

Feeding Dogs
ALTERNATIVE VETERINARY MEDICINE CENTRE

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FEEDING DOGS

Wouldn't it make life easy, if we were to have freeze-dried food for our own diet? The bag would have a smiling, sun-bronzed face on the front, looking annoyingly fit and healthy. Imagine that shopping trip; just put a bag of dried food into the car, go home and put it on your shelf. Coming home from a hard day at the office would be a treat. What's for supper? Just put a mugful in a saucepan of boiling water and supper's done!

The technology is in place for this but we are not prepared to go there for ourselves, **yet**. Rest assured, if we were, the manufacturers would be onto it in a flash. Why, then do we do it for our dogs? Firstly, we have been made fearful of our own ability to feed a dog and overly respectful of manufacturers' ability to create a 'balanced diet'. Secondly, we are hit with the convenience and a dog that doesn't complain. Your child soon would!

It is not likely that any manufacturer could create the 'perfect diet' , which would satisfy all your dog's nutritional needs, for every day, every week and every year of his life. One tiny error becomes multiplied by constant use. Just a single error is less likely than several errors. We tend to trust the notion that manufactured foods are perfectly balanced. If they were, why do 'improved' versions constantly appear, as new nutritional facts emerge?

It is not likely that any manufacturing process will improve food quality. In fact, vitamins have to be put back in.

It is not likely that manufacturers will source their ingredients with the same standards as yourself. Their prime purpose is business. This means buying as cheaply as possible and selling as expensively as possible, with extremely adroit marketing to convince us of extra value.

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Dogs used to survive very well on food left over from human meals. They are, by nature, scavengers. As long as the rules of '*moderation in all things*' and '*variety is the spice of life*' are observed, giving species-suitable, healthy ingredients, a dog's body is well-suited to balancing the nutrients he derives from his diet. Fresh is best and provides the healthiest nutrition, without the need for expensive supplements. A natural dog is a meat and carrion eater, an omnivorous fruit and root eater, a herbivore-dung eater, a bone cruncher. Feeding from our own larder is very easy and practical.

If his digestive system, his teeth and his jaw apparatus are not used in this way, your dog will be prone to digestive, dental and immune problems. Another adage comes to mind: 'if you don't use it, you lose it'. Why are so many dogs having regular dental attention at the vets, losing their teeth, suffering foul mouths and breath?

I run a very busy referral clinic, for all sorts of intractable health problems. In many cases, a change to a fresh diet transforms the situation. Perhaps I should keep quiet to maintain business?

Article written July 2007, commissioned by a dog magazine.

See also: <http://www.naturalfeeding.co.uk>

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