meats and meals are considered acceptable as long as they are identified and not generic (e.g., not "meat meal" or "meat and bone meal"). By-products may be OK if the company specifies that they are human-grade organs such as liver and kidney, but otherwise they usually signify parts not considered fit for human consumption.

* **No BHA, BHT or Ethoxyquin** (artificial preservatives), another sign of a low quality food. Ethoxyquin is banned from use in foods for human consumption except for the use of very small quantities as a color preservative for spices. Note that ethoxyquin is used to preserve fish meal, which will not be disclosed on the dog food label since it is added before the fish meal reaches the manufacturing plant. In general, unless the manufacturer provides a statement on their web site that the fish meal in their food does not contain ethoxyquin, you can assume that it does. Contact the manufacturer if you are unsure.

* No artificial colors, no sugars and sweeteners (such as corn syrup, sucrose, ammoniated glycyrrhizin), no propylene glycol

(added to some chewy foods to keep them moist, toxic in large amounts).

- * As few grains as possible (a whole-meat source should be one of the first two ingredients, preferably two of the top three)

- * Watch for splitting, such as listing ground yellow corn and corn gluten meal as separate ingredients which together might add up to more than the first ingredient. Note that canned foods often have fewer grains than dry.

- * Added taurine. Taurine was added to cat foods in the 70's when cats began going blind and dying due to taurine

deficiency. Taurine is thought not to be an "essential" amino acid in dogs because they can convert carnitine to taurine.

However, links are now being found between problems such as dilated cardiomyopathy and taurine deficiencies. Some dog food companies have begun adding taurine to their foods, and this is probably a good idea. Taurine is affected by heat, so there would not usually be enough natural taurine in processed dog foods, though foods that have a lot of meat will have more natural taurine. See the following for more info:

- * **Meets AAFCO Specifications.** Association of American Feed Control Officials. Although I do not consider AAFCO to know everything there is to know about nutrition, if a food specifies that it meets AAFCO specifications, it should be a complete diet. It is fine to use foods that do not meet AAFCO specifications as part of the diet, but you cannot rely on these foods as the sole source of nutrition without adding other foods and supplements to the diet.

SEE ALSO:

[Dog Food Comparison Tool from Natura](#) that allows you to see and compare the ingredients in different foods, plus offers in-depth information on each ingredient once you click on one.

Best Diet

There is no "best" food for all dogs, as each dog is an individual, and what works well for one dog may not work at all for another. In addition, it is better for a dog to get a variety of foods, rather than just one food for its whole life. Feeding different commercial diets can help

fill in nutritional gaps that a particular food or brand might have, as well as making it less likely that your dog will develop food allergies.

Rather than trying to find a single, "best" food, I recommend that you *choose at least two or three different brands*, using different protein sources, and rotate between them, anywhere from a daily basis to every few months. Variety is always better than feeding any single food, as it helps to guarantee that all of your dogs' nutritional needs are met and is more interesting for your dogs. The only warning I have about feeding a lot of variety is to not feed every exotic protein available (duck, rabbit, venison, etc.); always reserve one or two in case you ever need to do an elimination diet using a food your dog has never had before to test for food allergies.

In addition, I suggest adding some fresh foods to the diet, no matter what you feed, including eggs and meat (raw or cooked), canned fish with bones (jack mackerel, pink salmon, sardines), dairy (yogurt, kefir, cottage cheese) and healthy leftovers (see Adding Fresh Foods below for more info). This can be used to improve the quality of whatever diet you feed.

When you feed the same food continuously for a month or more, be sure to make the switch gradually to avoid digestive upset, but dogs that are used to getting different foods all the time rarely have any problems with it.

Exotic Proteins

Just a note about using foods with exotic proteins, such as duck, venison, buffalo, rabbit, trout, kangaroo, ostrich, emu, beaver, goat, quail, pheasant, eel, etc. These foods are formulated to be able to offer proteins that a dog has never had before for dogs with food allergies. I do not recommend feeding them to normal dogs. If you feed these foods routinely, then if your dog does develop food allergies at some point, it is going to be very difficult for you to find a protein that he has never had before in order to try an elimination diet. I would reserve most of these exotic protein foods for dogs who have food problems and need a special diet. Also, if you have a dog with digestive problems, don't just keep trying different foods, as they are more likely to become allergic to new ingredients while problems are occurring. If the first new diet doesn't work, you'll need to talk to your vet about using medications to get the problem under control before introducing any more new foods.

Corn, wheat, soy and other so-called common allergens

Foods considered to be "common allergens" in dogs are simply the foods most commonly fed. In other words, dogs are not inherently more likely to be allergic to corn, wheat, soy, rice, beef or chicken, etc., but they are more likely to be allergic to foods that they've been fed before. Food allergies are also more likely to develop if the dog is fed the same food all the time.

There can be other problems with certain foods, especially grains. Gluten intolerance can cause digestive problem for some dogs. Sources of gluten include wheat (including Kamut and spelt), barley, rye, and triticale; oats are considered questionable (oats are gluten-free but processed oats can be contaminated with gluten), while buckwheat, corn/maize, and rice are gluten-free. Certain grains can contain molds or storage mites that can cause an allergic reaction. I am not in favor of feeding grains to dogs, but I don't consider corn or wheat to be worse than other grains, unless your dog has a specific problem with these foods. Keep in mind that corn gluten meal is a waste product from the human food industry used as a cheap source of low-quality protein and is a hallmark of a poor quality food.

I also don't consider it necessary to avoid using products that contain soy, as long as it is a small part of the diet, used in place of grains or other plant products, rather than as a primary protein source, in place of meat. Again, if your individual dog has a problem with soy, then you should avoid foods that use it.

High-Protein Diets

Contrary to many myths and popular beliefs, there is no harm in feeding a high-protein diet to dogs of any age, including puppies (see Large and giant breed puppies below) and seniors (see Senior and overweight dogs below and my article on Diet and the Older Dog for more information). Studies have proven that protein does not cause orthopedic problems in puppies, nor lead to kidney disease in older dogs. In fact, protein is extremely beneficial: it supports the immune system and the central nervous system, contributes to wound healing, helps build lean muscle, and is required for skin and coat health.

Even most dogs with kidney disease benefit from a moderate-protein rather than low-protein diet (see my Kidney Disease web page for additional info). There are very, very few health conditions where a lower-protein diet is needed, and even then, it's extremely important to feed adequate protein, as protein malnutrition will cause the body to break down its own muscle tissue to get what it needs, leading to muscle wasting and other serious problems. Even mild protein

deficiency can significantly impair immune function. Dogs who get too little protein are also more susceptible to stress, including stress from injury or infection.

Dogs thrive on protein, the more the better. There is absolutely no reason to limit the amount of protein you feed your dog. Look for foods that are high in protein, rather than the typical high-carbohydrate diets that are more commonly available. Dogs have no nutritional need for carbohydrates; they are used in dog food mostly as an inexpensive source of calories (grains are also used to supply low-quality protein in some foods), and to help bind dry food together into kibble. Studies indicate that high-protein, low-carb foods with moderate amounts of fat also help dogs lose weight better than the traditional high-carb, low-fat (and often low-protein) weight loss diets.

There are a number of newer, high-protein, low-carbohydrate diets now being offered, for both adult and senior dogs. Some of these are also OK for puppies, if approved for them or for all life stages, but be careful of any with very high calcium percentages (best to stick to 2% or less calcium on a dry matter basis for large-breed puppies under the age of six months).

You can also increase the protein levels in whatever diet you feed by adding some fresh, high-protein foods, such as meat, eggs, yogurt, cottage cheese, and canned fish with bones (jack mackerel, pink salmon, sardines). See [Adding Fresh Foods to a Commercial Diet](#) below for more info.

If you have a dog that is hyper-reactive to outside stimuli, you may be interested in [How High Carbohydrate Diets Can Affect Some Dogs](#) by noted behaviorist William Campbell suggesting a possible cause being a high carbohydrate diet.

Large and giant breed puppies (or any breed prone to hip dysplasia) should be fed a restricted diet to slow growth. Overfeeding encourages them to grow too fast, resulting in most of the bone and joint problems common in large breeds, including dysplasia, osteochondrosis, etc. Limit the amount you feed to keep your pup lean and slow-growing.

Never give supplemental calcium of any kind when feeding a commercial diet. Feeding an adult food to a puppy may cause excessive calcium intake, as the adult food might have more calcium

for the same amount of calories than a puppy food would, while not providing the other nutrients required by puppies.

You should always feed puppies foods that are approved either for puppies or for all life stages. If you feed a food that is approved for adult dogs only, there will be inadequate amounts of protein, and improper levels of calcium and other nutrients. Large Breed Puppy Formulas may not be the answer, as they often replace protein with carbohydrates. Protein and carbohydrates contain exactly the same number of calories per gram, so reducing protein in favor of carbohydrates provides less needed nutrition without reducing calories. High protein diets are preferred, as puppies need protein to thrive and studies have shown that high protein does not lead to developmental problems, but high fat diets may contribute too many calories, leading to rapid growth. See the following articles for more information:

* "Effects of limited food consumption on the incidence of hip dysplasia in growing dogs", by RD Kealy et al., in JAVMA, Vol. 201, No. 6, Sept. 15, 1992 (pp 857-863), "On the basis of our findings in the long-term study reported here, limited food intake has a beneficial effect on development of the hip joints in growing and adolescent dogs. Labrador Retrievers fed 25% less food than those fed ad libitum had less hip joint laxity when they were 30 weeks old than their ad-libitum-fed counterparts. Furthermore, by maintaining the dogs on the same feeding regimen until they were 2 years old, this beneficial effect was still present at that age, as demonstrated by the significantly lower frequency of hip dysplasia in the limit-fed dogs."

* **Are high calcium diets related to bone disease?** "While feeding a special formula large breed puppy food to your puppy is not bad, there are no concrete studies that show it is better than a balanced puppy food formulated for all puppies."

Overfeeding During Growth "Overfeeding during the phase of rapid growth after weaning is linked to a variety of multi-factorial skeletal diseases including osteochondrosis, hip dysplasia, hypertrophic dystrophy and wobbler syndrome. A high protein diet (30% on a dry matter basis) does not increase the frequency or severity of skeletal abnormalities in giant breed dogs. So the excess weight during the period of rapid growth, rather than the protein content of the diet, is probably the factor which alters skeletal development.

* "Relationship of Nutrition to **Developmental Skeletal Disease** in Young Dogs "Excessive dietary energy may support a growth rate that is too fast for proper skeletal development and results in a higher frequency of skeletal abnormalities in large and giant-breed dogs Because fat has twice the caloric density of protein or carbohydrate, dietary fat is the primary contributor to excess energy intake. . . . Unlike other species, protein excess has not been demonstrated to negatively affect calcium metabolism or skeletal development in dogs. Protein deficiency, however, has more impact on the developing skeleton."

