

Why raise your companion animal vegan?

Learn more about companion animals, how to care and feed them better!



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www.vegan2050.org

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I am involved in a monthly plant based meeting and a yearly "Food is Medicine" all day event with four top notched vegan medical doctors from around the USA. One of the young women in our organization is a very dedicated vegan and very important to our meetings. She and one other woman run the monthly meal events for this nonprofit.

She is taking the best four semester Master's program on becoming a licensed dietitian. The entire course cost \$50,000 plus miscellaneous expenses. I have set up a scholarship program to raise the \$50,000. I have already given \$1,525 to get the program started and I intend to donate more. All of the \$9.95 donations for one of my ebooks will go to her scholarship fund program. I am not taking even one cent from the proceeds of my books. Additional donations will help to reach her goal.

Her name is Hilary Cosby, and the donations can be given to Venmo account @Hilary-Cosby

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My very good friend, Mateus Mendes, PhD, contributed many ideas for this book.

David A. Weseloh, PhD

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1. Introduction

1.1. Motivation

Many ethical vegans and vegetarians think very little about feeding their companion dog or cat commercial, non-vegan food. They live with the dilemma of feeding their companions food that takes the life of other animals because they rationalize by saying that there is no other choice. Nonetheless, there is an answer to that



Figure 1: Image by StockSnap from Pixabay.

dilemma. That is to have a companion dog or cat and to feed him or her vegan. To help answer that dilemma is the main reason that this book was written.

Over 50 years ago vegetarians were told that they would die much earlier because of not eating "meat". To their surprise, instead of dying early, they found that they were actually going to live longer and a better life. The same was said about vegans, when little was known about the vegan diet. Again it turned out not to be true. Research has shown that a vegetarian who eats a balanced diet and maintains a healthy lifestyle can expect to live on average five years longer than a flesh eater. And a vegan who eats a balanced vegan diet and maintains a healthy lifestyle can expect to live on average ten years longer than someone on a SAD (Standard American Diet) diet.

A similar thing may happen to dogs or cats that go vegan. They actually seem to live longer and healthier on a balanced vegan diet.

They may need Taurine added to their human food or a good vegan dog food from a health food store which will already have that essential amino acid.

Most people love their companion animals but they really know little about them. One common pitfall is to believe that dogs are carnivorous by nature. It is true that cats are carnivorous but dogs are omnivores. By the time that you finish this book you will understand your companion animal much better than you do now. You will learn about your companion animal and how to take better care of him or her, so that both of you can enjoy a longer and happier life. Several people have contributed to the information in this book. It is based on the latest scientific information about the nutritional requirements of companion animals. Additionally, veganism is not just about food. Veganism is also about lifestyle and the willingness to, in general, end suffering and animal exploitation. So the book also covers other topics of importance to deal with companion animals. That includes animals' nature and natural behavior, as well as how they are raised, how they can be kept safe, and how they should feel happy.

1.2. Book structure

Chapter two makes an historical review of the life of dogs and cats.

Chapter three is dedicated to the science of dog and cat food, and the problems with industrial production.

Chapter four is about how to save animal lives, not only choosing the right nutrition but also the best methods to raise animals.

Chapter five is about vegetarians and vegans feeding their companion animals flesh, dairy, and eggs.

Chapter six is dedicated to dog behaviours and how to make dogs feel safe and happy.

Chapter seven has testimonies from the owners of companion dogs and cats that have been fed most, if not all, of their lives, a vegan diet.

Chapter eight discusses common myths about vegan companion animals.

Chapter nine outlines some suggestions and good practices for those that care for their companion animals.

Chapter ten includes some “Do it yourself” recipes, for those readers who like to cook for their companion animals.

Chapter eleven is a “Cheat sheet” for quick reference of the good and bad practices.

Finally, Chapter twelve contains a summary and final remarks of the most important content of the book.

2. A bit of history

Dogs and cats were domesticated thousands of years ago. They played a very important role in human history.

2.1. History of dogs

Modern dogs belong to the genus *Canis*, which is a part of the wolf like canids. In historical terms, is a lineage that diverged from the wolves many years ago. The exact date is unknown but it was probably about 100,000 years ago that the species split.

It is believed that ancient humans started to partner with dogs because they offered protection for the herds. And for the dogs, they received shelter, food, and also protection from the human companions. So

it was a win-win situation both for dogs and humans in a time when finding food and shelter were essential for survival. This process is known as the domestication of dogs, i.e., when dogs became domestic animals living with humans and depending on them rather than wild animals surviving in packs in the forests. It is also unknown when or where domestication occurred. However, it is believed to have



Figure 2: Puppy.

happened about ten to thirty thousand years ago, in East Asia, Middle East, or Europe. There are also theories pointing to the possibility of different domestication events happening at different places and different times. European paleolithic dogs might have been domesticated from European wolves about fifteen thousand years ago. Later, in a separate event, Asian dogs might have been domesticated from Asian wolves about twelve thousand years ago.

The domestication process dates coincide in part with the period when ancient humans started to settle. It is believed the first agricultural societies settled about twelve thousand years ago. At that point, it became advantageous to remain in the same place, improving, and defending their territory. The alternative of running from place to place in search of food and water consumed more energy and presented unknown risks. Therefore, hunting and gathering societies evolved to form small communities that worked together and remained in the same place for long periods of time. Animals like dogs acquired a great importance in those societies. Their natural skills to help hunting and defending the territory were very useful for the small communities, surrounded by wild animals, and other competing communities. The dogs ability to live in packs, as well as their fidelity to the pack were characteristics that made them natural candidates to join those small communities.

Ancient burial sites show that dogs were of great importance for different civilizations. In Asia, Europe, and America there are burial sites, dated several thousand years ago, which contain dog bones. The way the bones are laid show they were buried with affection. That is an indication of the social importance of the dogs at the time.

The diverse domestication events, selection, and migration processes resulted in a wide range of dog breeds around the world. Some dog breeds are as small as small cats, weighing less than 1.1 pounds (500 grams). Other breeds seem to have been optimized for size, and they can weigh as much as 200 pounds (90 kg).

Many breeds were selected for herding, others for hunting or retrieving. Shepard dogs have good scent and are strong so as to defend the herd if necessary. Hunting species are usually fast and efficient catching prey. Recently, breeds are optimized for other characteristics including just beauty. This artificial selection process is often taken to extremes and the selected dogs have weaker genes when compared to natural selection.

Because of artificial selection and the abnormal long time that dogs depend on humans, most of the dogs nowadays will have a very hard time living alone, or in packs, or in the wild. They no longer have the necessary skills to hunt or even to defend themselves from the many dangers out there. The natural evolutionary line was broken thousands of years ago due to human interference in the natural processes. Modern dogs were selected for their affection and dedication to the human species. That means modern dogs are mostly dependent on humans nowadays. It is now our responsibility to protect and care for the evolutionary line that our ancestors created.



Figure 3: Photo by Sander Akkerman.

2.2. History of cats

Modern cat breeds belong to the family of Felidae, sub family Felinae. Just as happens with dogs, the relationship between cats and humans also started thousands of years ago. It is so old that, again, precision is lost in history. It is believed that the cats have been living with humans the last twelve thousand years, which is about the same date as dogs as well as the formation of the first human settlements. It is also possible that at least two domestication events happened, one in Africa and one in Asia.

Contrary to the dogs, which were probably invited by humans, it is believed that cats “invited themselves in.” As the first human agricultural settlements appeared they stocked considerable amounts of grains to eat and to grow. Those grains attracted rodents who thrived around the settlements due to the abundance of grains and garbage created by the humans. Those rodents were good prey for the cats, who started to gather and form colonies around the settlements.

