



SASKATCHEWAN  
**SPCA**

# factsheet



## PET FOOD LABELS

The *Consumer Packaging and Labelling Act* requires that pet food labels list the species for which the food is intended, the weight of food in the bag or can, and the manufacturer's contact information.

Additionally, it is generally accepted within the industry that labels will include the following: a guaranteed analysis containing minimum and maximum percentages of various ingredients, a list of ingredients in decreasing order by fresh weight, and a statement of nutritional adequacy.

**Ingredients** are listed in decreasing order by fresh weight. The list gives no information about the quality of the ingredients.

**AAFCO Statement** assures you that the food provides complete and balanced nutrition for the specified animal.

### PET NUTRITION FACTS

**Ingredients:** Chicken, chicken by-product meal, ground corn, rice flour, fish meal, chicken fat (preserved with mixed tocopherols and citric acid), ground grain sorghum, dried beet pulp, chicken digest, dried egg product, brewer's dried yeast, flax, dicalcium phosphate, calcium carbonate, DL-methionine, potassium chloride, mineral supplement, vitamin supplement

#### Guaranteed Analysis

Crude Protein .....	Min	21%
Crude Fat .....	Min	13%
Crude Fiber .....	Max	12%
Moisture .....	Max	11%
Ash .....	Max	5.5%

**AAFCO Statement:** Animal feeding tests using AAFCO procedures substantiate that Brand X dog food provides complete and balanced nutrition for the maintenance of adult dogs.

**Guaranteed Analysis** lists the minimum percentages of crude protein and crude fat and the maximum percentages of crude fiber and moisture. It's important to keep in mind that these are not exact values.

# Guaranteed Analysis

Pet food manufacturers are required to include minimum percentages of crude protein and crude fat and maximum percentages of moisture and crude fibre. It's important to keep in mind that these are not exact values and that one pet food claiming to have a minimum of 11% fat may have 11.5% fat, while another may have 13% fat. This will have implications for the caloric density and palatability of the food.

Guaranteed Analysis	
Crude Protein .....	Min 21%
Crude Fat .....	Min 13%
Crude Fibre .....	Max 12%
Moisture .....	Max 11%
Ash .....	Max 5.5%
Calcium .....	Min 0.5%
Phosphorus .....	Min 0.4%
Vitamin E .....	Min 400 IU/kg
Ascorbic Acid* (Vitamin C) .....	Min 75 mg/kg
*Not recognized as an essential nutrient by the AAFCO Dog Food Nutrient Profiles.	



## Ingredient List

**Ingredients:** Chicken, chicken by-product meal, ground corn, rice flour, fish meal, chicken fat (preserved with mixed tocopherols and citric acid), ground grain sorghum, dried beet pulp, chicken digest, dried egg product, brewer's dried yeast, flax, dicalcium phosphate, calcium carbonate, DL-methionine, potassium chloride, mineral supplement, vitamin supplement

The ingredient list contains the contents of the pet food in decreasing order by fresh weight. When an ingredient or combination of ingredients makes up 90% or greater of the food that ingredient can be used in the product name; e.g., Brand X Chicken Food for cats contains at least 90% chicken.

The ingredient list gives no information about the quality of the ingredients in terms of their digestibility, amino acid balance, etc.

Some pet foods have ingredient lists that vary from batch to batch, depending on ingredient availability and cost. These are referred to as **variable formula diets**.

Conversely, **fixed formula diets** use the same ingredients regardless of cost. Fixed formula diets generally cost more than variable formula diets but they offer the advantage of consistency between batches of food.

## Statement of Nutritional Adequacy



### AAFCO: Association of American Feed Control Officials

Pet foods that make a "complete and balanced" claim must either perform a feeding trial according to AAFCO procedures ("AAFCO feeding studies demonstrate..." or similar on the label) OR formulate the diet using AAFCO's nutrient profiles ("meets AAFCO's nutrient requirements..." or similar on the label).

**AAFCO Statement:** Animal feeding tests using AAFCO procedures substantiate that Brand X dog food provides complete and balanced nutrition for the maintenance of adult dogs.

## REMEMBER...

One cannot determine the true quality of a pet food by looking at the guaranteed analysis or the ingredient list. The nutrient content of two foods may vary widely despite similar guaranteed analyses. Similarly, the ingredient list does not provide information about the quality of the ingredients used in the food. It is possible for a high quality pet food to have an ingredient list that is very similar to a pet food of much lower quality.

Speak with your veterinarian for a recommendation on a quality pet food for your pet.