* Dietary Mineral Levels Affect Bone Development in Great Dane Pups "Controlling skeletal growth is considered critical in decreasing the expression of developmental bone disease in large and giant breed puppies. For these puppies, intake of calories and calcium should be restricted to a level that supports an adequate, but not excessive growth rate. If large and giant breed puppies are given unrestricted access from weaning to a puppy food with usual mineral and energy content, high mineral intakes may quickly result in bone mineral changes that could contribute to persistent skeletal problems."

* The optimal growth of large breed puppies "Excessive food intake (calories) during growth results in a higher risk of developing HD. . . . Research into the growth of Great Danes (Nap RC, The Netherlands,) has shown that the protein level of a diet has no significant influence on skeletal development. High protein intake does not result in increased risk for OCD or HD, and there is no effect on the development in the longitudinal growth of the bone."

Senior and overweight dogs are often fed foods that are lower in protein and higher in carbohydrates, which is a bad idea. Recent research indicates that older dogs need MORE protein than younger dogs, not less. Carbohydrates provide less nutrition than protein and can lead to weight gain. Feed senior and overweight dogs a diet that is high in protein, with low carbs and moderate amounts of fat (too little fat leaves your dog feeling hungry all the time, which can make it harder for them to lose weight).

Prescription Diets While I think many prescription diets are inappropriate (particularly those for struvite crystals and stones), if you do need to feed a prescription diet, IVD (now owned by Royal Canin) appears to be better quality than Purina or Hill's. Since IVD was bought by Royal Canin, these diets no longer appear to carry the IVD name, but can be distinguished from the Royal Canin brand by the use

of the word "Formula" in their names, such as "Sensitive Formula" or "Modified Formula". See them listed under "Limited Ingredient Diets" on the Royal Canin Veterinary Diets site. The Royal Canin Hi-Tor diets for special needs may also be better quality than Hill's or Purina, though I'm not as sure of this.

Note that prescription diets are not always needed. For example, dogs with liver disease do not need a diet change unless they are showing symptoms of hepatic encephalopathy. Prescription diets for weight loss are high in carbohydrates, which have been shown to be an ineffective method of weight control. A prescription diet is not needed for dogs with diabetes. "Consumption of diets with low carbohydrate, high protein, and moderate fat content may be advantageous for prevention and management of obesity, impaired glucose tolerance, and diabetes in cats and dogs."

Melamine and Cyanuric Acid

As everyone must be aware by now, there was a massive recall of pet foods beginning in March, 2007, due to contaminants that caused kidney failure in the deaths of thousands of pets. Eventually, the cause was determined to be contamination with **melamine and cyanuric acid**, ingredients that are often added illegally to foods in China to artificially increase their protein level. Contamination was found first in wheat gluten, then in rice protein concentrate, then in corn gluten (in South Africa), and most recently in chicken jerky, all coming from China. Since that time, most of the better dog food companies have instituted testing for these two substances, and have taken steps to eliminate ingredients sourced from China. Unfortunately, there are a few ingredients that simply cannot be found elsewhere in quantity, including taurine, glucosamine and most B vitamins. Note that companies who say that all of their ingredients come from US companies are lacking in frankness, or sincerity, as the original source of some parts could still be China.

Eagle Pack, whose foods are EU (European Union) certified, which requires disclosure of the country of origin of all ingredients, has this to say: "Due to the global economy and worldwide outsourcing, some ingredients or supplements are not made in the U.S. or are not made in sufficient quantity. Most pet food and human food companies and makers of supplements most likely source some supplements from China. Most B vitamins for human and pet consumption come from China. In our supplements, U.S. vitamin maker BASF sources some vitamins from China. This will be true of the vitamin content for most pet foods you buy and for many pet or human vitamins you use. The

Glucosamine we humans take as well as the Glucosamine in your pet's food most likely is sourced from China. The same is true for human grade Taurine. Some pet food makers seem unaware that some ingredients of necessity must be sourced from China; scary they don't know."

Canned, Refrigerated or Frozen Cooked Foods

There are several reasons why canned food may be a better choice than kibble if you are feeding your dog a commercial food. First, canned foods contain far fewer chemical additives than dry foods. Artificial colors and flavors are much less common, and preservatives are unnecessary due to the canning process itself (however, this also means that canned food will quickly spoil if left out at room temperature). Second, canned foods generally have much less grain than dry foods. Kibble must be at least 50% carbohydrates in order to be extruded without gumming up the machinery; canned foods have no such requirement. Fewer carbs also means more protein and fat, both of which are good for dogs. And third, canned food has more moisture, which makes it easier to digest (you can achieve the same result with kibble by soaking it first, but remember that soaked kibble will also spoil quickly if left out at room temperature) and better for the kidneys.

Here are some of the better canned foods that I have heard about.

- * Active Life ~ 100% human grade ingredients. Offers whole chicken wings and thighs cooked to softness in the can. All foods are low carb, some are limited ingredient (good for dogs with food allergies) or grain free.

- * Addiction ~ High quality ingredients. Novel protein (venison, unagi [eel] and brushtail), grain-free, limited ingredient diets suitable for feeding to dogs with severe food allergies. I would not recommend feeding these foods to normal, healthy dogs, as it's better to reserve novel proteins for future use in case your dog ever develops food allergies. Note the vegetarian diet is not recommended.

- * Artemis ~ Available in Europe and Asia, as well as the US. Human grade, antibiotic- and hormone-free meats.

- * Canidae ~ human-grade meats.

* Castor & Pollus Organix ~ Over 70% certified organic ingredients. Products are tested for melamine and cyanuric acid.

* Chicken Soup for the Pet Lover's Soul ~ High quality, hormone- and antibiotic-free ingredients. Offers higher-protein senior diet.

* Doctors Foster & Smith ~ High-quality ingredients, high meat content.

* Eagle Pack Holistic Select ~ Human grade, hormone and antibiotic free ingredients. Fish meal is ethoxyquin-free. "Eagle Pack Super Premium formulas are nutritionally balanced so pet owners can mix up to 25% raw food with the Eagle Pack formulas." Products are tested for melamine. Eagle Pack is EU (European Union) certified, which requires disclosure of the country of origin of their ingredients. They have eliminated Chinese-sourced ingredients except where it is not possible to do so (see above for more info).

* Evanger's for Dogs ~ Evanger's also makes all meat diets that are not nutritionally complete but can be used short-term for elimination diets (to determine if your dog has food allergies) or in combination with other foods. Several varieties are grain-free. Note the Vegetarian Dinner is NOT recommended.

* Fromm Four Star Nutritionals ~ USDA inspected meats, high quality ingredients. Several varieties are limited-ingredient and grain-free, which can help dogs with food allergies.

* Go! Natural from Petcurean ~ Human grade ingredients

* Natura makes several varieties of recommended foods. All foods have been tested by an independent laboratory and found to be free of melamine and cyanuric acid (see press release). "We have also directed our buyers to source ingredients from domestic sources and, in the few cases where an ingredient is only available offshore, we have instituted an elevated level of control and testing.

* California Natural a limited ingredient diet that can be helpful for dogs with food allergies.

* Innova and Evo grain-free, high in protein and fat (both of which are good for dogs) and low in carbs. Now offering beef, chicken/turkey, duck, rabbit and venison varieties.

* Natural Balance ~ Human grade ingredients. Fish meal is ethoxyquin-free. Several canned diets are limited-ingredient, which can help dogs with food allergies. Also see the new Eatables line, and they now offer a frozen Raw Food Diet and cooked Frozen Loaves in select locations.

* Nature's Variety Instinct and Prairie and Homestyle ~ Instinct is higher-protein, lower-carb and grain-free. The Venison variety should not be fed to large-breed puppies due to high calcium levels (the other varieties have much less calcium and should be OK).

* Performatrin Ultra ~ Human grade, hormone and antibiotic free ingredients.

* Pet Promise ~ hormone- and antibiotic-free ingredients from animals raised humanely on family farms.

* Solid Gold ~ Solid Gold now offers a Green Tripe canned dog food with very limited ingredients.

* Timberwolf Organics Offers four new canned foods, all high-protein and low-carbohydrate.

* Wellness from Old Mother Hubbard ~ Human grade ingredients. Products are tested for melamine and cyanuric acid. "Wellness® only uses ethoxyquin-free protein sources." Old Mother Hubbard also makes Neura Meats that are 95% meat, low carb.

Some of these companies offer vegetarian diets, but I believe these are inappropriate and quite dangerous for dogs. I do NOT recommend feeding your dog a vegetarian diet under any circumstances. See [Vegetarian Diets for Dogs?](#) for more information.

Dry Foods (Kibble and Dehydrated)

Here are some of the better **dry foods** that I have heard about. This is not a complete list of the high quality foods available, which are growing all the time, since the giant dog food recall in 2007.

Addiction ~ High quality ingredients. Addiction uses novel proteins (kangaroo, brushtail, venison), and limited ingredients suitable for feeding to dogs with **severe food allergies**. Offers raw dehydrated foods as well as regular dry foods. I would not recommend feeding this food to normal,

healthy dogs, as it's better to reserve novel proteins for future use in case your dog ever develops food allergies. Note the vegetarian diet is not recommended.

- **Artemis** ~ Human grade, antibiotic- and hormone-free meats. Weight management variety not recommended for that purpose (see above for more info), but might be good for a dog prone to pancreatitis or fat intolerance. **Now offering a high-protein, low-carb, grain-free variety called Maximal Dog.**
- **Back to Basics** ~ Human grade, hormone and antibiotic free ingredients.
- **Blue Buffalo** ~ Human grade, hormone and antibiotic free ingredients.
- **By Nature**, from Blue Seal, offers an organic chicken formula that looks very good. Their regular formulas are OK, but make no mention of using human grade ingredients. They have a pork and sweet potato variety that might be helpful for dogs with food allergies, though it also contains other ingredients.
- **Canidae** ~ Human grade, hormone and antibiotic free ingredients.
- **Canine Caviar** ~ Human-grade, hormone- and antibiotic-free ingredients. Offers a **grain-free** Venison & Split Pea variety that may be helpful for dogs with food allergies, though it contains a number of other ingredients.
- **Castor & Pollux Organix** ~ Over 70% certified organic ingredients. Products are tested for melamine and cyanuric acid.
- **Chicken Soup for the Pet Lover's Soul** ~ High quality ingredients. **Offers higher-protein senior diet.**
- **Dog Lover's Gold** ~ Human grade, hormone and antibiotic free, free range ingredients. Also available in Europe.
- **Eagle Pack Holistic Select** ~ Human grade, hormone and antibiotic free ingredients. Fish meal is ethoxyquin-free. "Eagle Pack Super Premium formulas are nutritionally balanced so pet owners can mix up to 25% raw food with the Eagle Pack formulas." **Offers higher-protein senior diet.** Dry foods are manufactured in their own plant. Products are tested for melamine. Eagle Pack is EU (European Union) certified, which requires disclosure of the country of origin of their ingredients.
- **Evanger's for Dogs** ~ Human grade ingredients.

