



## Raw Food or Kibble? Confused About What To Feed?

In an effort to inform and educate those considering adoption of a German Shepherd Dog, I will provide advice on both [feeding raw](#) and on feeding kibble here. The majority of those in our group prefer to feed our dogs the prey model raw or BARF (Biologically Appropriate Raw Food) diet ...yes we feed raw meat and organ and raw bones (never cooked)!

Still most of you will continue to prefer kibble, so I have asked permission from two great writers from the forum [dogster.com](#) to reprint this. We've kept this article in tact. Thanks to Sedona and Gunner from Dogster for this article. Enjoy reading it.

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## INTRODUCTION TO KIBBLE BASICS

You're probably reading this because you've just learned the dog food you are feeding your dog is garbage or maybe you're just reading this to get some more info. Maybe you've been looking for a new food but you just don't know how to get started. What ever the case may be this is a guide to help you pick out a good healthy food for your dog.

First, dogs are carnivores. See those sharp teeth they have? Those are for crunching bones and tearing flesh. If dogs were meant to eat lots of grains, fruits, and veggies they'd have flat molars like humans and bears. Remember learning about the Brontosaurus and the Tyrannosaurus Rex? The main differences between the two dinosaurs were their teeth and diet. The Brontosaurus had flat teeth for eating and grinding plants, and the T-Rex had sharp teeth for eating meat. Dogs have the same kind of teeth as the T-Rex did. They are carnivores, not herbivores or omnivores. Carnivores need MEAT, not a bunch of plants so

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please do consider [FEEDING RAW](#). Okay, now we have that out of the way.

## HOW TO PICK A MEATY KIBBLE

The first step in picking out a wholesome kibble is to make sure there is plenty of meat in the food. For example, if chicken is listed as the first ingredient and there is no other meat listed, there isn't enough meat in the food. Here's why; all animals are made up of mostly water, and water is heavy. The ingredients on all bags of dog food are listed by weight. Once the chicken is cooked and all that water is taken out, the chicken weighs a whole lot less. So in reality, there is much less chicken meat in the food than there is of the other first 5 (or so) ingredients.

If chicken meal is listed as the first ingredient there is a probably good amount of meat in the food. Chicken meal is regular ole chicken meat that's already been cooked and its water has been taken out. You can think of chicken meal as a cousin to chicken jerky. Since it's already been cooked the weight of the chicken meal won't change during processing.

If you don't quite catch the meaning of that, here's an analogy to help out a little. Imagine the difference between one balloon filled with water that weighs 3 pounds, and 3 pounds worth of empty balloons. You have to have a lot of empty balloons to make three pounds right? Well that's how it is with chicken and chicken meal. Chicken is full of water just like the water balloon. Once they cook the 3 pounds worth chicken to make kibble the chicken shrinks because all the water is out of it. It's like if you were to empty the water balloon. The amount of meat is hardly anything compared to already cooked 3 pounds of chicken meal, and the size of the empty water balloon is nothing compared to the 3 pounds of the empties.

Ideally you want a food that has both a whole meat and a meat meal. Although a meat meal (like chicken meal, beef meal, lamb meal, salmon meal, etc) is a good thing to find on your ingredient list, that stuff is overly cooked. Since it has spent so much time in the oven at really high temperatures, it has a lot of the nutrition cooked out of it. A regular meat source (like chicken, beef, lamb, salmon, etc) would have a more vitamins and minerals compared to the meal form, but a meal provides a whole lot of meat based protein. That's why it's good to have both.

Take a moment to look at the guaranteed analysis of the dog food. The guaranteed analysis will help you get a better idea of the amount of meat (protein) in the food. Some foods have as little as 18% protein, and some as much as 42% protein. You want at least 21%. That's as low as one should go. Even at that level you should probably add fresh meat to the kibble. If you find a kibble that has a few meats and meat meals in the first few ingredients and 35% protein, you've probably found a good food. Remember that carnivores need meat! I can't stress that enough.

There is a lot of hoopla about high protein levels causing liver and kidney damage to dogs. That's pure bologna. Right now, there is no safe upper limit established for the percentage of protein in dog food. This means that tests so far show that no damage has been caused by dogs eating high protein (unless pre-existing damage or failure exists). The tests that originally showed damage from high protein were done on rats and the results were inferred to be the same for dogs. That inference however, makes no sense because dogs and rats are biologically different. That's like comparing apples to machine guns. Not the same whatsoever.

