

Feeding Guide for Adult Dogs

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This chapter is representing **the goal for your feeding**. This is *not* where you start when you start feeding your dog a natural diet. It is brought here because it is important that you know what you are aiming at when you either start a puppy (see the ["Feeding Guide for Puppies"](#)) or convert an adult dog that has been fed kibble till now (see ["Converting to Natural Feeding"](#)).

Starting a dog directly on a natural diet if it has been addicted to an artificial diet for a long time *can* be dangerous. It is like starting an athlete on a full-scale Marathon after 6 months in a hospital...

You should also be very much aware that, if you have fed your dog in the past at regular and predictable times, you have instilled a conditional reflex in its body that will make *any* diet change problematic. Please check the article ["Why feeding your dog a consistent diet 'on time' is a bad idea..."](#) for more about this.

Defining the goal for the feeding plan

Let's face it: few people can manage to feed their dog *completely* naturally. And I would not recommend it, even if you could. Once in a while, yes: give the dog a whole animal, like a chicken or a rabbit. But wolves in nature will not eat whole animals only - they will also eat vegetables of various kind - when they have no prey available, that is: *when they are stressed and very hungry*.

We do not need to let our dogs experience the stress a wolf is exposed to for survival. There is a balance between that extreme and letting the pet food manufacturers decide for us.

I know that this balance has to

- ◆ make sense; and
- ◆ be easy to use.

If not, you won't do it! And you shouldn't. The chances of your doing something wrong are far too great if you have no understanding of your dog's needs. It would not be responsible to try.

We have already discussed in some detail what a wolf would eat. You have a reasonable understanding of what it will be: some whole prey animals, killed by the pack - including meat, guts, bones, and skin. On top of that come the partially digested vegetables in the stomach and intestines of that prey animal. In addition, the wolf will eat fruit and vegetables of all kinds as it can find them - if it is hungry.

We need to make a shopping list out of that - instead of trying to make you a scientist.

The bad news is that many people who "go natural" do so without understanding what they are doing - and the health results for their dogs are miserable.

The good news is that it does not have to be a science. The simply formula I will present to you is so simple to both remember and to use that anyone can do it, once you understand the background.

**Excerpt from Mogens Eliassen's book:
"Raw Food For Dogs - the Ultimate Guide for Dog Owners"**

The even better news is that this has been tested by thousands and thousands of dogs whose owners all report great results, compared to kibble feeding. This is in sharp contrast to the claims you can find almost everywhere from veterinarians and pet food manufacturers, even "holistic" veterinarians! The thing is, though, that if Toyota makes a public report about performance of certain cars, including some of their own, then you pretty much know who comes out the winner of that test, don't you? Well, the test results don't have to be wrong. But they are most definitely "selected carefully".

The same thing goes with dog food. Every single article or post I have seen about "proof" of a raw natural diet being less healthy than a kibble diet suffers from at least one of the following:

- ◆ It is unsubstantiated with independent data to back up the claim.
- ◆ It is flawed in its own use of data - if not outright drawing mathematically incorrect conclusions.
- ◆ It is deliberately deceiving by attacking a "raw meat diet" for not being balanced, assuming that "a raw natural diet" is the same as "a raw meat diet"!

Although opinions can be important, and everybody has a right to have one, then I also have the right to disregard the opinions of people who have a financial interest in making a sale, based on their claim, when their claim cannot be supported by honest data.

Unfortunately, it is easy to manipulate the public by using "scientific data". As I already explained when discussing labelling, it is just too easy to make "scientific data" appear in a way that leads to lay-people making incorrect conclusions.

And, of course, a diet consisting exclusively of raw meat will not be balanced. But that is not what we talk about here. We talk about

A fully balanced natural raw diet that comes as close as we practically can come to what a wolf would naturally feed on for optimal health.

So, I want to use an **idealised natural meal plan for the wolf** as a **standard reference**. And I want to **adjust it** for some of the hardships and risks it provides for the wolf, so your dog can obtain as many of the

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benefits as possible from this plan, without necessarily also suffering from the down-sides.

Yes, I want you to do better for your dog that Mother nature does for the wolf, by using her own principles as near as you can, balancing responsible care for your beloved pal with a fundamental respect for its nature.

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The ingredients of a full meal

(Partially omitted in this excerpt)

Raw meat, organs, or green tripe

(Omitted in this excerpt)

Vegetables for carnivores

(Omitted in this excerpt)

Bones = skeleton pieces of former live animals

If you can get bones with meat on, you kill two birds with one bone. Chicken wings are great examples. But larger bones do have additional advantage as chewing toys and entertainment, so make sure that your dog gets at least one big bone per week. "Big" means "so big that the dog cannot eat it all on that same day." The biggest value is the joints and the marrow (which is an excellent fat source!)

Cooked bones have very little value, except for entertainment. You should never serve cooked bones of poultry, lamb, goat, or pork - those bones become very brittle and sharp when cooked and can be outright dangerous for the dog, unless they are so big that the dog cannot swallow them.

When you cook for your family, keep in mind that you need the bones for your dog. Cut those bones out of the food before you cook it.

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Sometimes, this gives you a great advantage, as the case was for my personal experience with turkey: Once I tried to cut the bones out before the turkey went into the oven, I realized that I could cook the white meat for a shorter time than the dark meat - with some significantly improved taste effect! (The dark meat simply need longer cooking than the white meat does, so when you cook the entire bird in one piece, you cannot cook all the meat "just right"...)

If you want to create some treats for your dog from your own chicken dinner, you can bite off the thick cartilage-rich ends of the chicken bones. As long as you stay away from the center part that can splinter, the dog is safe.

Please note also that "bones" means "skeleton pieces of former live animals". Anything else carrying the name "bone" by virtue of its *shape* is generally *not* to be served - chances are it is either made of grain (which adult dogs should hardly ever have), or of chemically treated hides or synthetics (which nobody should eat). I feel silly about mentioning this, but I have met too many people who truly perceived all kinds of bone-shaped cookies as being "bones"...

Fat - not grease or lard

Fat generally comes easily when you get "low quality" meat (human standard). You may not need any extra fat then, other than what is in the bone marrow.

Another very important fat source is chicken skin. Pork feet are also great.

It is tempting to use cooked fat from your own cooking. In many households, melted fat is a profound "left-over" from human meals. Bacon fat is a classic... However, that kind of fat is just as bad for a dog as it is for you, so don't feed it to your dog! (Please check the article "[Why fat in the diet isn't 'bad' when you are a dog...](#)" for more details about this.)

(To be continued)