Cats have a very different personality, when compared to dogs. They are much more independent. They probably saw an opportunity to feed themselves near those communities where people, and possibly dogs, and other domesticated animals, lived together. At the same time, they also hunted mice and other small animals which might pester those communities. So a kind of symbiotic relationship was probably established. Humans tolerated the cats, because they helped keep the territory free from mice, small snakes, and other animals which could be threats to the safety of the villages. And the cats thrived on the leftover food, also benefiting from the safety provided by the community which also contributed to keep cats’ enemies at a distance.

Over time, humans probably also contributed to the natural selection of cats favoring the presence of docile felines and scaring away the most violent ones. That is the probable reason why there are now

many breeds of cats which are docile towards humans despite their mostly independent nature.

Cats are not as obedient and faithful to humans as dogs. Nonetheless, they still achieved very high status in many ancient civilizations. In ancient Egypt, for example, they were protected and revered. In ancient Roman they did not achieve such a high status but they were still highly valued because of all the protection they offered against rodents.

In the dark Middle Ages in Europe, cats were downgraded and seen as diabolic creatures. Thousands or even millions of cats were sacrificed during that time in an effort to ward off the devil and please the gods. That may have been a big mistake, since the cats were probably the most powerful allies the Europeans had to scare away the mice that carried diseases. At that time, Europe suffered horrible epidemics of the black plague also known as the “black death” which was carried by mice and mice’s fleas. That killed more than twenty million people in Europe alone.

For thousands of years the cats that lived with humans were still independent animals who had the right to enter the homes but lived mostly outside. It was only in the twentieth century that humans started to keep their cats inside most or all of the time, feeding them and providing them with cat litters for their biological necessities. This may be another big mistake, in the sense that it makes present and future generations of cats even more dependent on humans to live their lives. Modern cats are still similar to their ancestors, in morphology and psychology, to a great extent. In general even modern domestic cats can hunt, find shelter, and survive in the wild, alone, or in colonies. They live longer and healthier when they are well cared for by caring humans, protected from competition, and other risks.

Modern cats are, therefore, successors of those brave cats that defended

humans from other animals that carried diseases. When modern humans take good care of modern cats, they may be just paying back a little bit of what cats have done for our ancestors. The best option is perhaps to continue to protect the cats, leaving them with enough freedom to continue being independent, and able to survive in the outside in places where they are safe. Spaying and neutering is also very important to make sure they do not breed to unsustainable levels.

3. The science behind nutritional requirements for dogs and cats

This chapter highlights some important information about the nutritional requirements for dogs and cats. Cats are carnivores. Dogs are omnivores and can eat a more varied diet. In both cases, cheap so called pet foods often do not provide a healthy balanced diet.

3.1. Dogs' nutritional needs

Dogs, in general, adapt very easily to different diets. Nonetheless, their needs vary for each dog, according to the breed, gender, age, and other factors. In a sense, that is very similar to what happens with the human animal. Humans do not feed human babies the same kind of food that is given to adults. Humans'



Figure 4: Photo by Henrique Lopes.

diet is also adapted in other situations, such as for pregnant women, sick people, senior citizens after certain age, and other conditions. Those same principles must be kept in mind when feeding dogs or other animals. Their food must be adjusted according to their needs, to maximize their health and well being. The best diet for any new born is their mothers milk. That is true for human new borns and any other new borns..

3.1.1. Diet of wild animals

Dogs are not carnivores. In fact, they show many characteristics of carnivores, but also share some characteristics with herbivore animals. For example, a parallel can be established between dogs and bears. Both dogs and bears seem to retain many characteristics of carnivores but also adapted to a diet with plant-based food. In fact, the polar bear, which adapted to life in snow and ice, where no significant vegetation is to be found, is perhaps the only bear in all the world that follows a flesh-based diet. Bears in general are regarded as truly carnivore animals, except perhaps for some situations where bears are stealing honey from bees. However, apart from the polar bear, other bears eat a lot of fruit and vegetables. When given the opportunity, they ingest large quantities of plant-based products.

The dogs' ancestors in the wild are wolves. For the vast majority of wild wolves their diet consists mainly of meat from the flesh of other animals. But they will also eat vegetables to save energy hunting other animals or to enjoy a more varied diet. Many wolves supplement their diet with wild berries, apples, pears, and even melons when given the opportunity. It is known that wolves visit melon fields and orchards for eating. Also, just like domestic dogs, wolves sometimes eat tender green grass.

The fact that dogs and wolves eat grass may actually have been misunderstood in the past. In the mainstream literature there are many references to that grass-eating habit, which is well documented. But the popular justification for the behavior may be wrong. It was believed dogs and wolves would eat grass to clean their digestive system. However, the number of observations of perfectly healthy dogs grazing when they see green grass seems to show the opposite. Many people report observing their happy, healthy, and well fed dogs grazing. Therefore, the old assumption that dogs would graze to clean their digestive system is now being questioned. In fact, green grass may be part of a healthy diet of healthy dogs and wolves. In the wild,

wolves also eat almost all of their prey, including partially digested grass and grains from their digestive system. That means that wolves and dogs are physically prepared to ingest and digest significant amounts of vegetable foods and those foods must be part of a well balanced and healthy diet.

Dogs' anatomy

Dogs have large canine teeth which is a characteristic of a carnivore animal. Those canine teeth are used to kill prey, hold food, and tear it apart. Herbivores do not need large canine teeth because their source of nutrition is not prey that they kill. In fact, animals such as cows, horses, and deer, for example, either do not have canine teeth or have very small canines. Those small canines are reminiscences of their distant past in the evolutionary line. Rodents are another class of animals that lack canine teeth.

Dogs also have large and powerful paws and claws, which are useful to catch and hold prey. Those paws and claws are also useful for other protective purposes such as digging holes in the ground to hide themselves.

Dogs also have very prominent jaws with powerful muscles. That is another characteristic they share with carnivores. Their lower jaw can not move forward or sideways, as happens in many herbivores. Instead, it is used to make strong bites and tear apart pieces of flesh which can be quickly swallowed. Herbivores, instead, have enzyme-rich saliva and can chew grass and vegetables, effectively starting digestion in the mouth. Dogs' saliva does not contain amylase, which is useful to digest vegetable matter.

On the other hand, dogs also share some characteristics with herbivores. For example, the dogs' intestines are about six times the length of their body. True carnivores have short intestines so that the flesh remains which are easier to digest than vegetable remains which do not spend much time in their body. Herbivores, on the other hand

have long intestines which give the vegetables time to ferment, thus releasing more of the nutrients and allowing them to be absorbed into the blood stream.

Dogs' anatomy is in many aspects the anatomy of carnivores. Nonetheless, the dogs seem to have intestines adapted to digest vegetable matter.

3.1.2. The amino acids

There are over 20 types of amino acids in human and dog bodies. Of those amino acids, 12 are classified as necessary. Humans and dogs can get eight of them from a balanced vegan diet. The other four amino acids that will not be provided by a vegetable diet can be synthesized from the eight amino acids found in a balanced diet. Those eight amino acids are therefore classified as essential since they can not be synthesized in the body and need to be obtained from the food. Essential amino acids are critical to life. They are the building blocks of proteins and are essential to the proper functioning of the body. Lacking one or more of them is a serious health risk.

Taurine is one amino acid found in large amounts in the brain, heart, retina, and even in blood cells called platelets. Taurine is an amino acid that supports neurological development and helps regulate the level of water and minerals in the blood. It is also thought to have antioxidant properties. A vegan diet will supply a human or a dog with sufficient quantity of taurine, since it is only required in small amounts.

