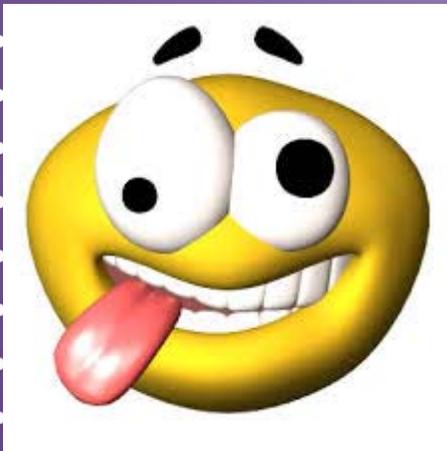




Kansas Department of Agriculture

Pet food labels 101:

A guide on how to interpret them
and other mysteries of the
modern world (at least the pet
food world).



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KSUCVM class of 1999



Objectives:

- ▶ What is AAFCO? A brief review of who they are and what they do.
- ▶ Reading and interpreting the language on a bag or can of pet food.
- ▶ Safety of food and ingredients.
- ▶ Definition for some common terms.

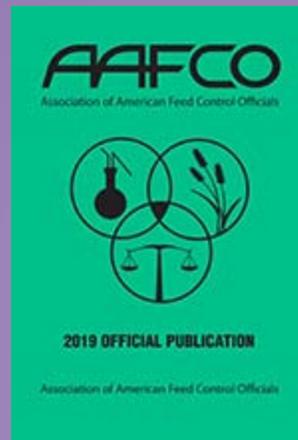
Association of American Feed Control Officials:

AAFCO started in 1909.

Provided a way to protect consumers and merchants by establishing measurable benchmarks and penalty structure for cheaters.

AAFCO started out mainly in livestock feeds but now includes all animal feeds in the interest of public health and consumer awareness

<https://www.aafco.org>



What does AAFCO do?

- ▶ 1. Sets the standards for pet foods sold in the United States.
- ▶ 2. Defines ingredients and terms for all animal feeds.
- ▶ 3. Standardizes feeding trials.
- ▶ 4. Establishes minimums and maximums for some key ingredients.
- ▶ 5. Determines guidelines for all life stages.

What AAFCO does not do:

- ▶ AAFCO does not regulate, test, approve or certify pet foods in any way.
- ▶ It is the food manufacturers responsibility to formulate their products to AAFCO standards.
- ▶ It is the state feed control officials and FDA's responsibility to make sure the rules are followed. They ensure that unadulterated and correctly formulated feed enters the market.
- ▶ Regulate information on websites or handouts.

Label interpretation 101.

- ▶ Designators
- ▶ Ingredient Statement
- ▶ Guaranteed Analysis
- ▶ Nutritional Adequacy Statement
- ▶ Feeding directions
- ▶ Manufacturer
- ▶ Definitions

Designators:

- ▶ There must be enough of this ingredient to impart flavor, sometimes a minimum percentage must be included in the product.
- ▶ If the product has only one ingredient word in its name, it is required to be at least 95% of that ingredient.
- ▶ May not even be pet food or complete and balanced, look for the AAFCO statement.



Designators:

- ▶ If the product says “dinner”, “platter” or “entrée” it must contain at least 25% of that ingredient.
- ▶ For example: Lamb and Barley dinner must contain a combination of Lamb and Barley that equals 25%.



Designators:

- ▶ If the word “with” is part of the name there must be at least 3% of that ingredient in the food.
- ▶ For example: With beef must contain at least 3% beef. With chicken and rice must contain at least 3% chicken and 3% rice. The ingredient with the higher percent is listed first.



Designators:

- ▶ Flavors:

- ▶ A flavor designation may be used if the flavor is listed in the ingredient list.

- ▶ For example: Chicken flavor must have chicken in the ingredient list, even at the bottom.

Ingredient Statement:

- ▶ The ingredient list contains all of the ingredients in that food, listed in order by weight and beginning with the heaviest ingredient prior to processing.
- ▶ Ingredient splitting.
- ▶ Meal vs. unprocessed meats.
- ▶ No data on the true nutritional value.

Corn and By-Products:

- ▶ Corn is a good source of fatty acids, vitamins and protein.
- ▶ Ground and cooked corn is very digestible.
- ▶ Less than 3% of dog and 1% of cat food allergies.
- ▶ By-products are a secondary product produced in addition to the primary product.

Guaranteed Analysis:

- ▶ Provides data on the minimum amount of fat and protein.
- ▶ Provides data on the maximum amount of fiber and moisture.
- ▶ Some other data may be provided to support claims like “high in calcium”:
- ▶ Additional nutrients may be voluntarily added.
- ▶ **NOT THE EXACT AMOUNT:**

Nutritional Adequacy Statement

- ▶ Methods to determine nutritional adequacy (AAFCO) statement.
- ▶ Life stages.

Nutritional Adequacy Statement

- ▶ Formulation Method:
- ▶ Compares the foods nutrient profile to AAFCO's food profile.
- ▶ Must contain every nutrient as specified from the AAFCO profile.
- ▶ Less expensive and faster as this is not actually fed to animals:

Nutritional Adequacy Statement

- ▶ Feeding Trials.
- ▶ This is considered the gold standard:
- ▶ Manufacturer must perform feeding trials meeting AAFCO standards and protocols.
- ▶ For example in an adult maintenance food trial must be conducted for 26 weeks and the animals must meet certain health parameters during that time.