## BY-PRODUCTS AND UGLY STUFF

Now, you might scratching your head and wondering why the label on the back of the bag of your dog food doesn't actually say chicken or chicken meal but says chicken by-product meal. Well, as it turns out you haven't been feeding your dog much meat.

## SPECIFIED MEAT BY-PRODUCTS

The organization who is in charge of dog food, the AAFCO, thinks it is okay for your dog to eat by-products. Well, they are half right. Specified meat by-products are the dry, ground, rendered, parts of slaughtered animals. Depending on the animal (chicken, beef, pork, salmon, etc) these by-products include heads, necks, feet, intestines, bones, undeveloped eggs, connective tissues, and a whole slew of other stuff left over from human processing. If your dog was feral and had to hunt for herself this is all stuff she'd eat anyway, so no biggie right? Not really. Dogs need meat to be their healthiest. So if the kibble doesn't list a meat (like chicken or beef) or a meat meal (like salmon meal or lamb meal) and only has meat by-products, you aren't giving your pet carnivore much meat.

## UNSPECIFIED MEAT PRODUCTS

Okay, now some of you are going to say, "Hey, my bag of food doesn't even mention a specific animal. What gives?" If your bag of food has ingredients like poultry meal, fish meal, meat meal, liver meal, meat and bone meal, etc it's best to just throw that food away right now. There is no telling what kind of animals are in that food. There could be raccoons, roadkill, euthanized horses, or even cats and dogs in that food. That's right! There are no laws preventing companion animals from being made into pet food. As sick as that is, it's the truth.

## CARBOHYDRATES

Okay so you've found a food that has a good amount of meat without any fillers in it. Now what do you do? You need to take a second to look over the carbohydrate sources in the food. There are many different sources of carbohydrates used in kibble. You want a food that uses WHOLE forms of carbohydrates. Whole forms of carbs have more nutritional value than fragments. The main reason dog food makers use fragments is to beef up the protein levels in the food. There isn't enough protein in the food because there isn't any meat.

### Here are some examples of whole vs. fragment:

White Rice is whole, Brewers Rice is a fragment.

Potato is whole, Potato Product is a fragment.

Oatmeal is whole, Oat Hulls are fragments.

Do you see where I'm going with this? If there are extra words attached to the name of the carb more often than not, it's a fragment. Besides, would you eat something called Potato Product? I think not.

If there are multiple carbohydrate sources in the food keep in mind that all those different carbs add up. If there are only one or two meat sources listed and five carbohydrate sources, there is a possibility that there are more carbs than meat in the food. Looking at the guaranteed analysis for protein levels will help ensure you don't pick a carb-heavy food.

## FILLERS

Fillers are just junky stuff no one uses so dog food makers throw it in food. It has no real nutritional value except as a source of fiber. Fiber is a good thing, but you can get fiber from other sources like the white rice and oatmeal written about above. Avoid ingredients like Corn Bran, Oat Hulls, Rice Hulls, Wheat Middlings, and Cellulose. Those are floor sweepings, seriously. There are other fillers that aren't so bad. A little doesn't hurt but if there are more than a couple fillers in the food it's probably best to avoid it. Some of the better fillers are Tomato Pomace, Apple Pomace, Citrus Pulp, and Dried Beet Pulp. Just make sure there isn't a ton of that stuff in there. Remember that the ingredients on the bag are listed by weight so if a filler comes before a good ingredient, there is more filler than the good stuff.

## FAT

Fat is probably the second most important ingredient besides meat. Good healthy fats are essential to your dog's health. Okay, remember reading about the unspecified meat sources in the food. Well, there can be unspecified fat sources in the food too. If your ingredient list says poultry fat, it's an unspecified fat source. Yuck. If they aren't honest enough to list what kind of animal is in the food, then that company isn't going to get my business. If it says chicken fat then YAY! Chicken is chicken; we all know what that is. This goes for all types of fats not just chicken. If it says animal fat, that's no good. If it says pork fat then it's good. Get it? Knowing what species your dog is eating is important.