- **Flint River Ranch** (multiple distributors) ~ Human grade, hormone-free ingredients. "All Flint River Ranch pet foods and pet treats are Guaranteed Free of BHA, BHT, and Ethoxyquin."
- **Fromm Four Star Nutritionals** and **Gold Nutritionals** ~ USDA inspected meats, high quality ingredients (note the Classic line is much lower quality and not recommended). Surf & Turf variety is higher-protein, lower-carb and **grain-free**.
- **Go! Natural** from Petcurean ~ Human grade ingredients. Go! Natural now offers a **higher-protein, low-carb, Grain Free** variety. Also offers a limited-ingredient *Salmon & Oatmeal* diet for dogs with **food allergies**.
- **Natura** makes several varieties of recommended foods. They use human grade, hormone and antibiotic free ingredients. Dry foods are manufactured in their own plant. **All foods have been tested by an independent laboratory and found to be free of melamine and cyanuric acid** "We have also directed our buyers to source ingredients from domestic sources and, in the few cases where an ingredient is only available offshore, we have instituted an elevated level of control and testing."
- **Innova** offers adult, puppy and large-breed puppy and senior varieties. **Both their Senior Plus and their Large Breed Senior diets are higher in protein.**
- **Evo** is a **high-protein, low-carb, grain-free** diet. The ingredients look very good, but I have heard reports of some dogs having problems on this diet, especially when used long term (problems include excessive water drinking in a number of dogs, probably due to the high protein content, and dry coat in a few, possibly due to the high calcium in the regular variety). I think it is better used as part of the diet, or as part of a rotation of foods, rather than fed all the time. **Regular and Reduced Fat EVO varieties should not be fed to large-breed puppies under 6 months old due to the high calcium content.** The Red Meat variety is lower in calcium and so it is safer, though the amount of calcium is still higher than is recommended for large-breed puppies. Mixing EVO half and half with a variety of animal protein sources (boneless meat, eggs, dairy, etc.) will reduce the overall calcium percentage in the diet to a more acceptable level.
- **Natural Balance Ultra Premium** ~ Human grade ingredients. Fish meal is ethoxyquin-free. Two limited-ingredient, **grain-free** varieties available, which may be good for dogs with food allergies: Potato & Duck and Sweet Potato & Fish. Also now offering a frozen raw

formula in select locations. Note that their Dog Food Rolls make great treats, but are not recommended as a major part of the diet due to the high amounts of sugar (sucrose). As always, the **Vegetarian Formula is NOT recommended**.

- **Nature's Variety Prairie** and **Instinct** ~ Human grade ingredients. Instinct is **higher-protein, low-carb and grain-free** (it uses tapioca). The Chicken variety of Instinct should **not** be fed to large-breed puppies due to high calcium levels (the Rabbit variety has much less calcium and should be OK for large-breed puppies, and the Duck & Turkey variety is in the middle).
- **Performatrin Ultra** ~ Human grade, hormone and antibiotic free ingredients
- **Pet Promise** ~ hormone- and antibiotic-free ingredients from animals raised humanely on family farms. **Their "Healthy Weight & Aging" formula is lower-fat but still higher-protein.** I'm not thrilled with their use of corn gluten meal and soy flour, both of which are sources of incomplete, poor-quality protein, but feel their commitment to humanely-raised animals and high-quality meat products still makes this a superior food.
- **Solid Gold** ~ Offering a **high-protein, low-carb, grain-free** variety called *Barking at the Moon* for adult dogs (not recommended for large-breed puppies under the age of six months due to high calcium content).
- **Wellness** from Old Mother Hubbard ~ Human grade ingredients. "Wellness® only uses ethoxyquin-free protein sources." Also offers Simple Solutions using exotic protein sources (duck and venison) for dogs with **food allergies**.
NEW: now offering high-protein, low-carb, grain-free product line called CORE for adult dogs, including a low-fat version. All products are tested for melamine and cyanuric acid.

Remember, there is no "best" diet, and I believe it's better to **switch foods periodically rather than to always feed the same thing. Find three or four foods that your dog likes and does well with, that meet the criteria for being very high quality, and rotate among them**, making the change gradually if your dog is prone to gastric upset. Add some fresh foods to the diet to further improve the quality.

Dehydrated Foods

SEE ALSO: Dog Food Mixes below for dehydrated foods designed to be mixed with fresh foods. Some of the Frozen Raw Food Products (widely available and local) also offer freeze-dried versions.

Soaking Kibble It is best to soak any kibble in warm water or broth (watch out for too much sodium), to help with digestion. Soaking dry food in heated water for 10-15 minutes starts breaking down the binders in the kibble, releasing some of its tasty fat and flavoring and cutting down the time it takes the stomach to break it down for its trip through the small intestine. Note that once dry food has been soaked in water, it cannot be left out or it will go bad, so this can only be done with food the dog eats right away. Also, the Purdue Bloat Study showed a link between soaking kibble that contains citric acid and bloat, something to be aware of if your dog is deep chested or from a breed prone to bloat. Contrary to popular belief, hard kibble does NOT keep teeth clean. See the following articles for more info:

SUPPLEMENTS

Following are several commonly recommended supplements. However, you may want to consider supplementing your commercial diet with food, rather than (or in addition to) vitamin supplements. See the section below on Foods Used to Supplement a Commercial Diet for more information.

1. **Fish Oil or Salmon Oil:** An important source of Omega-3 essential fatty acids. Omega-3 EFAs are beneficial to the immune system, the nervous system, the heart, and help stop inflammation, such as in arthritis and allergies. They also support brain development of puppies and fetuses. This is probably the most important supplement to give, no matter what you feed, as Omega-3 EFAs are hard to find even in a natural diet, and are highly perishable when exposed to heat, light or air, so they do not survive in commercial foods even if added. Omega-3 EFAs are found in fish body oil, not liver oil. They are also found in flax seed oil, although that form is not as well utilized and some dogs can be allergic to flax.

Recommended amount is 1000 mg fish oil (containing 300 mg combined EPA/DHA) per 30 pounds (14 kg) of body weight. Maximum dosage for dogs with health problems would be 1000 mg fish oil (300 mg EPA/DHA) per 10 pounds (4.5 kg) of body weight. You can also use sardines in place of fish oil supplements; one small sardine supplies

over 100 mg EPA/DHA. Vitamin E should also be given whenever oils are supplemented (even small amounts are adequate, but highest recommended dosage would be 100 IU per day for small dogs, 200 IU for medium-sized dogs, and 400 IU for large dogs). Note that fish oil is not the same as cod liver oil, which is high in vitamins A and D. Never add cod liver oil to a commercial diet, as they are already high in vitamin D, and too much is harmful.

2. Probiotics: Probiotics are the beneficial bacteria that live in the intestines and help control yeast and harmful bacteria, as well as helping with digestion and intestinal health. These friendly bacteria are destroyed whenever antibiotics are given, and can also be flushed out of the system if your dog has diarrhea. It is recommended to use probiotics for six months following any antibiotic usage. Dogs that are under stress or that have digestive problems or problems with yeast (usually manifested as itchy skin, ear infections, and chewing at feet) may benefit from routine probiotic supplementation. A supplement that contains multiple bacterial strains is preferable to those that have only a single strain (usually acidophilus). There are two strains that have been found to be particularly beneficial for dogs: *Lactobacillus sporogenes* (see dosage recommendations for dogs here) and *Enterococcus faecium* (found in many supplements, including Jarrow Formulas Pet Dophilus and Berte's Ultra Probiotic Powder). Supplements that also contain prebiotics, which are foods that nourish the beneficial bacteria themselves, such as FOS (fructooligosaccharides), chicory (found in Ark Naturals Gentle Digest and others), inulin, and larch (arabinogalactin -- see dosage for dogs here) may be especially helpful to dogs with diarrhea. You can use products made for dogs, or human-grade probiotics that you would find in a health food store. Kefir, which is easy to make at home, is also a good source of beneficial bacteria. Plain yogurt can also be used, though most brands contain only acidophilus. Most probiotics must be kept refrigerated.

3. Vitamins: Although commercial foods include a minimal supply of added vitamins (the original ones are destroyed by processing), supplementing can be beneficial, especially vitamins E, C (with bioflavonoids), and B-complex. Unfortunately, most pet multi-vitamins, such as Pet Tabs, contain too little of anything to be very useful. For the most part, I don't recommend supplementing minerals, other than small amounts of selenium, except in whole food form, due to the potential for overdosing or not using proper combinations (for example, zinc can be dangerous if given in large quantities or not

properly balanced with copper). Vitamin D should also not be added to a commercial diet. See below for some recommended brands.

4. Digestive Enzymes: Since enzymes are destroyed by cooking, commercial foods are enzyme dead. Adding digestive enzymes may be beneficial if your dog suffers from digestive disorders, liver problems, pancreatitis, or is otherwise unhealthy and may benefit from getting additional nutritional value from their food. Digestive enzymes should be given about 20-30 minutes before feeding to be effective. Animal-based enzymes, such as protease and lipase, help more with the breakdown of nutrients, while plant-based enzymes, such as bromelain and papain, seem to help more with gas and inflammation.

Whole Food vs Synthetic supplements: Whole food supplements use beneficial foods and herbs rather than synthetic vitamins. Green blends are whole food supplements that include primarily green foods, such as kelp, alfalfa, spirulina, etc. I think that whole food supplements may be especially good for dogs fed a commercial diet, since those diets already have synthetic vitamins added, but it is hard to quantify the benefits of whole food supplements since little in the way of measurable nutrients will show up on a nutritional analysis. Synthetic supplements generally offer much higher amounts of vitamins. If you want to provide high dosages of vitamin C, for example, you will have to rely on synthetic supplements to do so. Synthetic supplements that include minerals or vitamin D may be too much when feeding a commercial diet, as these can be overdosed.

Here are some examples of supplements that may be beneficial, listed in alphabetical order by category. It is not necessary to use more than one of these at a time, but doing so should cause no problems. If you like more than one, you might want to alternate using them daily or weekly, particularly for those which contain herbs, such as Hokamix , as herbs may lose their effectiveness if given continuously, better to give off and on. Just as with diet, providing variety by rotating between different supplements is preferable to always using the same one.

A Few Whole Food Formulas:

- * Animal Essentials Herbal Multi-Vitamin 1.888.463.7748
- * Endurance made by Wendy Volhard and marketed by Handcraft Collars, 800-837-2033
- * Hokamix 800-825-1669 ~ Hokamix is an herbal supplement that provides "vitamins, amino acids, enzymes, antioxidants, trace

elements, essential fatty acids, chlorophyll, fiber, proteins, carbohydrates and other nutrients that occur naturally in the herbs."