Taurine is a necessary amino acid that must be added to vegan cat food, since cats need a significant quantity of it. The same is not necessarily true for dogs. Most dogs do not need added taurine. However, there are some breeds that may need a supplement if they are going to be on a vegan diet. Breeds like Scottish Terriers, Cocker Spaniels, Chihuahuas, Basset Hounds, Australian Shepherds,

Newfoundlands, and Basenjis often need taurine supplements if they are going to eat only, or mostly, vegan dog food. Without a supplement their dog could develop heart disease, which is the deficiency that leads to an enlarged heart called cardiomyopathy.

Besides some breeds having a predisposition for needing taurine, there is also an inherited disease called cystinuria. It leads to the formation of kidney stones and other stones in the bladder and the ureter.

In case of suspicion that a dog has a taurine deficiency, then it is better to have a qualified veterinarian give a complete physical examination including examining the dog's heart. To help the vet, it is necessary to supply a detailed history of the dog along with a history of symptoms and feeding habits. The exam should include a biochemistry profile, a complete blood count (CBC), and a urinalysis. If the veterinarian suspects that cystinuria is the cause of a taurine deficiency, he or she will send the blood sample to a laboratory for an evaluation of the level of taurine in the blood.

If heart disease is suspected then a chest X-ray will be needed. An electrocardiogram (ECG) and other diagnostic tests may be used to evaluate and diagnose the diseases effect on health. With a taurine deficiency, retinal damage is common, so the vet should also do a detailed eye examination to determine the eye's condition. Nonetheless, a taurine deficiency is an uncommon problem for vegan dogs. The probability is relatively high for some breeds when proper measures are not taken into account, but it is still an uncommon problem.

3.1.3. Discussion

The current state of the art science seems to show that dogs can live and thrive on a well balanced vegan diet. It is not their natural diet but living in a house which is run by someone of another species is equally unnatural. Evidence seems to show that dogs are equally

happy and healthy, or happier and healthier, on a vegan diet, where they are fed good quality vegan meals which are balanced.

3.2. Cats' nutritional needs

Contrary to dogs, cats are natural carnivores. Their vegan diet must be supplemented but cats can still follow a healthy vegan diet.

3.2.1. Diet of wild animals

Cats are felines. They are biologically prepared to be patient and agile predators, hunting different prey.

For millennia, wild cats have adapted and lived in different environments. They have lived in savannas, pastures, open forests, dense forests, and even steppes. They search shelter in natural



Figure 5: Photo by Arne Mulder.

formations like hollow trees or under big rocks. Cats are very timid and they live most of the time alone, in an area of about three kilometers squared. A cat's territory will not overlap with territory of another cat of the same sex. It can overlap with a cat of the opposite sex.

Despite their small size, wild cats are fearsome hunters and fighters. A juvenile wild cat can easily cause large injuries even to larger animals using their sharp claws at an incredible speed.

Wild cats must not be confused with feral cats. The latter are descendants of domestic cats and their genetics is different from that

of wild cats. Contrary to dogs, domestic cats can often survive and thrive in the wild when they are abandoned by humans. Those become the feral cats. There are numerous colonies of feral cats worldwide. Sometimes they also mix with wild cats. Some feral cats will allow humans to get close to them, sometimes even touch them. Other feral cats are very suspicious of humans and they will not allow anyone to touch them.

Wild and feral cats live mostly on prey they hunt. They hunt birds, rabbits, hares, rodents, amphibians, insects, and other animals of similar size. They eat almost all of their prey, therefore ingesting meat, bones and other organs including intestines full of partially digested vegetables. They will also eat fresh grass, to help clear out their gut and digestive system.

3.2.2. Taurine and other amino acids

Cats, unlike most dogs, can not synthesize taurine. Without taurine a cat's retina slowly degenerates, causing eye problems and eventually irreversible blindness. It is a condition known as central retinal degeneration (CRD). It also causes hair loss and tooth decay. Taurine concentration has been shown to be associated with feline dilated cardiomyopathy. Luckily, the condition is reversible with taurine supplements. Taurine is now a requirement of the Association of American Feed Control Officials (AAFCO) and any dry or wet food product labeled approved by the AAFCO should have a minimum of 0.1% taurine in dry food and 0.2% in wet food.

Since cats are natural carnivores, the question then arises for vegan cat carers: why feed cats a vegan diet if they are not natural vegans? While the answer may be individual, there are points which should be taken in consideration. One point to consider is, how many other animals must be killed just to feed a companion cat? Many animal lives can be saved for each cat that is fed a healthy vegan diet with some synthetic taurine added to the food. The cat can still live a happy

and healthy life without any nutritional deficiency and without harming other animals. Obviously, the cat will not have the same diet as if living in the wild. That is not a valid excuse to prefer flesh based food since that same cat will live in an environment totally different from their natural environment. In the wild the cat will live a solitary life, hiding, hunting, fighting for his or her life and territory, fighting to mate and to live. Living in a home with a caring human is a completely different life

3.3. The problem with industrial food

Cats and dogs that hunt other animals in the wild will not have many toxins, growth hormones, antibiotics or residues of industrial products, like plastic, in their food specially if they live in areas distant from human cities, villages, settlements, tourist places, and other facilities or attractions. Animals fed with industrial food, however, most of the times ingest large quantities of those contaminants.



Figure 6: Photo by Colin Kean.

Modern food factories are usually advanced industrial processing facilities. They have very efficient machinery and technicians qualified in different fields working countless hours to produce as much food as possible in the shortest possible time period. The quality of the final product is just within government regulations which is not saying much. Nonetheless, the goal in industry is usually to minimize production costs and to maximize output and profits. Therefore, the large majority of industrial foods found in the market suffer from

many unsolved problems.

Industrial foods often incorporate many ingredients which are used only as fillers. Those ingredients are chosen not by quality and nutrition, but by price. Fillers are inexpensive so they often account for a large percentage of the whole formula. It is not uncommon to find pet food in the supermarket where fillers are in the first two or three ingredients of the formulation, which means they are a large percentage of the food. However, most of the fillers are remains from the human food industry with little nutritional value for the animals that will eat the food. They are often very poor quality scraps and have lost most of the nutritional value during processing of the human food. Poor quality grains, white flour, leftovers, and brewer's rice are examples of poor fillers that are used in very large quantities in the pet food industry.

Besides fillers, pet food factories often use remains of dead animals or sick animals. Body remains from 4-D animals (Dead, Diseased, Disabled or Dying) may, in some circumstances, be used. That means the remains may come from animals which were 4-D when they were slaughtered and the remains incorporated into the mixture. Processing at high temperatures kills the bacteria, virus, or microorganisms which could pose health problems to the animals that will later eat the food. Nonetheless, the nutritional quality of the food is still compromised.

Industrial production requires very large quantities of almost all ingredients. Therefore, the trade-off between quality and quantity is generally skewed to the side of quantity. It is difficult to select only the best ingredients and still obtain huge quantities of them at an affordable price. There is always the pressure to produce more at a lower cost, and for very large volumes it is difficult to source ingredients only from the best producers. When the only options are either not to produce or to accept ingredients of a bit lower quality, the lower quality wins out. In order to continue operations, the rational decision is almost always to accept a bit lower quality ingredients and

continue to produce in order to satisfy demand, They have overhead like paying salaries, rent of their facilities, advertising, and much more. The final result is that pet food, specially if it is inexpensive, is manufactured with scraps of human food factories and other ingredients rejected from the human food chain.

Another important issue when comparing the diet of companion animals fed with industrial food and those in the wild is that of growth hormones, antibiotics, and toxins. Wolves and cats in the wild do not generally hunt farm animals. Farm animals are fed very poor diets. They are also given large doses of antibiotics to prevent infections and ensure rapid growth. They are often sick animals which can hardly move during their whole lives. Parts of those animals are selected for human consumption. The remains, like fat, bones, and lower quality flesh are used for industrial production of food for companion animals. Those remains will still carry large quantities of antibiotics, growth hormones, toxins, and other substances.

