



RESPONSIBLE RAW FEEDING FOR CATS AND DOGS

With an overwhelming minefield of information for pet owners researching suitable diets for cats and dogs, UK Pet Food can offer some key advice on feeding a raw diet responsibly.

WHAT IS RAW FEEDING?

Providing a diet of raw food for cats and dogs made up of raw meat, offal and raw bone, along with other ingredients such as fruit, vegetables, oils, nuts and seeds.

There are two types of raw feeding; homemade raw diets and commercially prepared raw diets.

WHAT ARE THE CONCERNS WITH A HOMEMADE RAW DIET?

Whilst homemade diets provide more flexibility for pets with very specific nutritional needs, they are challenging and require significant research and expert guidance to undertake with any success.

A fundamental concern, as with any homemade diet, is whether all the right nutrients are provided in the right proportions for healthy bodily function.

Some proponents of raw feeding advise that dietary supplements are added to ensure all the essential vitamin and mineral requirements are met.

There is also concern amongst some veterinary professionals that many homemade diets do not provide adequate nutrition.

COMMERCIALLY PREPARED RAW FOODS

Some members of UK Pet Food produce frozen and freeze-dried raw foods for cats and dogs with both 'complete' and 'complementary' varieties available in a range of convenient formats. These products help owners to feed their pet raw diets responsibly. The 'complete' pet foods have been specially formulated to provide the nutritional balance a cat or dog needs in their daily diet, whilst a 'complementary' pet food will need to be fed alongside another food source. The pet food label will tell you whether it's 'complete' or 'complementary' along with directions for handling and feeding guidelines.

Owners feeding 'complete' commercially prepared pet foods (in line with the feeding guidelines on the packet) can have confidence they are addressing all their pet's nutritional needs. UK Pet Food raw pet food manufacturers are always happy to provide further help and advice with their products.



THINK ABOUT FOOD SAFETY

As with all commercially prepared pet foods, commercially prepared raw foods are subject to stringent legislation and require various tests to ensure they are safe. This therefore minimises the risk of food-borne contamination to both owner and the pet.

When preparing a homemade raw diet, pet owners must always source ingredients from safe and reliable sources to ensure food safety.



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HYGIENE AND HANDLING TIPS:

Good hygiene practice is always important and even more so when handling fresh, frozen or freeze-dried raw food, here is your guide:

1. Purchase products that are in good condition. You should see no visible signs of damage to the packaging such as dents, tears, discolourations, etc.
2. Wash your hands with hot water and soap after handling either your pet or their food and its packaging.
3. Immediately after each use, wash and disinfect all surfaces, dishes and utensils that have been in contact with raw food.
4. Remove and carefully dispose of any uneaten raw pet food, as soon as your pet has finished eating.
5. Clean and disinfect your pet's feeding area as soon as your pet has finished eating.

When buying prepared raw foods you can find the storage instructions on each package.



CONSIDERING A CHANGE IN DIET FOR YOUR PET?

If you are considering a change in diet for your cat or dog, there is a range of reliable sources of advice from your vet to UK Pet Food raw manufacturers and nutritionists. They'll be able to discuss your pet's needs, make suitable recommendations and give guidance on how to transition from one food to another.

INDUSTRY GUIDANCE AND CODES OF PRACTICE

- UK Pet Food Guidelines for the Manufacturer of Raw Pet Food in the UK
- FEDIAF Guide to Good Practice for the Manufacture of Safe Pet Food
- FEDIAF Nutritional Guidelines
- FEDIAF Code of Good Labelling Practice for Pet Food



DEFROSTING RAW PET FOOD TIPS:

Defrost in an airtight, leak-proof container at the bottom of the fridge.

- Never refreeze
- Never discard the thaw juice as this can contain essential nutrients for your pet

Consult the manufacturer for further information on preparation and storage.