



# Understanding Pet Food

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As consumers compare the infinite number of pet food products available, digest the promotional art and marketing language, evaluate the many ingredients and attempt to make sense of it all, is it any wonder that choosing the right pet food can seem complicated and confusing?

AAFCO is here to provide pet owners with practical, real-world information for answering questions about pet food. It's important for us to point out that AAFCO and its members, as feed control officials, are not practicing veterinarians. AAFCO does not provide veterinary medical advice or recommendations of any type.

If a pet is sick, pet owners should immediately seek veterinary care and advice for sick pets before doing anything else.

## AAFCO's Role in Pet Food Regulation

Throughout this section, there are numerous references to the AAFCO Model Pet Food Regulations or other AAFCO Models. Many states base their own feed laws, regulations and policies on the AAFCO Model Bill and Model Regulations. Pet food laws and regulations are enforced by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA), and both state and federal jurisdictions help regulate pet food.

*AAFCO does not regulate, test, approve or certify pet food. It establishes model language that states and other governing bodies may adopt into law.*

Learn More About Who is Responsible



Regulators' Role



## AAFCO's Role



## Understanding Pet Food

To say that pets are important companions to humans may well underestimate the nature and value of human relationships with dogs and cats. If a pet gets sick and dies, it may feel like a family member has been lost. Uncommon, but well-publicized, events have occurred when a pet food was to blame for a pet's illness or death, or when a pet owner may have become ill handling contaminated pet food or treats.

Aside from these rare events, feeding the wrong product to an animal can have minor to devastating effects on our pets. The best defense consumers have is understanding what they are feeding animals in the first place, how to handle pet food products safely and how to use them correctly in feeding companion animals.

## Selecting the Right Pet Food



## Frequently Asked Questions

