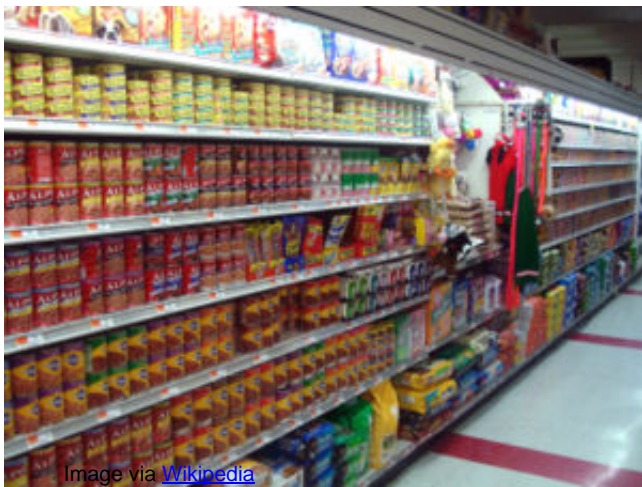


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Store-Bought, Or Home Made: What's A Dog Owner to Do?



Store-Bought, Or Home Made: What's A Dog Owner to Do?

The massive pet food recall of 2007 had millions of **dog owners terrified that they had unwittingly been poisoning their beloved pets**. If you and your dog survived that frightening time, you have undoubtedly been more careful in your choice of dog foods ever since. But how is the average dog owner to know [what's really going into doggie's dish?](#) One way to know for sure is to make your pet's food at home, but that can be very time-consuming. The other option is to know **which commercial food is the the best dog food**, that is both safe and nutritious.

The question of **what to feed your dog** is a sensitive one as there are many different camps advocating many different ideas, facts, and theories. For many owners, the question is solved by finances. To put it simply, if the **owner can afford the dog food then that type and brand** is going to go into the food bowl. While this approach may seem sensible, especially when the monthly budget is taken into consideration, it may not be best. **Why feed the dog sub-par ingredients and face vet bills later** on that may have been avoided in the first place by **choosing the right food?**

The **dog foods** found on most grocery store shelves, **the generic or store brand ones**, are not usually considered among the **best foods for your pet**. More often than not, **these brands are full of ingredients that are lower in quality and inexpensive**. While these brands provide a cheaper alternative to the other brands, they are generally not recommended. A quick glance at **the ingredients can provide an example of lower quality food**.

Generic meat ingredients without a specific species named is not a good thing to feed a dog. **Avoid phrases such as "meat byproducts" or "meat and bone meal"**. Look for brands that can list the animal that they use as an **ingredient, like "chicken meal" or "beef"**. Also, **avoid any brands that list corn as their main ingredient**. You are **feeding a dog, after all, and not a pig or a cow**.

But, you say, **Fido is delighted with the store brand food**, which retails for half of what the brand names do? That's because Fido's been **tricked**. **Chemicals have been added to that food**, creating a pleasing color and aroma which Fido finds irresistible and which hides the **fact that the food is not one of the best dog foods**. These chemicals are easy enough to spot if you know what to look for. **Coloring agents, drying agents, and**

texturizers are just some of the tell-tale ingredients that should cause you to sit up and take notice.

There are, of course, **premium commercial dog foods which provide the highest grade ingredients free of harmful additives**, and in another newsletter we'll explore how to find them. But they will cost a premium price, and if you are a hands-on dog owner, you might be more interested in [preparing your pet's meals yourself](#).

This option of **making pet food at home** has become more and more popular over the past few years as it **allows owners to choose directly what is going into their dog's bowl**. **Feeding doggie homemade food**, however, does not mean allowing him or her to dine on the family's leftovers. It means researching the **proper balance of proteins, carbohydrates, and fats for your dog**, and finding the foods which will provide them in an easily digestible form. One of the **best known homemade diets for the canine set is the BARF diet**.

And now—**what does BARF stand for?** Seems you can say it stands for a couple of things, but the most often cited explanation is **Bones And Raw Food**. The other one floating around on the Internet is **Biologically Appropriate Raw Food**, which is **attributed to Dr. Ian Billinghurst**, one of the original Barfers.

The [BARF Diet](#) is **suitable for many dogs** but it takes time and dedication on the owner's part. While there are noticeable **differences between the BARF diet and a diet based on commercial dog foods**, the purpose of both diets is to **provide the dog with the best nutrients possible**.

BARF is about feeding a biologically appropriate diet for a dog that is made up of **raw whole foods** like those eaten by their ancestors. This would **include muscle meat, bone, fat, organ meat and vegetable materials** and any other foods that mimic what the wild ancestors ate.



Image via [Wikipedia](#)

The BARF diet, however, is **not always the best method of feeding your dog** and it takes a great amount of time to prepare and research the foods. Conversely, **commercial brand dog foods** have undergone **several tests** to insure that they are **compatible with the dietary needs of the dog**. Basically, a dog will receive just about the **same benefits of the BARF diet** if he remains on a commercial diet and may even receive more nutrients that way.

The important thing you, as a dog owner, should know is that **commercial dog food is not all the same**. You can learn much more about what is in each can, pouch, or bag of dog food by **becoming educated in label reading**, and the AAFCO standards. Ultimately, it's up to you to decide what's the **best dog food for your dog**.

Sharda Baker has published several dog ebook and audios, including the internet best selling "[Complete Guide to Your Dog's Nutrition](#)".

Visit the link below now for Sharda's Special [Free Dog Food Report](#).

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