If the ingredients used for food production are of very low quality and full of undesired substances. The final result will still be of very low quality. Therefore, it is important to make a careful choice when choosing what to feed companion animals. Industrial food which uses animal by-products may have significant quantities of harmful substances carried from the animal remains that are used to produce the food. Vegan pet food will not have animal remains. That means the amount of growth hormones, antibiotics, and other undesired substances will be negligible. However, even vegan pet food is better if it does not incorporate large quantities of poor quality fillers. Therefore, it is important to prefer good quality foods to make sure the pets are fed a healthy diet. A high quality vegan dog food will cost more but your companion animal is worth paying the difference. What price can you put on their health? You would not feed your children a subpar diet so you should not feed the other member of your family...your companion dog.

4. Saving animal lives

4.1. *Is it really necessary to eat flesh?*

The number of animals killed during the average lifespan of a companion animal eating other animals depends on the breed, size, health, and other factors. Even ethical vegetarians and vegans often feed their companion animals other animals, because they think that is not only necessary but even natural and therefore, the way to go. However, that is not according to ethical veganism since it requires the suffering and even the life of some animals to feed other animals. Animal lovers are then left with a dilemma. They do not want to participate in the killing of animals just to feed their companion dog or cat. They also do not want to feed their



Figure 7: Photo by Hervé de Brabandère.

companion animal a diet that in the long run could cause him or her to suffer a premature death. And, of course, they also do not want to be deprived of their canine or feline friend whom they are offering a comfortable and safe life. So it is important to search and let science and reason to answer the questions and solve the dilemma.

There is no way that an accurate figure can be obtained for each

particular case, but feeding flesh to an animal will definitely require a very large number of other animal lives. A small dog will indirectly take less lives while a huge dog could easily, indirectly, take the lives of many animals. Another factor to consider is the type of flesh that they consume. If it is chicken then more chickens will be killed than if it was beef. In that sense, eating large animals could mean less suffering and less lives taken, and therefore a smaller ecological footprint. But that is not a final answer.

Another aspect to consider, regarding the ethical aspects of using the flesh of so called "food animals," is the quality of life they are offered while they are being raised for food. Cows, chickens, and other animals have to live miserable lives to be profitable. They are confined to small pens often without the room to even turn around. Even so called free range animals often only get an hour or two to exercise outside their pens before being put back into their pens. Those one or two hours outside their pens allow the slaughter houses to call them free range. One or two hours is better than no time to free range, but that is very far from what animals would do in their natural environment.

4.2. Cats and dogs lifespan

Life expectancy for dogs and cats are variable. It depends on many conditions, including breed, genetics, lifestyle, and diet, among many others things.

The average life span of dogs fed a normal non-vegan diet is about ten years for many popular breeds. The average life span of cats fed a normal non-vegan diet is about twelve years for many popular breeds. On the other hand the average life span of dogs fed a healthy vegan diet is maybe the same, or more, according to many reports. With cats, the average life span of those fed a healthy vegan diet, according to many reports, seems to be about the same twelve years or even more. There are reports of vegan cats and dogs that live twenty years or more, proving it is not impossible for vegan felines and canines to

reach very advanced ages. There are many reasons for the differences. First, the non-vegan "pet" food has a lot of waste products in them. Almost everyone has heard the story of old poor people eating dog food. That is a myth. Dog and cat food cost much more than hamburger. So you might ask, if dog and cat food has all the waste products of flesh served to humans then why the great difference in price. The answer is simple. It is the law of supply and demand. People will pay for it.

If dogs and cats need the flesh of other animals to survive then why the difference in life span figures shown above. As shown in chapter two, they, especially cats, need taurine which is in the flesh of animals. Now we have a way to purchase it without killing another animal. By giving your companion animal a good vegan diet they will get the nutrition that they need and they will not be eating scraps filled with antibiotics, growth hormones, and just plain filth from the slaughter houses. Have you ever seen the undercover videos of these slaughter houses? That alone will keep you from eating "meat" and you would not want to feed it to your companion animal. Vegetarians and vegans often feed their companion animals other animals. That is so contradictory to ethical vegetarianism and ethical veganism. Think about the number of animals that your dog or cat eats over their life time? So to save the life of one animal we take the life of many animals. The bigger the animal the more lives it takes. Is that really ethical? With vegan food for animals it solves that dilemma. Your friend can eat vegan and not harm many animals over his or her life span.

Were do we get the vegan food for animals. There are two major ways. First, we can purchase the food from most health food stores. Second, we can buy the supplement and mix it with your own homemade recipes. The second option takes more time but it is less expense and you may get better results getting them to eat it. Here is a little trick to get you older companion animal to eat a vegan diet. Start putting the supplement in the recipes that you want them to eat adding

some food that they normally eat to the mix. Then start decreasing how much meat, dairy, and eggs are in the meal that you want them to transition to. It generally works. Puppies and kittens get use to it if you start right after the weening period is over.

4.3. A word about puppy mills

Many people want a certain bred of a companion dog. They pay a lot of money for a pure bred and often into the thousands of dollars. If you are thinking about purchasing a pure bred then here are some things to think about.

First, most of the pure bred dogs come from puppy mills. This may not look like there is anything wrong with it but there is. Mother dogs are kept pregnant until the day they die.

Second, the pups are taken away from their mother as soon as they are weened and put into small cages until they are sold.

Third, love is not in the equation. In almost every case it is all about money. Filth is a lot less expensive than sanitary conditions.

Fourth, with filth comes diseases. I personally know of a case where a pure bred miniature German schnauzer dog was bought from a local animal shelter. The shelter did not know that the dog originally came from a puppy mill. That explains why someone gave the dog to the shelter. After he was adopted, his health kept getting worse and causing his companion human thousands of dollars with two different vets. Finally, he died a horrible death. Many pure bred dogs are sick when they sell them.

Also some of the owners of puppy mills do not even care if they inbred. Inbreeding can cause the offspring to have genetic problems throughout their lives.

Fifth, when you purchase a dog from a puppy mill you are not saving a dog from a shelter.

Sixth, by purchasing a mixed bred from a shelter you can almost surely know that he or she did not come from a puppy mill. You also save a dog from being euthanized since shelters can only handle a certain number of dogs. Excess dogs are euthanized unless you go to one of the few no-kill shelters. The problem with no-kill shelters is when they are full they can not accept any more. Those excess dogs usually find their way into shelters that do kill. By adopting a dog from a shelter you either directly or indirectly save the life of a dog that could make a wonderful companion.

5. A vegan diet is healthy for animals too!

Dogs and cats can not only live on a vegan diet but can thrive on it.

5.1. What's inside commercial food

There are a lot of misconceptions about commercial dog and cat food. Some groups take the exceptions and make it look like it is the norm. It is true that there have been cases that seem too hard to believe. Here are a few examples of the exceptions instead of the rule. Contaminated fish oil that



Figure 8: Photo by Kai Kuusik-Greenbaum.

has mercury and heavy

metals in them. Metal contaminants can also come from dogs identification tags and pet collars. Remember these are the exceptions and not the rule. We do not want to spread myths when we are talking to non-belivers. It only destroys our creditablity and we sure do not want that.

Out of date meats plus poultry and fish from supermarkets are brought to rendering plants. Much of the contaminats are in their Styrofoam packaging including in their shrink wrap. Sometimes they do not take the time to unwrap the packaging. As of today, any of the following ingredients, if used in companion animal food, are not illegal, even though it seems like they should be:

- Euthanized dogs and cats.
- Road kill like rabbits and deer.