-Minimum of 30 dogs (cats), eating a food that has successfully passed a feeding trial to establish colony average

-Minimum of 8 dogs (cats) at least one year of age and optimal body weight for each trial

-Same formulation must be used throughout the test period

-Test must run a minimum of 26 weeks; (6 months)

-Formulation shall be sole source of nutrients, except water

-Daily food consumption must be measured

-Individual body weights shall be measured and recorded weekly, Cannot lose more than 15% of initial body weight

-Hemoglobin, packed cell volume; serum alkaline phosphatase, serum albumin and taurine (for cats) blood chemistry tests done

-Up to 25% can be removed for non-nutritional reasons or poor food intake, (during the first two weeks)

-Complete veterinary physical exam done twice during test

Life Stages

- ▶ Gestation/Lactation
- ▶ Growth
- ▶ Adult Maintenance
- ▶ There are no AAFCO definitions for Senior or Large Breed

Feeding Directions:

- ▶ At a minimum must include the amount to feed per weight of the animal and the frequency to feed that amount.
- ▶ Based on well established data from resting energy requirements (RER/DER) charts:

Estimated Energy Requirements For Body Weights In Dogs and Cats

Resting Energy Requirements

lbs	kg	RER(kcal/day)
1	0.5	39
2	0.9	65
3	1.4	88
4	1.8	110
5	2.3	130
6	2.7	149
7	3.2	167
8	3.6	184
9	4.1	201
10	4.5	218
11	5.0	234
12	5.5	250
13	5.9	265
14	6.4	280
15	6.8	295
16	7.3	310
17	7.7	324
18	8.2	339
19	8.6	353
20	9.1	366
25	11.4	433
30	13.6	497
35	15.9	558
40	18.2	616
45	20.5	673
50	22.7	729
55	25.0	783
60	27.3	835
65	29.5	887
70	31.8	938

Feline Growth DER(kcal/day)
Growing kittens = 2.5 X RER

Feline Maintenance DER(kcal/day)
Normal, neutered, adult = 1.2 X RER
Intact adult = 1.4 X RER
Obese prone = 1.0 X RER
Weight loss = 0.8 X RER

Canine Growth DER(kcal/day)
Up to 4 mos. of age = 3 X RER
4 mos. of age and over = 2 X RER

Canine Maintenance DER(kcal/day)
Average, neutered, healthy adult = 1.6 X RER
Intact adult = 1.8 X RER
Obese prone = 1.4 X RER
Weight loss = 1.0 X RER

Canine Work DER(kcal/day)
Light work = 2 X RER
Moderate work = 3 X RER
Heavy work = 4-8 X RER

Resting Energy Requirements

RER (kcal/day) = 70 X wt^{0.75}

lbs	kg	RER(kcal/day)
75	34.1	988
80	36.4	1037
85	38.6	1085
90	40.9	1132
95	43.2	1179
100	45.5	1225
105	47.7	1271
110	50.0	1316
115	52.3	1361
120	54.5	1405
125	56.8	1449
130	59.1	1492
135	61.4	1535
140	63.6	1577
145	65.9	1619
150	68.2	1661
155	70.5	1702
160	72.7	1743
165	75.0	1784
170	77.3	1824
175	79.5	1864
180	81.8	1904
185	84.1	1944
190	86.4	1983
195	88.6	2022
200	90.9	2061

Hill's Veterinary Consultation Service
1-800-548-4387 © 2001

Manufacturer:

- ▶ Contact information including at minimum the name and mailing address of the manufacturer.
- ▶ Address may be omitted if listed in the telephone directory.

Definitions:

- ▶ Organic
- ▶ Holistic
- ▶ Natural
- ▶ Human Grade



**Organic or Natural?
What's the difference?**

INGREDIENT/PROCESSING	ORGANIC	NATURAL	CONVENTIONAL
Artificial flavors	NEVER	No	May be used
Artificial colors	NEVER	No	May be used
Artificial preservatives	NEVER	No	May be used
Artificial fertilizers	NEVER	May be used	May be used
Artificial pesticides	NEVER	May be used	May be used
Irradiation	NEVER	May be used	May be used
Genetically Engineered Ingredients	NEVER	May be used	May be used



Organic

- ▶ The term “Organic” was legally defined for human foods by the USDA.
- ▶ Pet food companies can use the term “Organic” if they follow the same rules applied to human foods.
- ▶ Foods that are 100% Organic or 95% Organic may carry the USDA organic seal on the package.

Code of Federal Regulations:

https://www.ecfr.gov/cgi-bin/text-idx?tpl=/ecfrbrowse/Title07/7cfr205_main_02.tpl

Title 7 → Subtitle B → Chapter I →
Subchapter M → Part 205



Organic

- ▶ As of 2012 Pet foods may display the Organic seal if the contents of the package meet the following:
- ▶ 100% Organic: All ingredients are certified organic. May display seal.
- ▶ Organic: At least 95% of ingredients by weight are certified organic. May display seal.
- ▶ Made with Organic: At least 70% of the content is certified organic. If less than 70% organic may list specific ingredients as organic. May not display seal.

Holistic

- ▶ There is no regulation or legal definition for the use of Holistic on pet food labels.

Natural

- ▶ According to AAFCO a pet food labeled as Natural must not contain chemically synthesized ingredients, except for added vitamins, minerals and amino acids.

Human Grade

- ▶ Pet food that makes this claim must be produced in a plant that makes human food.
- ▶ This is a misleading term
- ▶ By law all food ingredients that leave the chain of custody for human food are considered “condemned” or no longer fit for human consumption.

QUESTIONS?

Thank you!!!