

## Rebuttal of PFMA assertions

- The Pet Food Manufacturers' Association (PFMA), in a statement, said that commercially prepared pet foods offer a nutritionally complete and balanced diet that meet an animal's specific nutritional needs.

**Absurd:** In a similar vein to the immortal words of teenage prostitute Mandy Rice-Davies: 'They would say that wouldn't they'.

- Dogs are omnivores.

**False:** Dogs are carnivores. Their wild ancestors, wolves, and feral domestic dogs, dingoes, eat little plant material. Whole carcasses, minus the rumen/stomach/colon contents, constitute the bulk of their food.

- Cats are strictly carnivores.

**True:** Why then are commercial cat foods stuffed with cooked grains?

- Dogs are living longer, healthier lives.

**Marketing Hype:** where is the evidence to justify this widespread assertion? — in fact the evidence points to widespread ill-health and misery.

- Raw meat can contain dangerous bacteria and parasites. Just as we would not wish to eat raw meat or undercook meat for ourselves due to the risk of illness, dogs are vulnerable to the same risks.

**False:** Dogs are not vulnerable to the same risks. Dogs thrive on dead and decaying meat. Modern meat handling virtually eliminates parasite risks. Some bacterial issues arise, but pale into insignificance when compared with the bacterial damage arising from junk food fermenting in a carnivore's intestines.

- In addition, the BSAVA advises against feeding raw (or cooked) bones to dogs as splinters from bones can cause extensive internal injuries by lodging in the mouth, throat or chest, in addition to damaging stomach lining and puncturing intestines. These problems can be life threatening.

**True:** The British Small Animal Veterinary Association spreads half-baked, half-truths. The Australian Veterinary Association and major processed pet food makers, including Waltham, recommend the feeding of raw meaty bones that require plenty of chewing and thus reduce or eliminate any risks.

- Although the PFMA accepts dogs and cats evolved eating raw meat and bones in the wild, it said that through years of domestication, pet dogs do not have the immunity wild dogs have built up against bacteria.

**False:** Unsubstantiated nonsense.

- It is important to note, with regard to the risk of infection, that the probability of a wild carcass being infected with a food-borne pathogen is small, whereas the risk of cross-contamination of conventional un-cooked meat is higher.

**Scare mongering:** Raw meat, whether for human or animal consumption, should always be handled with care. Some pet food manufacturers recommend feeding raw meaty bones -- presumably meaty bones from farm-raised animals!

- According to the PFMA, commercial foods are subject to extensive study to ensure that they are complete diets which provide the correct amount of nutrients in the right balance.

**Fanciful nonsense:** Commercial food is neither 'correct' nor 'balanced' when compared with the natural standard.

- Raw meat and bone diets run a high risk of nutritional imbalance as eating only meat or the meat and bone of a carcass does not represent a balanced diet.

**Bogus comment:** Raw meaty bones and a few table scraps provide excellent nutrition.

- Feeding raw meat and bones does not necessarily lead to healthier teeth and gums because feeding bones can result in chipped or broken teeth, therefore preventing the dog from adequately chewing its food to aid digestion.

**Bogus comment:** Hard, large and cooked bones can break teeth. Raw meaty bones, the staple diet of carnivores, are essential teeth cleaning aids.

- Dogs fed natural diets have the same incidence of periodontal problems as pets fed commercial diets.

**False:** Dramatic evidence to the contrary abounds. The credibility of pet food company funded researchers who attempt to show the opposite is seriously questioned.

- Raw meat does not provide a gloss on the coat.

**False:** A glossy coat is often one of the first things an owner notices when switching pets from processed to raw food.

- There are no studies that confirm claims that veterinary bills decrease significantly in animals fed natural diets, nor is there evidence that raw meat and bones eliminate allergies or provide the animals with their daily calcium requirements, said the association.

**False or misleading:** Studies and other evidence abounds.

- There is no scientific data to support the claims or benefits attributed to feeding a raw food diet.

**False:** There is much data and overwhelming evidence supporting the claims for raw feeding.

- The majority of veterinary surgeons and veterinary associations would recommend feeding a commercially prepared, balanced diet.

**True:** That a majority of 'health care professionals' recommend the daily poisoning of the patients entrusted to their care is a major scandal of the modern age.