* Invigor from The Honest Kitchen 1-866 4-DRY RAW (1-866 437-9729) ~ Invigor is a whole food antioxidant blend. Also see their other whole food supplements, Sparkle (Skin & Coat Support) and Perfect Form (digestive support) on same web page.

* Missing Link (available at some pet supply stores and also at KV Vet) 800-774-7387

* Nupro 800-360-3300 ~ I have stated in the past that Nupro had too much vitamin D, but the company provided me with a more recent nutritional analysis showing this is no longer true. This supplement provides an appropriate amount of vitamins A, C, D and many of the B vitamins, along with an assortment of minerals. It is fine for adult dogs and puppies, whether added to commercial food or homemade.

* NutraChew for Dogs 800-PETS-NOW

* Wellness Super5 Canine Supplement from Old Mother Hubbard 800-225-0904

* Wellness from PHD 1-800-863-3403 ~ Wellness is a "Multiple Vitamin, Mineral / Herbal Blend" containing both whole foods and synthetic ingredients. Also see their Unleash probiotic and enzyme supplement.

* Wholistic Canine Complete from The Wholistic Pet 1-888-ILASAND (452-7263) ~ note this product contains rosemary, which should be avoided for pets prone to seizures (it's fine for normal dogs). They also offer a Joint Mobility version that adds glucosamine, chondroitin and MSM in appropriate amounts.

Green blends:

* All Systems Go! Total Health Aid from Aunt Jeni's 301-702-0123 ~ All Systems Go! is a whole food green blend with herbs.

* Animal Essentials Organic Green Alternative Herbal Blend 1.888.463.7748

* Ark Naturals Nu-Pet Granular Greens 800-926-5100

* Berte's Green Blend 866-368-2728 ~ Berte's is a sea blend, good for trace minerals. It can be combined with Berte's Daily Blend Plus (below, formerly called Immune Blend). Don't combine it with Berte's Daily Blend, which already contains kelp and alfalfa.

* Preference from The Honest Kitchen, 866 4379 RAW. This is not a supplement but a dog food mix designed to be combined with fresh foods. It contains alfalfa, sweet potatoes, cabbage, celery, apples, spinach, organic kelp, coconut, bananas, zucchini, and honey. Multiple nutritional formulas (using synthetic ingredients; may also have some whole food ingredients):

* Alive! from Nature's Way 800-962-8873 ~ This is a human supplement that includes whole foods as well as synthetics. It seems to offer a good blend, including green foods, veggies, fruits and enzymes. Give full human dose (3 tablets) to large dogs, 2 tablets to medium-sized dogs, and 1 tablet to small dogs daily. Also sold through KV Vet.

* Azmira Mega Pet Daily 800-497-5665 ~ Mega Pet Daily is "a high potency, quality, nutritional supplement of vitamins, minerals, and amino acids in a base of Alfalfa, Watercress, Parsley, Rice and Lecithin."

* Berte's Daily Blend Plus (formerly called Immune Blend) 866-368-2728 ~ Daily Blend Plus is a multi-vitamin supplement with selenium that is good for healthy dogs, and those that are ill. It contains small amounts of probiotics and digestive enzymes, along with l-glutamine, which is good for intestinal problems. I would give half the recommended dose. You can also use Berte's Daily Blend but I think it is better for dogs being fed a home made diet, as it contains vitamin D, and commercial dog foods are already high in vitamin D (again, I think it is fine to give half the recommended dosage).

* Canine Basic Nutrients and Canine Basic Geriatric Nutrients from Thorne Veterinary (303) 702-1986. Available from Wellvet 303-702-1986, and HolisticPetInfo 877-5-PetCare (877-573-8227) ~ Basic Nutrients are combinations of whole food and synthetic nutrients, designed to provide "optimal levels of most important nutrients for optimal body functions." Thorne Research vitamin supplements are hypoallergenic and contain no fillers, so may be a good choice for dogs with food allergies. The geriatric formula contains acetyl-l-carnitine plus alpha lipoic acid, which have been shown to aid memory and ability to learn in older dogs. See Nutritional Supplements Improve Memory in Old Dogs for more information.

* Canine Plus and Canine Plus Senior from Vetri-Science. Available from HolisticPetInfo 877-5-PetCare (877-573-8227), KV Vet, and VetAmerica. Also called Top Dog from Mountain Naturals, and Canine Discovery from US Animal Nutritionals. These products are made by the same manufacturer as Cell Revive below.

* Cell Revive 440/880 888-340-1995 (always check their Specials for current discounts) ~ Cell Revive is an antioxidant supplement that provides a variety of vitamins and minerals. It does not include a B-complex vitamin, which should be given separately. Note this supplement is identical to Cell Advance by Vetri-Science (also available at KV Vet) and Cell Discovery from US Animal Nutritionals. I use half the recommended amount.

* Dynamite Showdown (360)736-9150

* Grandma Lucy's Vitamin Balls 1-800-906-LUCY ~ Combination of human-grade whole foods and synthetic vitamins and minerals.

* Small Animal Antioxidant and Immugen from Thorne Veterinary (303) 702-1986. Available from Wellvet, 303-702-1986 and HolisticPetInfo (Small Animal Antioxidant and Immugen) 877-5-PetCare (877-573-8227).

Please be sure that any supplement containing ground Flax Seed or oils is kept refrigerated, as it will go rancid otherwise.

See Shopping for Dog Supplements for some information on how to identify better brands. This article refers to NASC members, which you can see here (click on Member List). For the most part, of the names that I recognize, I agree that these are good companies, with a few noted exceptions: I do not recommend Hartz Mountain products, some of which have been investigated and recalled by the FDA, and Consumer Labs recently found that Nutri-Vet joint supplements had far less glucosamine and chondroitin than specified on the label. I also have some reservations about Sergeant's Pet Care Products.

See the section on Dog Food Mixes below for supplements that can be added to incomplete homemade diets to help balance them and make them complete.

* Cholodin for canine cognitive dysfunction and helping to keep older dogs mentally alert. It contains choline and phosphatidylcholine, along with a few additional nutrients. See Alzheimer's in Dogs and Cats for more information. Also see Cognitive Disorder, Alzheimer's Disease for more information on this topic from the same author.

ADDING FRESH FOODS TO DIETS

It is a great idea to add some fresh foods to a commercial diet, to improve the quality of nutrition that your dog receives. As long as you feed at least half kibble, you don't need to worry too much about balancing the foods you add, though as always I think variety is best. The more fresh food you feed, the more important it is to provide a variety of foods in appropriate proportions in order to maintain a balanced diet.

It is generally better to add animal protein sources rather than plant foods (grains, legumes and vegetables), since commercial diets are usually high in carbs and dogs have no nutritional need for them, while

protein provides a number of benefits). Animal source proteins, including eggs, meat, organs and dairy are the best foods to add.

Most dogs do fine when fresh foods, whether raw or cooked, are added to commercial diets, but a few may have problems. If your dog develops diarrhea or any other digestive problems when you add fresh foods, try feeding the two types of food separately. You can also experiment with different foods and different ways of preparing them - - some dogs may do better with raw food, for example, while others do best when the food is cooked.

Here are foods you can add to a commercial diet:

* **Eggs:** raw or cooked, such as lightly scrambled, soft- or hard-boiled. Whole raw eggs are fine, as the yolks contain plenty of biotin to make up for what the raw egg whites destroy. One of the healthiest and easiest to add foods.

* **Muscle Meat** (including Heart): any kind of meat, either ground or chunks (small enough to avoid choking). Feed raw or lightly cooked (never feed cooked bones). Add 1/2 tsp. ground eggshell (you can grind them in a clean coffee grinder or blender), or around 1,000 mg calcium from any other source, per pound of meat to give the proper calcium/phosphorus ratio. Adding calcium is not necessary if the added meat is only a small portion of the diet, or if you are adding raw meat with bone that is consumed.

* **Liver and other Organ Meat:** feed small amounts of liver at a time, as it is rich and can lead to diarrhea, but it is very dense nutritionally and good to feed. Kidney is similar, but not quite as rich. Most other organ meats, like hearts and gizzards, are nutritionally more like muscle meats and can be fed in greater quantity, though a few dogs will react to these as well if too much is fed at one time.

* **Canned fish with bones:** Sardines (preferably packed in water rather than oil), Jack Mackerel and Pink Salmon: Full of beneficial omega-3 fatty acids and provides trace minerals. Bones are cooked to softness and are safe to feed (no need to add calcium to this food, since the bones supply it). Never feed raw salmon or trout from the Pacific Northwest (California to Alaska), as it may contain a parasite that can be fatal to dogs. I don't recommend feeding much tuna, as it is more likely to be contaminated with mercury, and does not include bones, which are nutritious. Sardines can be used to replace fish oil supplements; one small sardine has over 100 mg of the omega-3 fatty acids EPA and DHA.

* **Yogurt:** plain, preferably organic. Whole milk (rather than low- or non-fat) is fine unless your dog needs to lose weight. Kefir is another

cultured milk option. Dogs who have problems with cow's milk products may do better with those made from goat's milk.

- * **Cottage Cheese or Ricotta Cheese:** low-fat is best.

- * **Garlic:** may help repel fleas (although this is anecdotal) and has other health benefits as well. Garlic can be toxic in large quantities. Give no more than 1/2 to 1 small raw crushed clove (one small part of a bulb) per 20 pounds of body weight daily.

- * **Canned Pumpkin** (not pumpkin pie mix) -- great for digestion, helps both diarrhea and constipation. Use in small amounts, as too much can also cause diarrhea.

- * **Veggies:** preferably pureed raw or can be steamed (whole raw veggies, such as broccoli or carrot sticks, are not harmful but can't be digested by dogs so they don't get any nutritional value from them). Good veggies include carrots, celery, all kinds of greens (kale, collard greens, mustard greens, bok choy, cabbage, spinach, chard, parsley, cilantro, etc.), lettuce (anything but iceberg, which is not very nutritious), broccoli, Brussels sprouts, zucchini, asparagus, turnips, parsnips, etc. **Do NOT feed onions. Warning: If your animal is having any symptoms of arthritis, inflammation, respiratory problems or any other conditions that involve swelling or mucous, stay away from the nightshade family (potatoes, tomatoes, peppers and eggplant).**

- * **Fruit:** banana, papaya, apple, pear, blueberries, avocado, etc. **Note that avocado pits and skin are toxic to dogs. The fruit from Guatemalan avocados is also somewhat toxic, while the fruit from Mexican varieties is not. The popular Hass variety is a hybrid with some Guatemalan heritage, I'm unsure what it's level of toxicity is.**

Recreational bones can help keep the teeth clean, avoid gum disease, and provide a great deal of chewing pleasure and exercise. I like to give large beef ribs, and take them away once all the meat has been removed, but these bones may be consumed by larger dogs and more aggressive chewers. Knuckle bones are good recreational bones, especially for large dogs. Marrow bones are OK but can be a problem if the dog can get them between their molars and crunch down, as they are very hard and can cause broken teeth. The marrow is also very rich and may cause diarrhea (you can scoop some of it out with a spoon before feeding to help). Bones get harder as they dry out, so to avoid problems with broken teeth, it's better to take the bones away after a reasonable amount of time (anything from a few hours to a day or two). Bones should always be fed raw, as cooked bones become hard and brittle, which can be dangerous if consumed.