- Farm animals that were killed, died, disabled, or even diseased.
- The waste of dead animals like the intestines, organs, heads, feet, hooves, etc.
- The waste from distillers.
- Spoiled supermarket food.
- Restaurant waste including grease.
- Even dead zoo animals.

5.1.1. The problems of industrial foods

Most Americans know nothing about rendering plants. They have no clue as to where the products come from. Here is some information about rendering plants:

The process starts with cooking raw animal material in order to remove fat and moisture. A giant auger at the bottom of the pit begins to turn. The sound of popping bones and squeezing flesh are sounds you will never forget. Then they blend the raw product to maintain a ratio between the carcasses of livestock, companion animals, poultry waste, and the rejects from supermarket. The dead animals lay on the floor with the possibility of maggots swarming all over the carcasses. Often the plants get over 32 °C (90 °F) in the summer. The maggots become part of the mix.

The mass is cut into small pieces and placed in another auger to shred into fine pieces. Then it goes into an oven and is cooked at 138 degrees Celsius (280 degrees Fahrenheit) for one hour. The flesh is separated from the bones. The cooking process produces a fat of yellow grease that raises to the top and is skimmed off. The next step is to send the cooked meat with the bones to a hammer mill press where the remaining moisture is squeezed out and pulverizes the result into a gritty powder. Finally it goes into a shaker screen to sift out excess hair and bone chips. The final product is a yellow grease, flesh, and bone meal in three separate containers.

When dead companion animals are collected from animal shelters, sometimes but not often, their flea collars have not been removed. This is not the only contaminant that gets into the mix. Pharmaceuticals and antibiotics in the bodies of livestock get into the mix. Even drugs that are given to euthanize an animal will get into the mix. How would they get the drugs out of the mix even if they wanted to do it? Dead animals can bring many different things into the mix including diseases. Of course the high temperature will kill almost all of the diseases but some may survive. It may seem odd to imagine that the final product of this grisly process is sold as protein and fat in animal food. What may seem even more odd is that there are hundreds of rendering plants around the USA and they ship thousands of pounds of this mix each day. They ship to farms, ranches, feed lots, and of course to dog and cat food producers.

Animals hunted by cats and dogs in the wild would not have many toxins, growth hormones, antibiotics, etc. On the other hand industrial food has a lot of each. Growth hormones cause the so called food animals to grow faster. Antibiotics have the same effect but to a lesser degree. They do not see that giving antibiotics to the animals, except for true illnesses, will cause the viruses to develop immunities. Then these antibiotics will no longer work for us. There are now viruses that are immune to all antibiotics thanks to those that raise animals for food. These animals full of antibiotics and growth hormones are put in food that is fed to companion animals. That increases the immunity to the drugs even more. Besides growth hormones and antibiotic getting into the food that animals eat, there are other things that are in a small percentage of so called pet food.

5.1.2. Vegan food is usually comparable to the best foods in the market

Things mentioned above about flea collars and other odd things are

not common but sometimes they do occur. Some expensive animal food does not go to a rendering plants. They just kill healthy animals for the food. Over the life of a companion animal that eats this expensive food, many healthy animals are killed. A vegan companion animal food does not have killed animals in the food so it eliminates the possibility of the above horror stories.

Another advantage of a vegan companion animal food is that it does not have to have “unfit for human consumption” on the label. Actually most, if not all, vegan dog and cat food can be eaten by humans. Wholesome “people food” is also good for dogs. Just as a good vegan diet is nutritious for humans, it is also nutritious for dogs and cats (if the food for cats have taurine added). A good vegan diet will save you a lot of doctor and hospital bills and the same diet will save you a lot of vet bills.

5.2. Kibble and dental disease

For years people have been hearing that kibble will prevent dental disease. It is true that most dogs over the age of three have dental disease. Even with eating kibble, dogs still have dental disease. If kibble was so great then our companion animals would not be having these problems.

Most of us do not want to brush our dog's teeth so we listen to others and purchase kibble. These claims are not backed up with scientific evidence. Most kibble is loaded with corn. This corn is not the kind that humans purchase and eat. It is feed corn. It can even be cheap feed corn remnants or corn meal dust. All these are cheap fillers in order to lower the cost and increase profits. In some cases it could even be corn that was rejected for human consumption. Plus, the government puts no upper level for pesticide contamination in “pet” food.

Most kibble is preserved artificially while canned food generally is

not. A lot of preservatives are required in order to keep the kibble from being spoiled so it can be left out all day. Studies have shown that kibble is linked to kidney and bladder problems in cats. Bloating is a deadly problem especially in large broad chested dogs plus it is dehydrating.

We are not saying that canned food is the way to go. Please see Section 5.1.1 on "The problems of industrial foods". Fresh is always best. Following fresh is frozen and then freeze dried or dehydrated.

5.3. Variety is key for best nutrition

Just as with humans, nutritionists recommend people and companion animals to eat a variety of foods. This will improve nutrition. You would never accept eating feed stock corn and rancid fats for every meal even if they mixed it with vitamins and minerals. That is the same with dogs. Yes, they may eat it but it is not that they like it. They just need to eat. They also need and want variety in their diet. If your companion dog has been on the same diet for a long period of time then here is something that you need to be aware of. It can cause gastrointestinal upset in the short run. If they have been deprived of a nutritional diet they could have a sick digestive system. It may take a short period of time to heal their digestive system but once it is healed they can eat different foods just as we can. Switching foods should be done gradually over several weeks in order for your dog's digestive system to heal.

Kibble is bad but rawhide chews and cooked bones might cause major health problems. They could even require emergency surgery. You probably already know that chocolate can kill a dog. But there are many other dangers, like raisins, grapes, onion, Xylitol (an artificial sweetener), and some other common foods. They can be toxic for dogs. Even wheat in their food and treats may cause allergies. Humans can eat chocolate and the other items but like dogs we can also develop allergies. Their digestive system is very similar to ours.

Do not be mislead with terms like "complete and balanced". It just means that the food reaches what someone says in the requirement for an average dog. The food may have gone through trials but that usually is only for a short period of time and only on a small number of dogs.

Another point about kibble and other foods for dogs and cats is because they are packed with corn which is fattening. That can cause your companion animal to become obese. Obesity, just as in humans, can cause diabetes. Spend a little extra and purchase a high quality vegan dog and cat food, stay away from kibble, cooked bones, and rawhide chews. Even better, feed them what you eat, making sure it does not contain those few foods that can cause them problems.

5.4. A word about veterinarians

Veterinarians are very much like medical doctors. They do not learn much about nutrition during their advanced studies. Most of what vets learn comes from the pet food industry, sales reps, seminars, and articles. Vets generally have not experimented with raw or homemade diets. They probably do not know good food from bad.

A lot of what they think that they do know comes from outdated information. Myths also get in the way. When vets profit from selling one brand to the exclusion of other brands, they do a disservice to their patients and their companion humans. It is also a conflict of interest. When they influence the choices of others just to make money for themselves and do not worry about how good the items are, it is unethical.

For this reason we must learn the differences between human and companion animals nutritional needs. They should not eat chocolate, grapes, raisins, onions, spicy foods, and a few other foods. If you eat something spicy then take a few moments and rinse off the rich spices and sauces before giving it to your companion. You should also be

careful with the carbs and avoid wheat and corn.

Dog food may legally contain meat from dead, dying, diseased, and disabled animals. It is a shame that more vets do not see that most so called "pet" foods are really unhealthy. Many medical doctors are discovering the medical benefits of a vegan diet. Now some vets are also discovering the medical benefits for companion animals eating a vegan diet. Of course cats must have taurine added to their vegan diet but with that additive they can also live a very healthy life.