## OIL AS FAT

Some companies use oils as their fat source. That's fine. I prefer oils made from animals (like Salmon Oil) as opposed to plant sources (like Flaxseed Oil or Canola Oil) because my dog (like your dog) is a carnivore. If your dog doesn't have a problem with plant oils (like allergies and such) then you're probably all right. Just make sure it doesn't say Vegetable Oil because that's unspecified and could have some scary stuff in there.

## FLAVOR ENHANCERS

Ha, it's pretty funny when you think about it. These low quality dog foods are so terrible they actually have to add flavor and smell to the kibble to make dogs want to eat it.

Tallow and Lard are two very bad forms of fat. These fats are nutritionally shallow. They aren't a good source of linoleic acid which is important to a dog's health, and are just there because they smell and taste appealing to canines. Avoid those ingredients.

You also want to look out for anything called digest. Digest is like a big stew of just about everything except the kitchen sink. Then they take that soupy mess and add it into the kibble or spray it on after the kibble is made. It has zero nutritional value and its presence on an ingredient list is proof that the food is crap.

Sugar, Sorbitol, Cane Molasses, Fructose, and Corn Syrup are all sweeteners. As yummy as candy and sweet stuff is, dogs don't need that junk. Sweeteners can lead to obesity, Diabetes, and tooth decay. It's not fun to be obese, sick, and toothless.

## CHEMICALS

Dog food is chalk full of chemicals and dogs have to eat these chemical ridden foods everyday. Chemicals can build up in their bodies overtime and cause sickness.

You want to avoid artificial colors and dyes like Blue 2, Red 40, Yellow 5, Yellow 6 and stuff like that. Dogs don't care what color their food is. Dog food manufactures put that stuff in there so we see the different colors and think the food is better or more appealing. It's not. That junk is known to cause tumors and other health problems.

There are also some nasty preservatives you don't want your dog to be eating. BHA, BHT, Ethoxyquin, and Propyl Gallate are all really bad stuff. BHA and BHT have been banned by a lot of countries because it's a known human cancer causing agent. It's still legal in the US though. Don't risk it. Humans would only eat BHA/BHT once in awhile, but if it's in your pet's food they'd have to eat it everyday. Bad bad bad. Ethoxyquin is a stabilizer for rubber! It's been banned for human consumption! It's been known to cause all kinds of health problems! Steer clear of that stuff PLEASE! Propyl Gallate (aka Gallic Acid or Propyl Ester) is suspected to cause liver disease and cancer. You know, there are other options to preserve foods. Vitamin E, Vitamin C, and Rosemary do just as good of a job as those chemicals! They just happen to be more expensive but they are much safer than that other stuff.

There's one more thing you should avoid. It's located near the end of the ingredient list on that bag of food. It goes by the names Menadione Dimethyl-Pyrimidinol Bisulfate, Menadione Dimethyl-Pyrimidinol Bisulfite, Menadione Sodium Bisulfate Complex, Menadione Sodium Bisulfite, Menadione Sodium Bisulfite Complex, and Vitamin K3. It's synthetic vitamin K. This is another ugly thing that you should really avoid. It's been linked to a whole bunch of health problems. There are other whole food and natural ways to get vitamin K in kibble. Manufactures use K3 because it's cheap.

## WHY YOU SHOULD SWITCH

Have you noticed any of the following problems with your dog, lack of energy, itchy runny eyes, eye boogers, itchy skin, ears that smell bad, overall doggy odor, dull coat, excessive shedding, large smelly and loose stools, frequently impacted anal glands? None of those problems are normal for a healthy dog and most can be helped by switching to a better quality food.

A lot of dogs have food allergies or sensitivities that can cause all those above symptoms. The best way to make sure you're not feeding things to your dog that their body can't handle is to have an allergy test done by your Vet. If you're not too keen on running out and getting your dog tested there are a few things you can do right now to help.

First, you should find a food that doesn't have any of the poor quality ingredients I wrote about above. Sometimes that stuff just isn't giving your dog

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enough nutrition to be their healthiest. Next you should check to see if there is soy, wheat, or corn in your food. Those are highly allergenic ingredients. A lot of dogs just can't tolerate those at all. If there is none of that stuff in your food, check out the main ingredients. If you've been feeding the same brand of food or the same kind of protein for awhile your dog could have developed allergies to that kind of meat or carbohydrate.