Foods to Avoid or Restrict

While most foods safe for people are also safe for dogs, there are a few notable exceptions. Here are some foods you should not feed your dog:

- * **Onions:** can cause a form of anemia. Reaction is dose-dependent and will build up over time. Small amounts are not harmful, but there's no reason to feed them.

- * **Grapes and raisins:** cause kidney failure in a few dogs for unknown reasons.

- * **Macadamia nuts:** toxic to dogs, even in very small amounts.

- * **Raw salmon, trout and related andromadous fish** from the Pacific Northwest (California to Alaska): can carry a parasite that causes Salmon Poisoning in dogs. Cooking will destroy the parasite. Note that canned salmon is cooked and therefore safe.

- * **Chocolate and caffeine:** toxic to dogs.

- * **Xylitol**, a natural sweetener, is toxic to dogs.

The following foods should be restricted:

- * **Garlic:** beneficial in doses up to 1 small clove per 20 lbs of body weight, but can cause anemia if given in larger quantities.

- * **Avocado:** fruits of Guatemalan species are mildly toxic to dogs, causing digestive upset, while fruits of Mexican species are safe. Note that the popular Hass variety is a hybrid and toxicity level is unknown. Pits and rinds of all species can be toxic.

- * **Cruciferous vegetables** are very healthy, but can suppress thyroid function if large amounts are fed raw. Feed in limited amounts, or cook first. The cruciferous family includes include arugula, broccoli, cauliflower, brussels sprouts, bok choy, cabbage, kale, collard greens, mustard greens, turnips, turnip greens, watercress, rutabaga, daikon, kohlrabi.

- * **Spinach and swiss chard** should also be fed in limited amounts due to their high oxalate content. Cooking removes some of the oxalates, though in this case you should not feed the water, as that's where the oxalates go.

- * **Potatoes** (the regular kind, not sweet potatoes), tomatoes, peppers (all kinds) and eggplant may aggravate arthritis pain, but are otherwise fine to feed. Grains and starchy veggies may also aggravate arthritis and other forms of inflammation.

RAW FOOD PRODUCTS

There are fresh (frozen) raw food diets available. A few are complete diets, others offer different mixtures that you can use to create a complete diet, some just offer part of the diet, such as ground or

whole raw meaty bones, which you would need to combine with other foods at home in order to create a complete diet (see Balancing a Homemade Diet below for more info on how to ensure that you're feeding a complete diet). Most are pretty expensive, especially when shipping costs are figured in, they work better if you can find a local source (or have small dogs!). Here are some that are widely available (see below for local sources):

Widely available complete raw diets (meeting AAFCO guidelines):

*** Dr. Billinghurst's BARF Diet**

Available through distributors in the US and Canada, or can be ordered online, shipping charge is \$25 minimum.

BARFWorld offers complete diets (BARF Diet), as well as mix and match minces (BARF Mates -- see below for how to use these as a basis for a homemade diet). Diets do not claim to meet AAFCO guidelines, but appear to be complete and state "Dr. Billinghurst's BARF DIET™ is nutritionally sound and nutritionally adequate. This means - in addition to containing those nutrients which 'must be present' in processed pet foods, the Dr. Billinghurst's BARF DIET™ diet also contains many other essential nutrients."

*** Home Made 4 Life**

American Manufacturer: Aunt Jeni's ~ 877-254-6123 or 301-702-0123 (Maryland)

Canadian Manufacturer: Pets 4 Life ~ 519-372-1818 (Ontario)

US Retailers in many states, also several Canadian distributors.

Home Made 4 Life is complete diet consisting of ground meat and bones, organ meat, vegetables, and a variety of other healthy ingredients. No grains. Lamb, Chicken, Beef, Rabbit, Turkey and Goat varieties available, as well as cat food. All ingredients are human grade. Jennifer Boniface (Aunt Jeni), MS, is an Animal Nutritionist and quite knowledgeable about canine diets. "Home Made 4 Life has been formulated and analyzed by qualified, degreed, experienced Animal Nutritionists not only to meet but to exceed CVMA, NRC, and AAFCO requirements." However, the beef and goat varieties are not appropriate for large-breed puppies due to high calcium content.

*** Steve's Real Food for Dogs**

Eugene, Oregon 1-888-526-1900 or (541) 683-9950
Retailers across the country in most states.

Steve's is a complete diet consisting of ground meat and bones, organ meat, vegetables, and a variety of supplements. Has a tiny amount of rice bran, but no other grains. Chicken, Turkey, Beef and new Turducken varieties available, as well as cat food. Now available in patties as well as nuggets, which are bulkier and more expensive to ship. Freeze-dried version is also available, but very expensive. "All formulas of Steve's Real Food for Pets are formulated using the AAFCO nutrient profiles to meet the nutritional requirements for all stages of your dogs life from weaned puppy through seniors."

* **Stella & Chewy's**

Wisconsin (888) 477-8977

Retailers around the country and available online from SitStay.com and Amazon.com (freeze-dried only)

Stella & Chewy's offers frozen and freeze-dried chicken and beef products for cats and dogs. "Steaks" are 96% human-grade, free-range meats and bones, and 4% organic fruits and vegetables. Hormone- and antibiotic-free. "All food meets the nutritional levels established by the AAFCO Dog Food Nutrient Profiles for All Life Stages." Opened their own processing plant in May, 2007. Calcium percentages are not given, so unsure whether they're OK for large-breed puppies.

* **Primal Pet Foods**

San Francisco, California 415-566-4652

Available at retailers around the country, including Whole Foods. Also available online from Only Natural Pet Store.

Primal makes both complete diets (Formulas) and blends that are not complete (Grinds and Mixes, see below for more information on how to use these products as the basis for a homemade diet). Grinds are meat, bone and organs only; mixes add fruits and vegetables as well. Uses 100% human grade, hormone, antibiotic and steroid free meats, poultry and game, certified organic produce, certified organic minerals and unrefined vitamins. Formulas are available in chicken, duck, beef, lamb, pheasant and venison varieties. Grinds and mixes come in turkey, chicken, buffalo and sardine varieties. Only the venison formula has an appropriate amount of calcium for large-breed puppies, the rest should not be fed due to high calcium content.

* **Northwest Naturals**

Portland, OR 1-800-782-6328

Retailers in many states.

Northwest Naturals offers complete raw diets that meet AAFCO guidelines. Mixes are about 78-80% meat and include ground meat and bone, organ meat, vegetables, and a variety of supplements, no grains. Chicken, Turkey and Beef varieties are available, plus one for cats. Available in the form of both nuggets and "dinner bars", for easy storage and feeding. Meat is human grade. Although AAFCO is not mentioned on their web site, in private communication they have assured me that "The products are balanced/complete and meet all AAFCO objectives." Calcium percentages are not given, so unsure whether they're OK for large-breed puppies.

* **Paw Naturaw Organic Frozen Raw Diets**

Wisconsin (866) 729-4738

Retailers at several locations in the Milwaukee-Madison-Chicago triangle. There are distributors in several states and Canada. Also available through Amazon.com with free shipping! Can also be ordered from LocalHarvest.org, PoochieHeaven.com, and BARFDirect.com.

These are complete diets meeting AAFCO nutritional guidelines for all life stages. Beef, bison, chicken and turkey varieties are all grain-free and made with 100% human-grade ingredients. The company makes its foods at its own processing plant, to ensure quality control. All of the organic chickens, turkeys and bison are purchased directly from documented family farmers, humanely transported, processed for human consumption in USDA inspected facilities, and shipped directly to their own manufacturing facility.

* **Healthy Pet Products**

Canton, Georgia 1-877-475-7195

Available in many states.

Offers complete diets in beef and chicken varieties. Meat is organic, hormone- and antibiotic-free, and grass-fed/free-range. Available in both frozen and freeze-dried form. Also offers freeze-dried green tripe. "Healthy Pet Products is formulated to meet the nutritional levels established by the AAFCO Dog and Cat Food Nutrient Profiles for all life stages."

* **FarMore**

Available in Canada in Alberta, British Columbia, Manitoba and Ontario.

Available in US in many states. Carried at Pet Food Express stores in Northern California.

FarMore is a mix of ground meat (including bones), organ meat, veggies, grains (beef and buffalo varieties only), and supplements. Varieties include beef, chicken, lamb and buffalo. Meat is human grade, free-range and antibiotic-free. This food is reasonably priced and has been improved substantially with the addition of more bone, different veggies, and grains removed from all but the beef (oats) and buffalo (barley). "FarMore Beef Diet is formulated to meet the nutritional levels established by AAFCO Nutrient Profiles for all Stages of Life." Calcium percentages are not given, so unsure whether they're OK for large-breed puppies.

* **Natural Balance Gourmet Frozen Loaves (800) 829-4493**

Natural Balance raw foods are available in California, Arizona, Nevada, Hawaii and Michigan so far. "Formulated to meet the nutritional levels established by the AAFCO dog food nutrient profiles for all life stages." Calcium percentages are not given, so unsure whether they're OK for large-breed puppies.

* **Nature's Variety Prairie**

Distributors in many states.

Prairie uses 95% fresh meat ingredients including ground raw bones. Freeze-dried version and whole raw meaty bones also available. All varieties are "formulated to meet the nutritional levels established by the AAFCO Dog & Cat Food Nutrient Profiles for All Life Stages." However, the Rabbit variety should not be fed to large-breed puppies due to high calcium content. Note that this food is much higher in calories than the other frozen foods listed above. It appears to have much more fat than the minimum amounts listed in their nutritional analyses, based on the calories they show. Freeze-dried version available from Amazon.

* **Bravo! Raw Diet ~ 860-693-0632**

Distributors in many states.

Bravo! offers a wide variety of products, including mixes (ground meat, bone, organs and veggies) and unusual meats (kangaroo, buffalo, ostrich), plus green tripe. Mixes are not complete and do not meet AAFCO guidelines. You can formulate a complete diet from their

products, but don't just feed the mixes with nothing added (eggs, yogurt, cottage cheese, and canned fish other than tuna are good to add). See below for more info on how to ensure that you're feeding a complete diet. See the booklet Bravo Beginnings for good information on how to put together a complete diet for your dog from Bravo products. Also see the How-2 web page put together by a Bravo distributor who is also a friend of mine.