6. Dog behaviours – how to help your dog feel safe

Are you the "alpha dog"? Dogs will accept you as the alpha dog or they will gladly take that position if you let them. Becoming the alpha dog does not mean that you have to mistreat them. Instead be firm but fair with them. Show them a lot of love.

If you do not want your companion dog to jump up on the couch then let him or her know that in a firm voice. Do not allow them to do what they want. Show them that you are in charge. When you want them to do something and they want to do something different, do not back down. Remember they are like children. They will try to push the limits.

You need to stand your ground. They need to be continually reminded who is the boss. The firmness does not mean that you should give up on the loving. Show them love and they will return it.

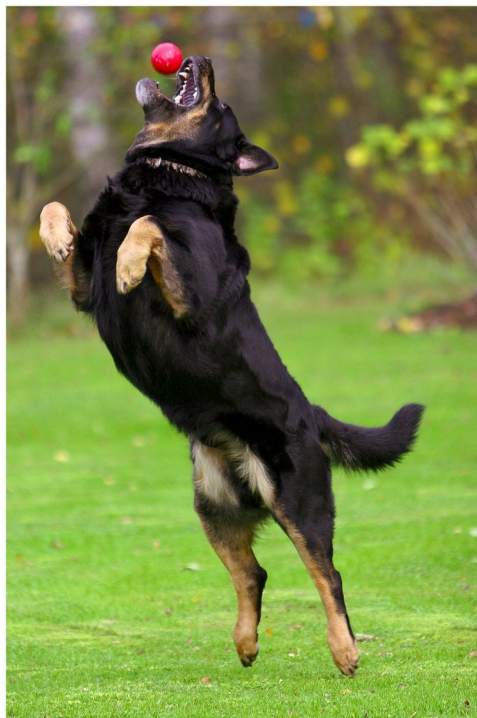


Figure 9: Photo by Kai Kuusik-Greenbaum.

6.1. The Alpha dog

Descending from the wolves, dogs are genetically prepared to live in

packs. They group together and work collaboratively to protect their territory, find food, and scare away potential predators. In the pack, there is always a dominant dog, ranking higher in the group hierarchy and acting as the leader of the group. He is called the alpha dog. The alpha dog is respected by the others. Sometimes other dogs, specially young males of the pack, may challenge its authority, aiming to take the alpha position and become the dominant dog of the group.

When living with humans, dogs generally recognize the companion humans as dominant. Otherwise they may also try to dominate the relationship taking the role of alpha dog. In the dog's eyes, one human in the household takes the role of the alpha dog and is the one who must be obeyed above all others. However, that does not mean your dog will never try to challenge the alpha position.

Dogs will accept you as the alpha dog as long as they recognize the rules and discipline in the group. Otherwise they will gladly take that position if you let them. Becoming the alpha dog does not mean that you have to mistreat them. Instead be firm but fair with them. Show them a lot of love, but also be firm about the limits and the rules of the house.

If you do not want your companion dog to jump up on the couch, then let him or her know that in a firm voice. Do not allow them to do what they want. Show them that you are in charge. When you want them to do something and they want to do something different, do not back down. Remember, they are like children learning their limits. They will try to push the limits. You need to stand your ground. They need to be continually reminded who is the boss. The firmness does not mean that you should give up on the loving. Show them love and they will return it.

6.2. Parties, noise and your companion dog

What can you do when your four-legged furry friend is frightened by thunder or fireworks?

Always leave someone home with your companion dog if possible but whatever you do, do not leave

your buddy outside alone. If he or she becomes



Figure 10 - Dogs often fear sounds that they do not really understand. When that happens, they need to be comforted to reduce their fear or anxiety.

frightened, they can run. When running they can be injured, hit by a car, lost, or stolen by a stranger. Many companion animals panic at the sound of thunder and fireworks. They can try to escape through any opening they find, such as an open door or window. Many show up many miles away from home, hungry, dehydrated, frightened, disoriented, and sometimes injured. Some will never be found.

Some dogs have an anxiety problem when left alone in the house. Again, as social beings they will miss the pack and anxiety is a natural reaction. There is not much that you can do except keeping them locked up in a carrier. Here is an interest fact that might help you. Dogs are den animals. In their natural environment they would dig holes for protection. Generally speaking they have no problem staying in a carrier. One of those igloo style pens is the best because they are dark inside. It is also best to keep the door open during the day, so your friend can go in and out and know that it is their special place.

Leaving your dog with something smelly, like a piece of clothing that you used the day before, may also help the dog feel like you are nearby and contribute to reduce anxiety.

Thunder and professional fireworks displays can be stressful and frightening for your hairy family member. Do not bring your companion along with you when you go to a firework display. Even normally calm dogs can get spooked and disoriented by the crowds, lights, and noise involved in a fireworks display. It will almost surely frighten him or her. Because of fear that could put him or her in a situation where they might bolt or become aggressive. If your buddy is shaking, looking for a place to hide, barking, howling, excessively drooling, or trying to escape, all those are signs of their fear.

If your friend has a noise phobia, the time to make a stress reduction plan is before the loud noise event occurs. Take your hairy family member out earlier in the day for some playtime or vigorous exercise to get them relaxed and tired out. Muffle the sound of thunder or fireworks with music or TV.

Fireworks can result in severe burns and other injuries in case of an accident. Unused fireworks contain potentially toxic substances like potassium nitrate and arsenic. Be sure to pick up all fireworks debris before letting your friend outside again unsupervised. Otherwise they may try to play with the debris and hurt themselves.

Many animals, like many children, show a fear of thunder and lighting. It is doubtful that you will ever completely be able to get them over it. This is another time that loving is needed. By cuddling with them at that time will relieve their anxiety. Oh, they will still be frightened but they will feel safe in your arms. You become their protector and the alpha dog.

Your companion dog needs to be identified if they are lost. It can be with a microchip. A modern ID collar or tag could also be used. In case your companion dog is lost during all the confusion of a thunderstorm or the noise of holidays like the fourth of July, they need to be identified. Ideally that identification would be with both a

microchip and collar with your contacts or a QR code that leads to contacting you.

In many outdoor summer events alcoholic beverages will be served. Beer, wine, and liquor can poison your companion dog. Alcoholic drinks must be kept out of the reach of your buddy. Depending on how much is ingested, your friend can become weak, depressed, intoxicated, and can even slip into a coma. Severe alcohol poisoning can result in death from respiratory failure.

Lighter fluid and matches must also be kept out of reach of your companion dog. Lighter fluid can, if ingested, cause stomach upset and central nervous system problems. Inhaling lighter fluid can result in breathing difficulties and even pneumonia. It can also irritate your friends skin. Some matches contain chlorate, which can damage blood cells, impair respiration, and cause kidney disease.

At a party keep barbecue foods out of reach of your buddy. Feed him or her their regular diet for the party and be especially careful that they do not eat potentially toxic people foods like chocolate, raisins, onions, coffee, grapes, and bread dough. A common cause of summertime pancreatitis, in dogs, is eating the contents of the grill grease trap so make sure to keep your companion dog away from the grill.

Keep oils, citronella candles, and insect coils out of reach of your friend. Ingesting any of them can cause stomach irritation and even damage to their central nervous system. Inhaling the oil can cause breathing difficulties and even pneumonia.

Natural stress solutions to consider before the fireworks begin includes diffusing calming essential oils, administering flower essences or calming herbs (l-theanine, rhodiola, 5-HTP, chamomile, holy basil, GABA, and ashwagandha), or giving your buddy a massage. With a little advance planning, you can prevent problems. It will be much easier for you and your family to relax if you are not worrying about your hairy family members health and safety.