So if the food you've been feeding has an ingredient list that reads like; Chicken, Chicken Meal, White Rice, Brown Rice, Barley etc you want to try a different food that looks nothing like the one you are currently eating. The new food could have an ingredient list like Salmon, Salmon Meal, Oatmeal, Sweet Potato etc. See how different that is? There's no guarantee that it's going to cure your dog but I bet it will help your dog.

## SO WHAT IN THE HECK ARE YOU SUPPOSED TO FEED?

Well, there are lots of good foods out there. Since every dog is different it's hard for me to say one food is better than another. What one dog does terribly on another dog could do wonderfully on. If you're looking for a truly awesome and healthy food you're not going to find it at your local grocery store or Wal-Mart. More than likely you're going to have to go to a pet specialty store or order online.

## THE PRICE OF PREMIUM

Premium foods are more expensive. From what I've seen, the really good foods average out at about \$1.75 a pound whereas the food at the grocery store is about \$.75 a pound. Huge difference isn't it? Not really. The premium foods often have way more calories. So that 20lb bag of premium food that costs \$35 it going to outlast the 20lb bag of food that costs \$15. You probably think I'm full of it don't you?

**Okay, let's break it down:**

**Purina Beneful Original** has 1674 calories per pound of food. The cost of a 17.6 pound bag on PetFoodDirect.com is \$19.49.

$1674 * 17.6 = 29462.4$  calories

So it costs \$19.49 for 29463 calories (I rounded up).

Per calorie it costs you \$0.00066.

**Canidae All Life Stages** has 1875 calories per pound of food. The cost of a 20 pound bag on PetFoodDirect.com is 25.79.

$1875 * 20 = 37500$  calories

So it costs \$25.79 for 37500 calories.

Per calorie it costs you \$0.00068.

There is hardly any difference in per calorie costs of the foods. Sure the price per pound of Canidae is higher, but you're getting a heck of a lot more food for that price. Each piece of Canidae kibble is providing a lot more nutrition to your pet than each piece of Beneful kibble. You'd have to feed less Canidae than you would Beneful. Less food going in means less food coming out the other end. That's a huge plus in my book.

## INGREDIENTS COMPARISON

Since I've already used Canidae All Life Stages and Beneful as examples I'm going to go ahead and continue using them. I don't mean to pick on Beneful. It's just that it was the only lower quality food that I could find the calories per pound so I used it. The reason I chose Canidae ALS as an example is because I know it's a great good food at a really reasonable price and it is pretty easy to find. There are many other great foods out there. Don't think that Canidae is the end all be all of kibble.

Now let's compare the ingredients of these two foods. I'm sure you've been paying attention so you should be able to pick out all the nasty ingredients right?

**Beneful-** Ground yellow corn, chicken by-product meal, corn gluten meal, whole wheat flour, animal fat preserved with mixed-tocopherols (form of Vitamin E), rice flour, beef, soy flour, sugar, sorbitol, tricalcium phosphate, water, salt, phosphoric acid, animal digest, potassium chloride, dicalcium phosphate,

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sorbic acid (a preservative), L-Lysine monohydrochloride, dried peas, dried carrots, calcium carbonate, calcium propionate (a preservative), choline chloride, added color (Yellow 5, Red 40, Yellow 6, Blue 2), DL-Methionine, Vitamin E supplement, zinc sulfate, ferrous sulfate, Vitamin A supplement, manganese sulfate, niacin, Vitamin B-12 supplement, calcium pantothenate, riboflavin supplement, copper sulfate, biotin, garlic oil, thiamine hydrochloride, pyridoxine hydrochloride, thiamine mononitrate, folic acid, Vitamin D-3 supplement, menadione sodium bisulfite complex (source of Vitamin K activity), calcium iodate, sodium selenite.

