

Don't Believe These Experts' Myths on Raw Pet Food

They seem to be on a 'search and destroy' mission for these healthy foods. Yet the 'dangers' they cite are mostly myths. Why this vicious attack, when for 8 years, they've been unable to get to the bottom of the jerky fiasco that's sickened or killed thousands of pets?

Reviewed by [Dr. Becker](#)

STORY AT-A-GLANCE

- A survey of 1,800 dog and cat owners indicates that 37% are interested in a fresh raw food diet for their pet
- Of the respondents who feed processed pet food, almost a quarter report diet-related health problems in their dog or cat
- 55% of survey respondents said they would prefer to offer their pet fresh food that can be served raw or cooked
- The relatively small sampling of pet owners who responded to the Allprovide survey is actually a pretty good representation of U.S. pet owners in general
- Meanwhile, the FDA and other anti-raw forces continue to put pressure on raw pet food manufacturers, and issue baseless warnings to consumers about the “dangers” of raw diets

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In 2015, a pet food company called Allprovide that produces raw diets for pets, surveyed over 1,800 self-described "health conscious" cat and dog owners across the US about their pet food choices. The results show that over 37% of pet owners are interested in a fresh raw food diet for their dog or cat. According to Allprovide's co-founder:

*"These statistics demonstrate what we've been hearing from pet owners across the country. The more people learn about the risks of feeding pets processed foods and the more they see the health benefits of a fresh, raw food diet, the more eager they are to switch."*¹

Over Half of Pet Owners Would Prefer to Feed Their Dog or Cat Fresh Food

Additional results of the survey:

- 33% of respondents would be interested in feeding their pets a fresh, raw food diet
- 46% had never heard of raw pet food diets before being surveyed
- 13% were already feeding a raw diet to their pets
- According to survey respondents, pet health is the number 1 factor (94%) in selecting a pet food
- Freshness and quality (89%) are the second motivating factors for purchase
- Cost is the third consideration (65%) in purchase
- 89% of pet guardians feed processed pet foods and fillers

- 23% of those who feed processed pet food report that their dog or cat suffers from skin conditions, arthritis, kidney problems, or food allergies; all of those pet owners report their veterinarians have suggested dietary changes to treat those conditions
- 33% like the idea of having their pet's food delivered to their home on a regular schedule
- 55% would prefer to feed their dog or cat fresh food that can be served raw or cooked

The relatively small sampling of pet owners who responded to the Allprovide survey is actually a pretty good representation of U.S. pet owners in general.

Most are feeding processed pet food to their dog or cat, and a significant number of those animals have health conditions directly or indirectly attributable to their processed diet.

Since the survey respondents reported their No. 1 reason for choosing a pet food was their pet's health, followed by the freshness and quality of the food, hopefully it's just a matter of time before they give fresh food diets a try — especially those guardians with pets who are already suffering from diet-related health problems.

Why Is the FDA Targeting Raw Pet Food Manufacturers?

Curiously, as consumer interest in raw pet food increases, the FDA seems ever more determined to issue warnings about the supposed "dangers" of raw diets. The agency seems to be specifically (and unfairly) targeting raw pet food producers for "special treatment."

According to an FDA Law Blog entry titled "FDA Turns Up Heat on Raw Pet Food:"

"In an unusually public manner, FDA announced the issuance of an assignment to its field staff to collect official samples of raw food intended for consumption by dogs or cats.

The samples will be analyzed for Salmonella, Listeria monocytogenes, E. coli O157:H7, and non-O157:H7 Shiga toxin-producing E. coli (known as STEC).

According to the assignment, positive findings 'may result in a Class I recall, press release, and Reportable Food Registry (RFR) submission.'"²

The FDA asserts:

"The scientific literature indicates that feeding raw foods to household pets such as dogs or cats carries a risk to human and animal health."³

(Yes, it is a fact of life that all raw food, whether intended for animals or humans, presents health risks. So does processed food, in particular processed pet food.)

"Even if the pets do not appear to be sick after consuming raw pet foods containing pathogens such as Salmonella and Listeria monocytogenes, they can become carriers of such pathogens and transfer the pathogens to the environment."⁴

(Pets fed a fresh raw diet don't appear to be sick because they aren't sick — dogs and cats are designed to eat freshly-killed prey, for crying out loud. And dogs will even eat not-so-fresh dead animals.)

Transfer of pathogens to the environment occurs naturally and constantly when living creatures pee, poop, and otherwise eliminate things from their bodies. That's why we pick up after our dogs, scoop the cat's litterbox and dispose of its contents, and try to prevent our pets from sampling the poop of other animals.

*"Humans can be infected by contacting pathogens in the contaminated environment."*⁵

(This is another fact of life for anyone handling any type of raw meat, especially if they're not careful or don't follow common sense hygiene practices.)

*"Raw pet foods containing pathogens can also contaminate food contact surfaces and human hands that increase the risk of human exposure."*⁶

(Just as any raw food that contains pathogens — including the chicken breast or hamburger you're thawing for dinner tonight — can contaminate surfaces in your kitchen. That's why we don't handle raw food, and raw meat in particular, without following common sense hygiene practices.)

It's disturbing that the FDA seems to be trying extra hard to find a problem with raw pet food where none has ever existed. Meanwhile, another of the FDA's projects — finding the source of the imported, processed toxic chicken jerky treats that have sickened and killed thousands of pets — remains mysteriously unsolved for eight years and counting.

The vast majority of pet food recalls are for pathogen contamination of processed diets, not raw diets, but regardless, the FDA seems fixated on the raw pet food industry.

Sources and References

¹ [PetfoodIndustry.com, June 29, 2015](#).

² [FDA Law Blog, June 11, 2015](#)

^{3, 4, 5, 6} [FDA.gov](#)