* **Oma's Pride**

From Miller Foods, Inc. in Avon, Connecticut ~ (800) 678-6627, 860-673-3256

Distributors in many states, also available at WagginTails.

Oma's Pride offers unusual meats (emu, rabbit, ostrich, duck, venison), tripe (not from USDA approved source), whole raw meaty bones, as well as mixtures of ground meat and bones, organ meat and veggies. Mixes are not complete and do not meet AAFCO guidelines. The mixes are high in bone (70-80% meat/bone at a 50/50 ratio) and low in muscle and organ meat. You can formulate a complete diet from their products, but don't just feed the mixes with nothing added (additional muscle meat and organ meat, as well as eggs, yogurt, cottage cheese and canned fish other than tuna are good to add). See below for more info on how to ensure that you're feeding a complete diet.

Local or limited availability products

There are a number of other products available which you may want to look into, particularly if they are in your area (many can be shipped, but shipping is costly for frozen foods). Note that very few of these products are certified to meet AAFCO nutritional standards -- in other words, most are not complete diets. You will need to balance out the ratio of meat, bone and organs yourself, and preferably add some additional fresh foods as well, such as eggs, dairy and canned fish with bones. See below for more information.

See the following for commercial raw food products in the US, Canada, Australia and Europe, as well as Specialty Products and Grass Fed and Organic Products:

US (listed alphabetically by state):

* The Wholesome Hound in Dothan, Alabama 334-685-0002 ~ Offers a selection of raw meaty bones, meat, organs, etc., plus several commercial raw diets.

* Grandad's Pet Foods in Lodi, California 209-368-3025 ~ Distributors in California, Oregon and Washington. Will ship throughout the Western US. Delivery to much of California available for \$7.50 and up with a minimum 30 pound order.

* Wagalicious Natural Pet Foods, in Mar Vista (Los Angeles), California (310) 508-8660 ~ Will deliver to Los Angeles and Orange Counties, will ship elsewhere. Offers blends of meat (turkey, lamb and chicken) and veggies, some with liver. Uses eggshell calcium rather than bones. Meats are human-grade, antibiotic- and hormone-free, and foods are produced at a human-grade facility. According to the people who make this food, "It has been lab tested and meets AAFCO standards for complete and balanced for all life stages for both cats and dogs." Calcium percentages are not given, so unsure whether they're OK for large-breed puppies.

* K9 Raw Diet in Westlake Village, California 805-379-0227 ~ Bravo distributor, will deliver to local area. Also offers supplements.

* Halshan Premium Raw Food in Southern California 888-766-9725 ~ Shipping to California, Utah and Nevada is \$15 per 50 pound box, all other states are \$100. Offers a variety of ground meat and veggie mixes. Antibiotic and hormone free meats are used. Meat types include chicken, turkey, lamb, beef, venison, ostrich, buffalo, duck and fish. Green tripe is also available. You need to add your own calcium to all boneless mixes (add 1/2 teaspoon ground eggshell per pound of meat).

* Feed This in Forestville, California 707-823-7001 ~ Delivers as far north as Willits, East to Sacramento, South to Santa Cruz and throughout the Greater San Francisco Bay Area for a nominal fee. Available at a number of retailers around the San Francisco Bay Area, including Sonoma County and Vallejo. Now also shipping across the US. Offers meaty bones, "Bogey Balls" (a variety of mixtures that include meat with and without bone, eggs, fish, organs and/or veggies) and supplements. Can order individual items or various meal plans.

* Natural Kravings in Denver/Colorado Springs/Boulder areas, Colorado 303-814-2891

* Companion Animal Meals in Miami, Florida (305) 893-1440 ~ Mixes include veggies and grains, as well as ground raw meaty bones and organs, delivered to your door.

* Good Doggie in Nokomos, Florida 941 966-0482 ~ Carries multiple raw foods, free delivery in Sarasota and Manatee Counties

* Raw4Dogs several distributors in Florida. Offers mixes plus individual ingredients, including chicken, turkey, lamb, beef, rabbit and lamb (all with bone) and other unusual meats, plus green tripe, organ meat, and whole raw meaty bones.

* Raw Health in Florida 866-862-5379 ~ Offers chicken and rabbit blends of raw meaty bones, organs and veggies (these are not complete diets, see below for how best to use blends such as these).

* Health Connections 4 Life in Wonder Lake, Illinois 847-814-9992 ~ Distributor for Oma's Pride, Companion Natural, Taylor Pond Farms (tripe) and B-Naturals supplements.

* Natural Pet Market in Glen Ellyn, Illinois 630-534-6682 ~ Carries multiple raw foods, plus a variety of raw food pre-mixes and things like Tripett and Wysong All Meat Diets.

* K9Cuisine in Paris, Illinois 866.919.2415 ~ Carries Healthy Pet Products (see above) frozen and freeze-dried foods.

* My Pet Carnivore in Indianapolis, Indiana 317-373-4111 ~ Rabbit, Duck, Fish, Turkey, Lamb, Mutton, Beef (including tripe), chicken and goat, whole or ground, including organs. Products come from small family farms and are antibiotic- and hormone-free, most are grass-fed. Also offers treats and supplements.

* Prey4Pets in rural north-central Kentucky. Beef, pastured chicken, pork, and rabbit parts.

* K-9 Kraving in Baltimore, Maryland 410-675-1071 ~ Available in Arizona, Colorado, Illinois, New York and Virginia.

* Golden Acres in Elk River, Minnesota 763-441-0089

* K-9 Choice in McHenry, Mississippi 601-928-9308 ~ Distributors in California, New Mexico, Oklahoma, Utah

* Nature's Logic in Lincoln, Nebraska 402-475-7663 ~ Distributors in many states, but I don't know if they offer the raw foods or just the dry/canned. Offers a complete raw diet that uses eggshells rather than bone. Unsure if meat is human-grade.

* Rock Farm Natural Beef in Wolfeboro, New Hampshire 603-569-4250 ~ All natural beef business -- has a good supply of hearts, tongues, bones, and livers for raw dog food at \$1.00 per pound. All natural, no antibiotics and no hormones.

* Newfound Naturals in Manchester, New Hampshire (603) 232-1010 ~ Dehydrated raw diets. No mention of AAFCO but diets appear to be complete.

* Healthy Paws in Washington, New Jersey ~ Ground and whole meat, raw meaty bones, organs, veggies and tripe.

* Wild About Meat in Ridgewood, New Jersey ~ Distributor for Bravo (including green tripe), Aunt Jeni's Home Made 4 Life, Primal Pet Foods and Nature's Variety.

* NDN (Nu Dimensions Nutrition) in Raleigh, North Carolina (919) 848-4071 ~ Retailers in Florida, New York, North Carolina, South Carolina and Virginia.

* Three Cheers Raw! Raw! Raw! in North Lima, Ohio 330-549-3077 ~ Offers a large selection of ground mixes, whole raw meaty bones and dehydrated treats.

* A Place for Paws in Columbiana, Ohio (800) 354-4216 ~ Offers a variety of veggie, meat and bone mixes and raw meaty bones, including tripe.

* mOrigins in Cleveland, Ohio (216) 228-3656 ~ Distributors in Connecticut, Massachusetts, New York, North Carolina, Ohio and Texas. Freeze-dried version also available. Appears to be a complete diet, though there is no mention of meeting AAFCO requirements.

* OmegaFarms in Alvordton, Ohio ~ Offers a variety of meat and raw meaty bones, both whole and ground, also rabbit, goat, pinkies and baby chicks, etc.

- Hall Brothers Meats in North Olmsted, Ohio (440) 235-3262 ~ Ground chicken quarters, and a beef heart mixture for dogs.
-
- * Peps Poultry in Quakertown, Pennsylvania 215-538-9908 ~ Chicken, Turkey, Duck, Pheasant, Ostrich, Beef, Pork, Buffalo and Rabbit products, both whole and ground, including green tripe.
- * Bone-affied Nutrition in Dallas-Fort Worth, Texas 214-529-8355 ~ Huge variety, including tripe, pre-made raw diets, treats, supplements, and exotic meats, such as buffalo, duck, goat, ostrich, quail, venison and more.
- * Bones2Go in Houston, Texas 713-462-2663 ~ Huge variety, including tripe, pre-made raw diets, freeze-dried products, treats, supplements, and exotic meats, such as goat, duck, ostrich, rabbit, buffalo, venison and more.
- * The Dog Bowl in Houston, Texas 713-529-0334 ~ Located in the Village area of Houston, we are an exclusive retailer for B.A.R.F. and Nature's Variety & sell a wide variety of "must have" pet items that compliment sustaining of a healthy pet – dog & cat!
- * HealthyPet Boutique in Houston, Texas 713-301-2340 ~ Offers a number of pre-made raw diets, freeze-dried products, treats and supplements.
- * The Hydrant in Suffolk, Virginia 757-539-8500 ~ Large assortment of raw food and meaty bones, whole and ground, which may be purchased by the pound or the case. Also Nature's Variety frozen raw and B-Naturals supplements.
- * Pepperdogz in Bellevue, Washington 1-866-866-DOGZ, 425-945-2300 ~ Distributors in Colorado, Oregon and Washington. Complete diets, currently offering chicken and buffalo varieties, will soon have turkey as well.
- * Darwin's Natural Pet Products in Seattle, Washington 206-324-7387 (324-PETS) ~ Darwin's claims to meet AAFCO guidelines, though I'm not sure how this would be possible without additional ingredients. I recommend adding some additional foods to this diet (see below for more info on how to use foods such as this as part of a complete diet).
- * Columbia River Natural Pet Foods in Ridgefield, Washington 360-834-6854 ~ Available in Alaska, California, Oregon, Washington.

Ground chicken, turkey, duck, guinea hen, quail and rabbit (including bones), venison and lamb (without bones), plus buffalo organs, veggies, tripe and recreational bones.

* Natural Pet Pantry in Burien (near Seattle), Washington
206.248.1079 or 206.890.0889

* Raw Advantage in Stanwood, Washington 360-387-5185 ~ Available in Alaska, California, Colorado, New Mexico, New York, Oregon and Washington. Although this company says that their dinners meet AAFCO requirements for all life stages, they do not appear to be complete diets. The company itself does not recommend that any of their foods be fed as the entire diet. Use these products only as part of a raw diet, not the complete diet.

* Better Meat in Seattle, Washington (206) 783-8987 or (206) 783-0570 ~ Offers "beef supplement" mix (ground beef, organ meats, ground tracheas), whole chicken backs, beef shank bones and lamb necks.