**Canidae All Life Stages-** Chicken Meal, Turkey Meal, Brown Rice, White Rice, Lamb Meal, Chicken Fat (preserved with Mixed Tocopherols), Herring Meal, Flax Seed, Sun Cured Alfalfa Meal, Sunflower Oil, Chicken, Lecithin, Monocalcium Phosphate, Potassium Chloride, Choline Chloride, Linoleic Acid, Rosemary Extract, Sage Extract, Dried Enterococcus Faecium, Dried Lactobacillus Acidophilus Fermentation Product, Dried Aspergillus Oryzae Fermentation Extract, Dried Bacillus Subtilis Fermentation Extract, Inulin (from Chicory root), Saccharomyces Cerevisiae Fermentation Solubles, Yucca Schidigera Extract, Mixed Tocopherols (source of Vitamin E), Zinc Amino Acid Chelate, Manganese Amino Acid Chelate, Iron Amino Acid Chelate, Copper Amino Acid Chelate, Cobalt Amino Acid Chelate, Vitamin A Supplement, Vitamin D3 Supplement, Ascorbic Acid (source of Vitamin C), Niacin, Thiamine Mononitrate (Vitamin B1), Riboflavin (source of B2), Beta Carotene, Calcium Pantothenate, Pyridoxine Hydrochloride (Vitamin B6), Calcium Iodate, Folic Acid, D-Biotin, Sodium Selenite, Papaya, Vitamin B12 Supplement.

Do I actually need to explain this to you? Nearly every one of the bad ingredients I told you about before is in Beneful. There are two kinds of sugar in the first 10 ingredients. There are unspecified animals sources. There are dyes and nasty chemicals. What gives?

Do you see any of that junk in Canidae?

Now don't you feel ripped off? Where's the meat and all the fresh foods that are supposed to be in Beneful? If you are like me, you probably thought you were doing good for your dog buying a name brand food. That stuff is supposed to be good right? On the Beneful commercial it shows meat, rice, corn, and vegetables right? Well, where in the heck is that stuff? All I see are corn and chemicals!

## **CORN AND LOW QUALITY FOODS**

A good indicator that you have a low quality food is the presence of corn. If you are feeding a food you got at a grocery store, chances are you're feeding your dog mostly corn. Check the ingredients of the food you have or plan on feeding to your dog. Is there corn in there? Is it the first ingredient? Why would a dog need corn and meat-less by-products in their food instead of meat? If you ran out of dog food what would you feed your dog? An ear of corn? I hope not. If you have any sense, you'd most likely feed your dog a piece of meat. Then why have we all been buying big bags of corn for our dogs to eat?

Why do the big companies like Mars (Nutro, Pedigree, Royal Canin). Procter and Gamble (Iams, Eukanuba), and Nestle (Purina, Alpo) think that dogs don't need any meat? What are candy and toilet paper making companies doing producing dog food anyway?

A few of you who are reading this are saying to yourself, "I had a dog live 18 years eating food like that and he was just fine." Most of you that have a story like that have probably already stopped reading this. That's okay. This is for the few of you that are still with me. A man named Buster Martin has been a beer drinker and smoker nearly his entire life. He's 101 years old and he just competed in the London Marathon. Google him and read his story. If you had a dog live for 18 years eating mostly corn that dog is a genetic marvel just like Buster Martin. Most of us aren't as lucky as Mr. Martin, and most of our dogs won't be that lucky either. Dogs have very short life spans and providing them with the nutrition they need is an important way to keep them healthy for as long as possible.

## **A QUICK WORD ABOUT CANNED FOOD**

Canned foods are less processed than kibble. They also provide your pet with much needed moisture. How do you know you're getting a good kind of canned food though? You can use the same method as choosing a kibble. If the ingredient label on the canned food lists stuff like by-products, chemicals, lots of carbohydrate fragments, corn, soy, and other junk don't get it. Simple as that. You should be able to recognize most of the ingredients in the food as food.

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An example of a good food is: Chicken, Chicken Liver, Chicken Broth, Brown Rice, Eggs, Peas, Carrots, Flaxseed, Spinach, Menhaden Fish Oil, Vitamins, Dried Kelp, Salt, Taurine, Potassium Chloride, Minerals, Artichokes, Cranberries, Pumpkin, Tomato, Blueberries, Broccoli, Cabbage, Kale, Parsley.

And an example of a bad food is: Chicken, sufficient water for processing, poultry by-products, brewers rice, carob bean gum, sodium tripolyphosphate, carrageenan, minerals, vegetable oil, dried yam, guar gum, natural flavor blend, bay leaves, vitamins.