7. Testimonies

Actual testimonies from the owners of dogs and cats



Luna, mostly vegan dog for more than 15 years

Luna was born on 19 June 2004. At the time of this writing, she is still alive. Luna's mother was a sweet dog. She was found in a trash bin when she was still a small puppy. Caring hands saved her and she lived several happy years on a small farm. She was not spayed and at some point she got pregnant. As a result, Luna was born. It was not clear who her father was but he was probably a small Portuguese Podengo. Luna is also a small dog 6 kilograms (13 pounds) with many traits of a Podengo. Luna was a small puppy, maybe the smallest of all her six brothers and sisters. At three months she was adopted by us and she has lived with us ever since. She has been fed mostly vegan pet food and sharing our own food. Her favorite food is boiled potatoes with olive oil. She is also crazy about chestnut. Most of the times we take food from our plates, being careful to take out onion, mushrooms or other ingredients that Luna must not eat or we know she does not like. We cook with very little salt, or no salt at all, so the amount of salt in the food is no problem. We also try to give Luna more of the most protein rich foods since we know Luna needs more protein than we do. The variety of those dishes was clearly appreciated by Luna and for several years, maybe about ten years, that was Luna's primary source of nutrition. Luna was always a happy dog. She would run in our yard, dig holes, bark very loudly at intruders and even hunt.

Podengos are a breed of small dogs that evolved and was selected to help hunters find rabbits. All of it seems to be in Luna's genes. Luna pursued all animals she could no matter how big or small. All our efforts to train her were pointless. We could not counter her genetics. So she would bravely scare off all intruders in our yard. A few mice, lizards, grasshoppers, moles, and even birds did not run away in time and perished at Luna's hands. In the best case we could scare the poor animals away before Luna reached them otherwise Luna would not control her hunting instincts. Even with her tummy full and aware of our objections she would proudly bring her prey to us. Then she quickly learned we did not like it and she would hide them from us. She ate quickly or buried them in the ground.

On the other hand, Luna was also a very sweet dog. After getting acquainted with us she would lay on her back and bark every time we stopped tickling her belly for



endless minutes. She would also lick our hands over and over with great pleasure. It was our choice not to spay her when she was young. That later proved to be a big mistake. Luna had a number of false pregnancies. When each of our three children were born, Luna would take great care with the children. Her breasts became full of milk as if she was minding her own puppies.

Podengos rarely live more than 15 years. Luna has already surpassed

that point. Luna being a mixed breed is even more unpredictable. Anyway, we just want to continue showing her support and affection for the rest of her life, in return for all the love she has also given to us all the years she has been with us.

8. Truth and myths about vegan companion animals.

Just as with humans, a vegan diet is the best diet in the world but a junk vegan diet is the worse. Also table scraps is not enough for you hairy friend. Of course they could survive on it except for cats which must have taurine added to their vegan food. Just because dogs can survive on table scraps does not mean that it is a healthy diet.



Figure 11: Photo by Miguel Lima.

Humans and dogs can eat the best diet in the world...a vegan diet. On the other hand we eat the worse diet in the world...a junk vegan diet. That may sound like a contradiction and it can be. If a human and dogs eat a junk vegan diet then it will ruin ones health faster than the "Standard American Diet (SAD)".

If one eats a well a well balanced vegan diet it can extend a persons life and during their lifetime, a far better life.

This same rule also applies to our companion dogs and cats. Table scraps can be good but often we give our friend the things that we do not want or things that are not good for them.

Cats can also survive on a vegan diet if taurine is added to the meals. Unless you raise them from kittens it may be hard to get them to transition to a vegan diet. Older cats will make the transition without a problem while others will not do it.

9. Dangers – how to protect your companion

Almost half of the dogs in the USA are obese. Many die of kidney, liver, heart disease, and cancer. None of us want our companion animals to suffer and we do not want to spend a lot of money on vet bills. A little education about dog and cat health as related to food can save you a lot of money and improve your companion animals health. This book



Figure 12: Photo by adam kurzok.

has given you the information that you need to know about your companion animals health and diet. Besides a good balanced vegan diet, companion animals, like humans, need love.

9.1. Safety under the sun and heat waves

Humans are not the only animal that gets sunburns. Cats will not spend time in direct sunlight in the hottest part of the day. Dogs on the other hand will stay in the sunlight unless their caretaker will do something to move them. Sunlight is especially dangerous for dogs that are hairless or have short coats, have pink or light colored noises, and dark colored coats. A fair number of dogs love to lay on their backs so even with a thick coat, their stomachs are hairless and they can burn

Only use sunscreens that have zinc oxide for protection from UVA and UVB rays. Other sunscreens may absorb ultraviolet light while zinc

oxide scatter and reflect these harmful waves away from the body. It is also a safe natural ingredient without all of the chemicals used in most sunscreens.

Just like with human children, reapply sunscreen about every two hours if your companion animal will be outside for any period of time. Do not forget the stomach and avoid the eyes. Do not forget the ears and face.

If your friend will be outdoors for any length of time then make sure he or she has a lot of clean cool drinking water. They also needs a nice shaded area to get out of the sun. Never forget that dogs and cats dehydrate much faster than humans in warm weather. Just as you would bring your companion animal indoors when it gets too cold, you have do the same when it gets too hot.

You can protect your partner from a sunburn by using a toxic free animal safe sunscreen. Yes, dogs and cats can get sunburned. There are sunscreens out there what will also moisturize and nourish the skin. Make sure that the sunscreen does not contain nanoparticles, mineral oil, parabens, artificial fragrances, and of course no chemical ingredients that are dangerous. One additional ingredient that should be avoided and that is non-comedogenic (will not irritate or clog pores).

As ethical vegans we want to make sure that it is not tested on animals or is involved in any form of animal cruelty. Zinc oxide is a safe ingredient for sunscreens that helps reflect and scatter both UVA and UVB rays. Some chemical sunscreens absorb ultraviolet light from your buddies body so stay away from them.

There is another solution to overheating if your companion animal likes to stay outdoors. Turn on a sprinkler and let your friend play in the spray. You could also fill a small wading pool with water. Lying in it will cool your buddy down.

Exercise your buddy in the early morning in the summer. Evenings are also okay. These are times when the temperature is coolest. Try to stay

in the shade during daylight hours but no matter the time of day do not exercise too much. Outdoor play sessions and exercise is great but too much of a good thing can be too much. Long periods of physical exertion in hot weather can cause heatstroke. Overcast day or in the winter still requires caution.

Allowing your dog or cat to stand, walk, or rest on hot outdoor surfaces like sidewalks or parking lots can do a lot of harm. Their paws, belly, and rear ends can easily burn from hot pavement or concrete. Walking on hot pavement can easily cause overheating.

It is surprising that anyone that loves their companion animals would leave them in a parked vehicle on a hot day. **NEVER LEAVE THEM IN A PARKED VEHICLE ON A HOT DAY.** Your vehicle can easily reach temperatures that can kill any living beings even with windows open. Even if the heat does not kill them, they can still be seriously sick.

On hot days we need to take a few extra precautions. Taking a few precautions can keep a dog safe and healthy. A vehicle can become a furnace very quickly. Even with the windows open it can cause a heatstroke which could lead to serious illness or death. Leaving a child or a dog unattended in a vehicle was made illegal in most states.

Many people do not realize just how quickly a dog can have a heat stroke. Dogs can not regulate their body temperature as efficiently as humans can. Most of their sweat glands are confined to the pads on their feet. Panting is the main way dogs cool down. Remember that dogs with flat faces can not pant as effectively as breeds with longer noses, so they have even less ability to regulate their body temperature.