* Health Connections 4 Life in Pleasant Prairie, Wisconsin 815-382-2118 ~ Distributor for Oma's Pride, Companion Natural, Taylor Pond Farms (tripe) and B-Naturals supplements.

* Companion Natural Pet Food in Milwaukee, Wisconsin (414) 372-LIFE (5433) ~ also available in Illinois

* Nature's Menu in Lake Geneva, Wisconsin 1-866-FEED-RAW ~ Complete diet, but limited ingredients (just muscle and organ meat, the rest is artificial vitamins and minerals).

* Grassfed Traditions in Milwaukee(?), Wisconsin is now offering pastured organic raw chicken steaks. Diet appears complete but there is no mention of meeting AAFCO guidelines. They also offer grass-fed bison, beef and lamb parts. While the company is in Wisconsin, there is no information about whether you can pick up the food from them rather than having it shipped (which is very expensive for frozen foods). This is from the same company that makes Tropical Traditions Coconut Oil.

Not recommended:

Animal Food Services (does not use human grade ingredients, includes cereal waste products)

Abady Frozen Diets (includes meat meal, corn and other grains, soy, and does not use human grade ingredients)

Bil-Jac Fresh Frozen (contains meat by-products and other foods from unnamed sources, cereal waste products, and other low quality ingredients)

There are fresh (frozen) raw food diets available. A few are complete diets, others offer different mixtures that you can use to create a complete diet, some just offer part of the diet, such as ground or whole raw meaty bones, which you would need to combine with other foods at home in order to create a complete diet (see Balancing a Homemade Diet below for more info on how to ensure that you're feeding a complete diet). Most are pretty expensive, especially when shipping costs are figured in, they work better if you can find a local source (or have small dogs!). Here are some that are widely available (see below for local sources): At this time all numbers and companies are correct, but are subject to change.

Widely available complete raw diets (meeting AAFCO guidelines):

* Dr. Billinghurst's BARF Diet

Available through distributors in the US and Canada, or can be ordered online, shipping charge is \$25 minimum.

BARFWorld offers complete diets (BARF Diet), as well as mix and match minces (BARF Mates -- see below for how to use these as a basis for a homemade diet). Diets do not claim to meet AAFCO guidelines, but appear to be complete and state "Dr. Billinghurst's BARF DIET™ is nutritionally sound and nutritionally adequate. This means - in addition to containing those nutrients which 'must be present' in processed pet foods, the Dr. Billinghurst's BARF DIET™ diet also contains many other essential nutrients."

* Home Made 4 Life

American Manufacturer: Aunt Jeni's ~ 877-254-6123 or 301-702-0123 (Maryland)

Canadian Manufacturer: Pets 4 Life ~ 519-372-1818 (Ontario)

US Retailers in many states, also several Canadian distributors.

Home Made 4 Life is complete diet consisting of ground meat and bones, organ meat, vegetables, and a variety of other healthy ingredients. No grains. Lamb, Chicken, Beef, Rabbit, Turkey and Goat varieties available, as well as cat food. All ingredients are human grade. Jennifer Boniface (Aunt Jeni), MS, is an Animal Nutritionist and quite knowledgeable about canine diets. "Home Made 4 Life has been

formulated and analyzed by qualified, degreed, experienced Animal Nutritionists not only to meet but to exceed CVMA, NRC, and AAFCO requirements." However, the beef and goat varieties are not appropriate for large-breed puppies due to high calcium content.

- * Steve's Real Food for Dogs

Eugene, Oregon 1-888-526-1900 or (541) 683-9950
Retailers across the country in most states.

Steve's is a complete diet consisting of ground meat and bones, organ meat, vegetables, and a variety of supplements. Has a tiny amount of rice bran, but no other grains. Chicken, Turkey, Beef and new Turducken varieties available, as well as cat food. Now available in patties as well as nuggets, which are bulkier and more expensive to ship. Freeze-dried version is also available, but very expensive. "All formulas of Steve's Real Food for Pets are formulated using the AAFCO nutrient profiles to meet the nutritional requirements for all stages of your dogs life from weaned puppy through seniors."

- * Primal Pet Foods

San Francisco, California 415-566-4652

Available at retailers around the country, including Whole Foods. Also available online from Only Natural Pet Store.

Primal makes both complete diets (Formulas) and blends that are not complete (Grinds and Mixes, see below for more information on how to use these products as the basis for a homemade diet). Grinds are meat, bone and organs only; mixes add fruits and vegetables as well. Uses 100% human grade, hormone, antibiotic and steroid free meats, poultry and game, certified organic produce, certified organic minerals and unrefined vitamins. Formulas are available in chicken, duck, beef, lamb, pheasant and venison varieties. Grinds and mixes come in turkey, chicken, buffalo and sardine varieties. Only the venison formula has an appropriate amount of calcium for large-breed puppies, the rest should not be fed due to high calcium content.

- * Northwest Naturals

Portland, OR 1-800-782-6328
Retailers in many states.

Northwest Naturals offers complete raw diets that meet AAFCO guidelines. Mixes are about 78-80% meat and include ground meat and bone, organ meat, vegetables, and a variety of supplements, no grains. Chicken, Turkey and Beef varieties are available, plus one for

cats. Available in the form of both nuggets and "dinner bars", for easy storage and feeding. Meat is human grade. Although AAFCO is not mentioned on their web site, in private communication they have assured me that "The products are balanced/complete and meet all AAFCO objectives." Calcium percentages are not given, so unsure whether they're OK for large-breed puppies.

* Paw Naturaw Organic Frozen Raw Diets

Wisconsin (866) 729-4738

Retailers at several locations in the Milwaukee-Madison-Chicago triangle. There are distributors in several states and Canada. Also available through Amazon.com with free shipping! Can also be ordered from LocalHarvest.org, PoochieHeaven.com, and BARFDirect.com.

These are complete diets meeting AAFCO nutritional guidelines for all life stages. Beef, bison, chicken and turkey varieties are all grain-free and made with 100% human-grade ingredients. The company makes its foods at its own processing plant, to ensure quality control. All of the organic chickens, turkeys and bison are purchased directly from documented family farmers, humanely transported, processed for human consumption in USDA inspected facilities, and shipped directly to their own manufacturing facility.

* Healthy Pet Products

Canton, Georgia 1-877-475-7195

Available in many states.

Offers complete diets in beef and chicken varieties. Meat is organic, hormone- and antibiotic-free, and grass-fed/free-range. Available in both frozen and freeze-dried form. Also offers freeze-dried green tripe. "Healthy Pet Products is formulated to meet the nutritional levels established by the AAFCO Dog and Cat Food Nutrient Profiles for all life stages."

* FarMore

Available in Canada in Alberta, British Columbia, Manitoba and Ontario.

Available in US in many states. Carried at Pet Food Express stores in Northern California.

Farmore is a mix of ground meat (including bones), organ meat, veggies, grains (beef and buffalo varieties only), and supplements. Varieties include beef, chicken, lamb and buffalo. Meat is human grade, free-range and antibiotic-free. This food is reasonably priced

and has been improved substantially with the addition of more bone, different veggies, and grains removed from all but the beef (oats) and buffalo (barley). "FarMore Beef Diet is formulated to meet the nutritional levels established by AAFCO Nutrient Profiles for all Stages of Life." Calcium percentages are not given, so unsure whether they're OK for large-breed puppies.

* Natural Balance Gourmet Frozen Loaves (800) 829-4493

Natural Balance raw foods are available in California, Arizona, Nevada, Hawaii and Michigan so far. "Formulated to meet the nutritional levels established by the AAFCO dog food nutrient profiles for all life stages." Calcium percentages are not given, so unsure whether they're OK for large-breed puppies.

* Nature's Variety Prairie

Distributors in many states.

Prairie uses 95% fresh meat ingredients including ground raw bones. Freeze-dried version and whole raw meaty bones also available. All varieties are "formulated to meet the nutritional levels established by the AAFCO Dog & Cat Food Nutrient Profiles for All Life Stages." However, the Rabbit variety should not be fed to large-breed puppies due to high calcium content. Note that this food is much higher in calories than the other frozen foods listed above. It appears to have much more fat than the minimum amounts listed in their nutritional analyses, based on the calories they show.

SEE ALSO:

Dehydrated Foods for some raw, dehydrated foods.

Refrigerated and Frozen Cooked Foods

Dog Food Mixes designed to be used with fresh raw or cooked foods.

Widely available incomplete raw blends (see below for how to use these as the basis for a homemade diet):

* Bravo! Raw Diet ~ 860-693-0632

Distributors in many states.

Bravo! offers a wide variety of products, including mixes (ground meat, bone, organs and veggies) and unusual meats (kangaroo, buffalo, ostrich), plus green tripe. Mixes are not complete and do not meet AAFCO guidelines. You can formulate a complete diet from their products, but don't just feed the mixes with nothing added (eggs, yogurt, cottage cheese, and canned fish other than tuna are good to

add). See below for more info on how to ensure that you're feeding a complete diet. See the booklet Bravo Beginnings for good information on how to put together a complete diet for your dog from Bravo products. Also see the How-2 web page put together by a Bravo distributor who is also a friend of mine.

* Oma's Pride

From Miller Foods, Inc. in Avon, Connecticut ~ (800) 678-6627, 860-673-3256

Distributors in many states, also available at WagginTails.

Oma's Pride offers unusual meats (emu, rabbit, ostrich, duck, venison), tripe (not from USDA approved source), whole raw meaty bones, as well as mixtures of ground meat and bones, organ meat and veggies. Mixes are not complete and do not meet AAFCO guidelines. The mixes are high in bone (70-80% meat/bone at a 50/50 ratio) and low in muscle and organ meat. You can formulate a complete diet from their products, but don't just feed the mixes with nothing added (additional muscle meat and organ meat, as well as eggs, yogurt, cottage cheese and canned fish other than tuna are good to add). See below for more info on how to ensure that you're feeding a complete diet.

Local or limited availability products

There are a number of other products available which you may want to look into, particularly if they are in your area (many can be shipped, but shipping is costly for frozen foods). Note that very few of these products are certified to meet AAFCO nutritional standards -- in other words, most are not complete diets. You will need to balance out the ratio of meat, bone and organs yourself, and preferably add some additional fresh foods as well, such as eggs, dairy and canned fish with bones. See below for more information.

See the following for commercial raw food products in the US, Canada, Australia and Europe, as well as Specialty Products and Grass Fed and Organic Products:

US (listed alphabetically by state):

* The Wholesome Hound in Dothan, Alabama 334-685-0002 ~ Offers a selection of raw meaty bones, meat, organs, etc., plus several commercial raw diets.

* Grandad's Pet Foods in Lodi, California 209-368-3025 ~ Distributors in California, Oregon and Washington. Will ship throughout the Western US. Delivery to much of California available for \$7.50 and up with a minimum 30 pound order.