## **PUPPY, ADULT, AND SENIOR FOOD**

There are four main types of dog foods on the market; Puppy, Adult Maintenance, Senior, and All Life Stages. The first three are pretty self explanatory. Puppy food is designed for growing puppies, adult maintenance is designed to maintain the health of an adult, senior formulas are designed for older, less active dogs and they are typically lower calorie versions of the adult. Senior formulas are also notorious for being full of fillers, so make sure to read those ingredient labels. All Life Stages (ALS) foods are designed to be used by every dog no matter the age.

## **LARGE BREED PUPPIES NEED DIFFERENT FOODS**

Every dog is an individual, and therefore has unique needs. Large and giant breed puppies for example, should eat foods with a moderate protein percentage, as well as a calcium level of 1.5% or less. Also, it's important to keep them lean to avoid extra pressure on the joints. These criteria ensure a proper growth rate, and help prevent joint issues in adulthood. Puppy foods, for the most part, should be avoided because they often promote a faster growth rate than is recommended.

## **WHAT FOOD DOGSTERS DON'T RECOMMEND**

While Dogsters try not to ostracize anyone because of the food they feed, there are certain foods that are not recommended by the majority of members. Some of these companies listed make prescription foods. If you have a very sick dog that needs special foods, then you might have to feed your dog a food with pretty gross ingredients. Sometimes you just gotta do it. If your dog is very sick, please talk to your vet.

Take a look at the ingredients of the following foods and try to apply what you've learned to see why they aren't considered that great.

- Alpo - <http://www.alpo.com>
- Beneful - <http://www.beneful.com>
- Dad's - <http://www.dadspetcare.com>
- Purina Dog Chow - <http://www.longliveyourdog.com>
- Iams - <http://www.iams.com>
- Nutro - <http://www.nutroproducts.com>
- Pedigree - <http://www.pedigree.com>
- Purina One - <http://www.purinaone.com>
- Pro Plan - <http://www.proplan.com>
- Science Diet - <http://www.hillspet.com>
- Royal Canin - <http://www.royalcanin.com>
- Eukanuba - [www.eukanuba.com](http://www.eukanuba.com)

## **WHAT FOODS DOGSTERS DO RECOMMEND**

This is a list of most of the foods frequently recommended (and fed by) Dogsters. Check out their ingredients lists and you'll see why. All of these

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recommendations are for healthy dogs. There are other foods not on this list that are good too. This will at least give you a good starting out point.

- Blue Buffalo - <http://www.bluebuff.com>
- By Nature - <http://www.bynaturepetfoods.com>
- Canidae - <http://www.canidae.com>
- Natural Balance - <http://www.naturalbalanceinc.com>
- Eagle Pack Holistic Select - <http://www.eaglepack.com>
- Evanger's™ - <http://www.evangersdogfood.com>
- Fromm - <http://www.frommfamily.com>
- Merrick - <http://www.merrickpetcare.com>
- Timberwolf - <http://www.timberwolforganics.com>
- Natura Products - <http://www.naturapet.com>
- Wellness - <http://www.wellnesspetfood.com>
- Nature's Recipe - <http://www.naturesrecipe.com>
- Nature's Variety™ - <http://naturesvariety.com>
- Orijen - <http://www.orijen.ca>
- Solid Gold - <http://www.solidgoldhealth.com>
- Taste of the Wild - <http://www.tasteofthewildpetfood.com>
- Ziwi Peak - <http://www.ziwipeak.com>

## TREATS AND CHEWS

Treats and chews shouldn't make up more than 10% of a dog's diet. Any more than that and you run the risk of throwing off your dog's vitamin and mineral ratios causing nutritional deficiencies. There are some really great and really terrible treats out there. Now that you've learned how to pick a good dog food, you should be able to find good nutritious snacks without ugly chemicals and by-products.

Here's an example of a treat you would want to avoid.

Beggin's Strips Original Bacon Flavor: Ground wheat, corn gluten meal, wheat flour, ground yellow corn, water, sugar, glycerin, soybean meal, hydrogenated starch hydrolysate, bacon (preserved with sodium nitrite), salt, bacon fat (preserved with BHA), meat, phosphoric acid, sorbic acid (a preservative), calcium propionate (a preservative), natural and artificial smoke flavors, added color (Red 40, Yellow 5, Blue 1, Yellow 6).

