

SOURCING INGREDIENTS SUSTAINABLY

PROTEIN SOURCES USED IN PET FOOD

Pet owners want to feed their pets in a way that respects the environment. When it comes to pet food ingredients, we are conscious of sourcing pet food ingredients responsibly and sustainably. Sustainable sourcing means ensuring to the best of our abilities that the ingredients we use positively impact the local community and ecosystems from which they are sourced.

SUSTAINABLE AND HEALTHY BY-PRODUCTS

Most ingredients in pet food are by-products from the human food chain. These are not just leftovers but high-quality, sustainable ingredients that people usually don't eat. Cats and dogs will happily and healthily eat organ meats or the less pretty trimmings. This also means that no animal is raised specifically for pet food and makes sure as much of the delicious and nutritious food that is already produced is consumed. Manufacturers commonly use beef, lamb, poultry, pork, fish, and game and select these based on nutrient profile and ingredient digestibility.

REDUCING THE IMPACT OF FOOD WASTE

By using these by-products in pet food, we are reducing the impact on food waste, the availability of commodities and minimising the environmental footprint of producing foods specifically for use in pet food. This benefits the farmer and helps reduce food cost inflation by providing an outlet for what would otherwise be costly to dispose of.

FISH AND SEAFOOD ARE PRECIOUS RESOURCES

Similarly, surplus fish products are parts of a fish that remain after the fish fillets are removed for the human food supply chain. In addition to being nutritionally beneficial, using fish by-products represents an environmentally and socially responsible practice, as all the protein sources of the fish are used while not competing with the human food supply. Overfishing is a key challenge facing all of us in the human and pet food sector. Replacing vulnerable species with more sustainable species or alternative proteins is another change many manufacturers continue to adopt and explore.

PLANT-BASED INGREDIENTS

Plant-based (grain and vegetable) by-products such as soy leftovers, broken rice, and beet pulp are also used in pet food. In recent years, additional plant protein ingredients have become increasingly viable options. These include pea protein, potato protein, and rice protein.

Changes in the pet food market mirror those in the human food industry, catering to vegan, vegetarian, and flexitarian consumers. The selection of plant-based ingredients will have an impact on the format, texture and appeal of the finished product and manufacturers consider this factor when selecting a plant protein or selection of plant proteins. As always, the key consideration is to ensure that a pet's diet is complete and meets their nutritional needs.

Pea Protein



Chlorella
Algae Protein



Chickpea
Protein



FURTHER INFORMATION ON SUSTAINABLE INGREDIENTS CAN BE FOUND AT WWW.UKPETFOOD.ORG



INCREASING DEMAND FOR ANIMAL-BASED PROTEIN

The human population is expected to grow to ten billion by 2050. Assuming consumption habits continue as they currently are, this is expected to increase global demand for animal-derived protein.

Pet food producers are now working to address the anticipated gap between available meat-based proteins for pet food and the projected demand. Research and development centred on new approaches is crucial to address the issue of sustainability and, as ever, there must be no compromise in nutritional quality to ensure pets receive a healthy and balanced diet.



ALTERNATIVE PROTEIN SOURCES

Insect protein is very much talked about, with a protein content between 40 and 75% depending on the species; some pet food brands now include an insect protein source. There is much research into protein-rich meat alternatives such as 'cultured' or 'in vitro meat,' soy-based tofu, or seitan from wheat gluten. Algae protein also has great potential.



House Crickets – *Acheta Domestica* a common insect used in animal feed

Ongoing research and innovation will provide alternative protein sources for human and pet foods. Our role in the pet food industry will be to transform these into palatable and nutritious pet foods.

LOW IMPACT ON FOOD WASTE

Currently, the industry has a low impact on food waste, with less than 1% of pet food thrown away by consumers compared to an average of 30% of all other food purchases.

FEED NO MORE THAN NEEDED

Obesity is a big issue for pets, and in most cases, this is caused by eating more calories than needed. By not feeding more than the recommended amount, you can have a happy and healthy pet and a more sustainable approach to feeding. Follow the feeding guidelines on the pet food packet, remembering that the amount you need to feed depends on a number of factors—age, size, level of activity, etc.

COMMITTED TO LOOKING AT SOLUTIONS TO MINIMISE ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

As the pet food industry, we are proud of the steps already taken to reduce waste in the food chain and minimise its overall impact on the environment.

As the squeeze on resources and food availability continues, we are committed to looking at further solutions to minimise the environmental impact and sustainable use of resources in pet food manufacturing.

Please check our website or simply scan the QR code opposite for a full list of UK Pet Food Factsheets and Posters