* Wagalicious Natural Pet Foods, in Mar Vista (Los Angeles), California (310) 508-8660 ~ Will deliver to Los Angeles and Orange Counties, will ship elsewhere. Offers blends of meat (turkey, lamb and chicken) and veggies, some with liver. Uses eggshell calcium rather than bones. Meats are human-grade, antibiotic- and hormone-free, and foods are produced at a human-grade facility. According to the people who make this food, "It has been lab tested and meets AAFCO standards for complete and balanced for all life stages for both cats and dogs." Calcium percentages are not given, so unsure whether they're OK for large-breed puppies.

* K9 Raw Diet in Westlake Village, California 805-379-0227 ~ Bravo distributor, will deliver to local area. Also offers supplements.

* Halshan Premium Raw Food in Southern California 888-766-9725 ~ Shipping to California, Utah and Nevada is \$15 per 50 pound box, all other states are \$100. Offers a variety of ground meat and veggie mixes. Antibiotic and hormone free meats are used. Meat types include chicken, turkey, lamb, beef, venison, ostrich, buffalo, duck and fish. Green tripe is also available. You need to add your own calcium to all boneless mixes (add 1/2 teaspoon ground eggshell per pound of meat).

* Feed This in Forestville, California 707-823-7001 ~ Delivers as far north as Willits, East to Sacramento, South to Santa Cruz and throughout the Greater San Francisco Bay Area for a nominal fee. Available at a number of retailers around the San Francisco Bay Area, including Sonoma County and Vallejo. Now also shipping across the US. Offers meaty bones, "Bogey Balls" (a variety of mixtures that include meat with and without bone, eggs, fish, organs and/or veggies) and supplements. Can order individual items or various meal plans.

* Natural Kravings in Denver/Colorado Springs/Boulder areas, Colorado 303-814-2891

* Companion Animal Meals in Miami, Florida (305) 893-1440 ~ Mixes include veggies and grains, as well as ground raw meaty bones and organs, delivered to your door.

* Good Doggie in Nokomos, Florida 941 966-0482 ~ Carries multiple raw foods, free delivery in Sarasota and Manatee Counties

* Raw4Dogs several distributors in Florida. Offers mixes plus individual ingredients, including chicken, turkey, lamb, beef, rabbit and lamb (all with bone) and other unusual meats, plus green tripe, organ meat, and whole raw meaty bones.

* Raw Health in Florida 866-862-5379 ~ Offers chicken and rabbit blends of raw meaty bones, organs and veggies (these are not complete diets, see below for how best to use blends such as these).

* Golden Choice in North Metro Atlanta, Georgia 770-425-5412

* Health Connections 4 Life in Wonder Lake, Illinois 847-814-9992 ~ Distributor for Oma's Pride, Companion Natural, Taylor Pond Farms (tripe) and B-Naturals supplements.

* Natural Pet Market in Glen Ellyn, Illinois 630-534-6682 ~ Carries multiple raw foods, plus a variety of raw food pre-mixes and things like Tripett and Wysong All Meat Diets.

* K9Cuisine in Paris, Illinois 866.919.2415 ~ Carries Healthy Pet Products (see above) frozen and freeze-dried foods.

* My Pet Carnivore in Indianapolis, Indiana 317-373-4111 ~ Rabbit, Duck, Fish, Turkey, Lamb, Mutton, Beef (including tripe), chicken and goat, whole or ground, including organs. Products come from small family farms and are antibiotic- and hormone-free, most are grass-fed. Also offers treats and supplements.

* Prey4Pets in rural north-central Kentucky. Beef, pastured chicken, pork, and rabbit parts.

* K-9 Kraving in Baltimore, Maryland 410-675-1071 ~ Available in Arizona, Colorado, Illinois, New York and Virginia.

* Golden Acres in Elk River, Minnesota 763-441-0089

* K-9 Choice in McHenry, Mississippi 601-928-9308 ~ Distributors in California, New Mexico, Oklahoma, Utah

* Nature's Logic in Lincoln, Nebraska 402-475-7663 ~ Distributors in many states, but I don't know if they offer the raw foods or just the dry/canned. Offers a complete raw diet that uses eggshells rather than bone. Unsure if meat is human-grade.

* Rock Farm Natural Beef in Wolfeboro, New Hampshire 603-569-4250 ~ All natural beef business -- has a good supply of hearts, tongues, bones, and livers for raw dog food at \$1.00 per pound. All natural, no antibiotics and no hormones.

* Newfound Naturals in Manchester, New Hampshire (603) 232-1010 ~ Dehydrated raw diets. No mention of AAFCO but diets appear to be complete.

* Healthy Paws in Washington, New Jersey ~ Ground and whole meat, raw meaty bones, organs, veggies and tripe.

* Wild About Meat in Ridgewood, New Jersey ~ Distributor for Bravo (including green tripe), Aunt Jeni's Home Made 4 Life, Primal Pet Foods and Nature's Variety.

* NDN (Nu Dimensions Nutrition) in Raleigh, North Carolina (919) 848-4071 ~ Retailers in Florida, New York, North Carolina, South Carolina and Virginia.

* Three Cheers Raw! Raw! Raw! in North Lima, Ohio 330-549-3077 ~ Offers a large selection of ground mixes, whole raw meaty bones and dehydrated treats.

* A Place for Paws in Columbiana, Ohio (800) 354-4216 ~ Offers a variety of veggie, meat and bone mixes and raw meaty bones, including tripe.

* mOrigins in Cleveland, Ohio (216) 228-3656 ~ Distributors in Connecticut, Massachusetts, New York, North Carolina, Ohio and Texas. Freeze-dried version also available. Appears to be a complete diet, though there is no mention of meeting AAFCO requirements.

* OmegaFarms in Alvordton, Ohio ~ Offers a variety of meat and raw meaty bones, both whole and ground, also rabbit, goat, pinkies and baby chicks, etc.

* Hall Brothers Meats in North Olmsted, Ohio (440) 235-3262 ~ Ground chicken quarters, and a beef heart mixture for dogs.

* Peps Poultry in Quakertown, Pennsylvania 215-538-9908 ~ Chicken, Turkey, Duck, Pheasant, Ostrich, Beef, Pork, Buffalo and Rabbit products, both whole and ground, including green tripe.

* Bone-affied Nutrition in Dallas-Fort Worth, Texas 214-529-8355 ~ Huge variety, including tripe, pre-made raw diets, treats, supplements, and exotic meats, such as buffalo, duck, goat, ostrich, quail, venison and more.

* Bones2Go in Houston, Texas 713-462-2663 ~ Huge variety, including tripe, pre-made raw diets, freeze-dried products, treats, supplements, and exotic meats, such as goat, duck, ostrich, rabbit, buffalo, venison and more.

* The Dog Bowl in Houston, Texas 713-529-0334 ~ Located in the Village area of Houston, we are an exclusive retailer for B.A.R.F. and Nature's Variety & sell a wide variety of "must have" pet items that compliment sustaining of a healthy pet – dog & cat!

* HealthyPet Boutique in Houston, Texas 713-301-2340 ~ Offers a number of pre-made raw diets, freeze-dried products, treats and supplements.

* The Hydrant in Suffolk, Virginia 757-539-8500 ~ Large assortment of raw food and meaty bones, whole and ground, which may be purchased by the pound or the case. Also Nature's Variety frozen raw and B-Naturals supplements.

* Pepperdogz in Bellevue, Washington 1-866-866-DOGZ, 425-945-2300 ~ Distributors in Colorado, Oregon and Washington. Complete diets, currently offering chicken and buffalo varieties, will soon have turkey as well.

* Darwin's Natural Pet Products in Seattle, Washington 206-324-7387 (324-PETS) ~ Darwin's claims to meet AAFCO guidelines, though I'm not sure how this would be possible without additional ingredients. I recommend adding some additional foods to this diet (see below for more info on how to use foods such as this as part of a complete diet).

* Columbia River Natural Pet Foods in Ridgefield, Washington 360-834-6854 ~ Available in Alaska, California, Oregon, Washington. Ground chicken, turkey, duck, guinea hen, quail and rabbit (including

bones), venison and lamb (without bones), plus buffalo organs, veggies, tripe and recreational bones.

* Natural Pet Pantry in Burien (near Seattle), Washington
206.248.1079 or 206.890.0889

* Raw Advantage in Stanwood, Washington 360-387-5185 ~ Available in Alaska, California, Colorado, New Mexico, New York, Oregon and Washington. Although this company says that their dinners meet AAFCO requirements for all life stages, they do not appear to be complete diets. The company itself does not recommend that any of their foods be fed as the entire diet. Use these products only as part of a raw diet, not the complete diet.

* Better Meat in Seattle, Washington (206) 783-8987 or (206) 783-0570 ~ Offers "beef supplement" mix (ground beef, organ meats, ground tracheas), whole chicken backs, beef shank bones and lamb necks.

* Health Connections 4 Life in Pleasant Prairie, Wisconsin 815-382-2118 ~ Distributor for Oma's Pride, Companion Natural, Taylor Pond Farms (tripe) and B-Naturals supplements.

* Companion Natural Pet Food in Milwaukee, Wisconsin (414) 372-LIFE (5433) ~ also available in Illinois

* Nature's Menu in Lake Geneva, Wisconsin 1-866-FEED-RAW ~ Complete diet, but limited ingredients (just muscle and organ meat, the rest is artificial vitamins and minerals).

* Grassfed Traditions in Milwaukee(?), Wisconsin is now offering pastured organic raw chicken steaks. Diet appears complete but there is no mention of meeting AAFCO guidelines. They also offer grass-fed bison, beef and lamb parts. While the company is in Wisconsin, there is no information about whether you can pick up the food from them rather than having it shipped (which is very expensive for frozen foods). This is from the same company that makes Tropical Traditions Coconut Oil.

Not recommended:

Animal Food Services (does not use human grade ingredients, includes cereal waste products)

Abady Frozen Diets (includes meat meal, corn and other grains, soy, and does not use human grade ingredients)

Bil-Jac Fresh Frozen (contains meat by-products and other foods from unnamed sources, cereal waste products, and other low quality ingredients)

The contents of these reports are provided as informational reference only. Any consequences that arise from use of the information provided within the Dog Food Reports are strictly the responsibility of the reader. Please speak with your vet if you have any questions concerning changes in your dog's diet. We will not be held liable for use of the information contained within this guide. Unauthorized distribution, resell, or copying of this material is unlawful. No portion of this book may be copied or resold.

If you've received a copy without purchasing it, please contact us at support@speedydogtraining.com for a nice reward!

Be a Good Dog parent and feed a healthy diet which could add many extra years of championship for you and your best friend!

Thank you,
Loyal to the end,
SpeedyDogTraining.com