Dogs can also become dehydrated very rapidly in warm weather so it is extremely important to make sure that a dog has a constant source of fresh clean drinking water. If a dog will be outside in the heat for any period of time they should also have access to a shaded area and plenty of cool drinking water. Be sure to bring dogs indoors when the temperature climbs over 90 degrees F (32 degrees C). We love seeing

dogs playing outdoors but it is our obligation to protect them.

Most dogs do not like being stuck indoors when you are outdoors. Let the dog outdoors and turn on a hose or sprinkler to cool them off. A childrens small plastic wading pool with water can also make a difference. It may take some convincing to get a dog to get into it. Generally once a dog gets into a pool in the summer it will be hard to keep them out of the pool from then on.

Just because a dog had a fur coat does not mean that they are protected from skin cancer. Dogs can get skin cancer just as humans can. Dogs with short coats, hairless, white coats, pink or light colored noses, and especially dogs that love to lay on their backs are the most susceptible to dangerous sunburns.

A non-toxic, dog-safe sunscreen can protect a dog from harmful rays from the sun. Find a product that contains no dangerous chemical ingredients like artificial fragrances, nanoparticles, parabens, or mineral oil. Of course it would be nice if it was not tested on animals and totally vegan.

Try products that contain only zinc oxide for active UVA and UVB ray protection. Unlike some chemical sunscreens that may absorb ultraviolet light, zinc oxide helps reflect and scatter both UVA and UVB rays away from the body. Zinc oxide is found naturally in the earth's crust and is a safe ingredient to help prevent excessive sun exposure.

When sunscreen is put on a dog, be sure to avoid the eyes but definitely cover the area around the dogs face and the ears. Do not forget the stomach if the dog likes to sunbath belly up. If the dog will be outside for an extended period, reapply the sunscreen every two hours.

9.2. Poisons, Pesticides and other risky situations

Take the same precautions with your companion animals that you would with your own children. Keep them away from pesticides,

herbicides, and fertilizers. The chemicals in them can be toxic to your buddy. You sure do not want them to die. Mouse and Rat bait will kill the rodents but it can also kill cats and dogs. So if you are going to use bait, be very careful where you place it. Even better is live traps and then take the mouse or rat to a vacant lot at least a mile away from your house.

Even when walking your dog make sure they do not eat anything toxic. Leave buildings that have toxic chemicals locked up or at least out of reach.

Some plants and flowers can kill your friend if they eat them. So be very careful planting them. When in doubt check with your vet, a local shelter, or even where you are going to purchase your seeds for flowers or plants. If for some reason they do eat them, call 888-426-4435 right away. DO NOT WAIT! It could easily be a matter of life or death.

Many commonly used pesticides, herbicides, rodent bait, and fertilizers are loaded with chemicals that are toxic to dogs. Never allow a dog access to areas where chemicals have been used. Store all chemicals out of reach of dogs. Since most dogs are very curious, take precautions when walking them.

If you are going to plant anything check with your local nursery as to which greenery, flowers, and plants will be toxic to a dog if swallowed. If a dog does eat any substance that is poisonous to them then call a veterinarian or an Animal Poison Center immediately. If you suspect a dog has swallowed a poisonous substance act on the side of precaution and make the call.

10. Do it yourself recipes

First: Cooked rice is easy to digest for dogs and humans. So these two recipes are especially adequate for dogs who are not feeling very well.



Figure 13: German sheppard.

Cook some rice in plain water as if it was for humans. Do not put salt or any seasonings, except maybe for a dash of olive oil in the mix. Olive oil will

help prevent the rice from sticking and it improves the taste. Let it cook and cool before serving it to your buddy. Put another dash of olive oil and mix. The olive oil is easy to digest and dogs usually love it.

You can add some protein by mixing some pea protein or broken peas into the rice up to 15 % of the weight of the rice.

You can also add to the rice a potato cut into small pieces, as that will improve taste.

Second: Some dogs love boiled potatoes. Peel potatoes and cut them in small size cubes. Potatoes cut in small pieces cook faster. Let them boil in just plain water. Drain the water and let them cool. Put a dash of olive oil and mix. Sprinkle a bit of kelp to improve taste and smell. Potatoes go well with olive oil and kelp powder.

It is not necessary to put any salt or other seasonings in the mix. A tiny

bit of hickory smoke over the potatoes will make them even more appealing.

Third: Cut up a carrot into small pieces and add it into rice and water. Cook in plain water as you would just plain rice. Add a dash of olive oil as you would normally do for yourself but without onion, garlic, salt, or herbs. When the rice is cooked, mix with about the same weight of cooked beans. Put a dash of olive oil, let cool and serve.

Those recipes are very easy to digest. They meals are not well balanced but they are adequate for recovering dogs.

11. Summary

In this book, you have seen that your companion animal can not only live on a well balanced vegan diet but also live a longer and healthier life. You discovered how "pet food" is made in most cases. You discovered some of the dangers that your companion animal will run into and how you can eliminate those dangers.

This book covered many topics that will help your friend.

You love your family and that includes your companion animal. You would not feed the garbage that the put in "pet food" to your spouse, you children, or even your friends. So why would you feed it to your four legged friend?

In this book, you have seen that your companion animal can not only live on a well balanced vegan diet but also will live a longer and healthier life. You discovered how, in most cases, "pet food" is made. You discovered some of the dangers that your companion animal will run into and how you can eliminate those dangers. This book covered many topics that will help your friend.

There are hazards that you may not realize that concerns your companion animal. Letting your companion animal stay out doors playing or laying in the sun can lead to heatstroke or overheating. Dogs and cats can not regulate their body temperature like humans can. Their sweat glands are in the pad of their feet. They can overheat very fast. Their way of cooling down is by panting. If your companion animal is flat-faced (brachycephalic) they can not pant as



Figure 14: Photo by jolanda funk.

effectively as breeds with longer noses.

Being vegan entails more than just a diet. It also means that you are concerned with the environment and animal welfare. What better way to care for animals then to make sure that we are not killing animals in order to feed our four legged members of our family. It might be one thing if your companion animal could not survive without eating other animals but as you saw, that is not the case. By feeding them a vegan diet it will save the lives of several other animals and allow your companion animal to live a longer and healthier life. That is what I call a win-win. Now the question is, are you going to be a part of the win-win?

The author's biography



David A. Weseloh, PhD

Dr. Weseloh was born on 24 May 1941 in San Diego, California. When World War II broke out, he moved with his parents to Lincoln, Kansas. His mother divorced and moved back to San Diego when he was nine. From the age of about six he started several small businesses. He started with selling sodas and sandwiches to construction workers. When he was twelve, he started a printing company with a very small printing press. He built his printing company up to a complete shop with a two ton press by the time he completed high school.

While still in high school, he joined the US Naval Reserve two days after his seventeenth birthday. He served in many countries including Japan, Korea, Thailand, Philippines, Vietnam, Hong Kong, other Asian countries, England, Canada, and Mexico. With a total of 22 years in the military (Navy and Air Force), he retired.

He has six degrees including a Bachelor of Science in Electrical Engineering (electronics), Psychology, Business Administration, Accounting with a minor in Psychology, a Masters of Business Administration (MBA), and a Ph.D. He received his Doctor of Philosophy in Human Behavior with emphasis on Managerial Leadership in 1981.

For many years he taught electronics, business, and accounting. In 1989 he moved to Midland, Texas where he got very involved with the rights of animals.

He helped develop VEGAN Info which later became VEGAN 2050. As part of that he helped develop VEGAN Mailing List. He wrote many articles for VEGAN 2050, which can be found at www.vegan2050.org. He also invested in Efeito Verde, a vegan distribution center.