See. It's got that ugly stuff we talked about before.

**Here's an example of a good treat.**

Wellness Pure Rewards Beef: Beef, Dried Chicory Root, Cultured Whey, Sea Salt, Lecithin, Garlic, Mixed Tocopherols (a natural preservative).

**Biscuit or cookie type treats are very popular too. Compare these two biscuit treats and see which one is better.**

**Hills Science Diet Adult Canine Maintenance Treats with Real Chicken:** Corn meal, brewers rice, chicken by-product meal, powdered cellulose, chicken, natural flavor, animal fat (preserved with BHA, propyl gallate and citric acid), dried egg product, minerals (potassium chloride, calcium carbonate, iodized salt, ferrous sulfate, zinc oxide, copper sulfate, manganous oxide, calcium iodate, sodium selenite), preserved with BHT and BHA, vitamins (choline chloride,

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vitamin A supplement, vitamin D3 supplement, vitamin E supplement, niacin, thiamine, calcium pantothenate, pyridoxine hydrochloride, riboflavin, folic acid, biotin, vitamin B12 supplement).

**Old Mother Hubbard Old Fashioned Dog Biscuit:** Wheat flour, oatmeal, chicken fat (preserved with mixed tocopherols), molasses, charcoal, chicken, white cheddar cheese, eggs, turmeric, paprika, whole ground apples, whole ground carrots, garlic, sea salt.

In a good treat you should be able to recognize the ingredients as food.

**You can also find good chews and bad chews.** A bad chew's ingredient list looks like this.

Busy Bone ChewBone Treat: Rice, glycerin, wheat flour, water, tricalcium phosphate, poultry by-product meal, gelatin, hydrogenated starch hydrolysate, brewers dried yeast, sugar, dried beef stock, animal fat preserved with mixed-tocopherols (form of Vitamin E), wheat gluten, partially hydrogenated cottonseed oil, phosphoric acid, animal digest, salt, added color (Red 40, Yellow 5, Blue 1, Yellow 6 and other color), sorbic acid (a preservative), natural and artificial flavors, BHA (a preservative), BHT (a preservative).

**Here's another popular chew whose ingredients are severely lacking.**

**Greenies:** Gelatin, Wheat Protein Isolate, Glycerin, Soy Protein Isolate, Sodium Caseinate, Natural Poultry flavour, Hydrogenated Starch Hydrolysate, Vegetable Oil (Preserved with Propyl Gallate), Sodium Tripolyphosphate, Lecithin, Ground Flaxseed, Minerals (Calcium Carbonate, Magnesium Oxide, Zinc Sulfate, Ferrous Sulfate, Copper Sulfate, Manganese Sulfate, Potassium Iodide), Magnesium Monostearate, Vitamins (dl-Alpha Tocopherol Acetate [source of vitamin E], Vitamin B12 Supplement, Calcium Pantothenate, Niacin Supplement, Vitamin A Supplement, Riboflavin Supplement, Vitamin D3 Supplement, Biotin, Pyridoxine Hydrochloride [Vitamin B6], Thiamine Mononitrate [Vitamin B1], Folic Acid), Monoglycerides of Edible Fatty Acids, Choline Chloride, Potassium Sorbate (to preserve freshness), Chlorophyll.

**The best chews** are made from animals. Bones, ears, hooves, bullysticks, lungs, gullets, antlers, trachea, tendons, and other products like this make wonderful chews. They are fully digestible and will help keep your pet's teeth clean just as well as the other two.

Okay, that is a basic rundown of dog foods and treats. There are SO many products out there and it can get overwhelming very quickly. If you're looking to switch foods just take it slow. You'll find the perfect food you're looking for. I promise!

**Here are a couple of places that can help you with your food search.**

The Dog Food Project - <http://www.dogfoodproject.com>

Dog Food Analysis - <http://www.dogfoodanalysis.com>

Thanks to everyone who contributed and helped put this thing together! You all rock!

Sedona and Gunner PAWS

Sedona - <http://www.dogster.com/dogs/632919>

Gunner PAWS - <http://www.dogster.com/dogs/138416>

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