

# Feeding Philosophy

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## Contents of this chapter:

<a href="#">The overall perspective</a>	10
<a href="#">What feeding would be like in Nature...</a>	12
<a href="#">Some identified problems...</a>	14
<a href="#">Meat sources</a>	14
<a href="#">Vegetable sources</a>	15
<a href="#">Grain products</a>	15
<a href="#">Raw or cooked?</a>	16
<a href="#">Additives - some good ones and bad ones</a>	17
<a href="#">Making sure the dog gets enough of everything it needs</a>	18

## The overall perspective

The domestication process of our dogs has changed their exterior quite dramatically, but their gastrointestinal system is still like that of their forefather, the wolf. Recent genetic studies even lead to the conclusion that wolf and dog are one and the same species!

The wolf is a carnivore; therefore, the dog is a carnivore. Carnivores prefer to eat **raw meat as their primary source of nutrition**. They do not thrive without it, and they certainly do not cook it! Most carnivores do eat vegetables too, such as fruit, berries, vegetables, crops etc., as a supplement to their diet, yet their primary source of vegetables is the contents of the stomachs of their prey. Although wolves/dogs can survive for some time on a purely vegetarian diet (if that is all they have access to), they do not maintain their body functions and their health very well without some serious contribution of raw meat. It is scientifically well documented that raw meat contains at least of 30 known proteins that are as essential for dogs as vitamins are for humans (and that's only what has been discovered so far), yet all those proteins get destroyed when heated. None of them have been found in any vegetarian food source. (These proteins are called "missing links" in **Ed Dorosz: "[Let's Cook for Our Dog](#)"** )

Regardless of the efforts and the funding, all human scientific research will only give limited information. No scientist can provide answers to questions

that have not been asked. Through analysis, we can only find what we look for. We cannot find what we don't know exists - except in very rare situations when new discoveries are made. Such discoveries are very expensive to pursue and the work involved goes far beyond standard analysis.

The consequence of this is that no human will know exactly what your dog needs, in terms of nutrition. Any dog food manufacturer who claims that "this food contains EVERYTHING your dog needs" is going beyond honesty. There is no way of knowing that for any non-divine human being.

**This leaves us with only one relevant guide for what to feed and what not: what Mother Nature would feed a wolf in the wild.** Getting as close as practically possible to that standard is the only responsible way of approaching the task of feeding your dog a healthy diet. Fortunately, quite a lot is known about this, so we do have a strong basis for making good decisions.

One note of caution: Many people like to believe that because dogs have been domesticated for such a long time now (probably about 10-20,000 years), they have become adjusted to the kind of food we feed them. Here are some strong reasons for classifying this an outrageous postulate that simply cannot be right:

- ◆ It is only in the last few hundred years the domestication has been serious and deliberately manipulative. Before then, it was more a "co-habitant" relationship with no systematic attempts from man's side to change the dog's nature.
- ◆ Nobody has so far been able to demonstrate the existence of any difference in the enzyme chemistry of a wolf's stomach and a dog's stomach. Hence, there is no support for assuming any biological differences between the two. To the contrary, there is a lot of evidence for the fact of the genetic diversification among dogs being greater than the difference between any breed of dog and the wolf.
- ◆ Man himself has tried to adapt to a life style as hunter for at least 150,000 years - ten times longer than the man-dog relationship has been serious. We still cannot digest raw meat very well...
- ◆ Modern dog food has existed less than 50 years. Before that, dogs were generally fed a diet that came fairly close to a natural diet. That is about 25 generations of dogs (at the most, assuming that most bitches are being bred when they are only two years old). Genetic changes like

those suggested to the complex chemistry of the digestion process have never been documented for any species in such a short time span.

- ◆ Mother Nature spent some 15,000,000 years developing the wolf from its ancestors. It is about 10 times as long time as she has spent so far developing man... It deserves some respect.

Unfortunately, the wolf has gained a reputation as something bad. The truth is that the wolf has been man's economic *competitor*, not his enemy. We have killed wolves in big scale, to the point of extinction in more than 90% of its natural habitat, simply because farmers replaced its natural prey animals with domestic animals and insisted on slaughtering their animals for *human* consumption, not for substitute wolf food.

Wolves are not vicious or bloodthirsty. They are just natural carnivores that have developed into a very successful species - and got its success dramatically infringed by man's greed. When it comes right down to it, man has demonstrated extreme superiority to the wolf in the areas of viciousness, bloodthirstiness, and use of evil force to kill and damage, for no other purpose than obtaining *control* - a purpose that never was on the wolf's agenda.

[Back to start of this section](#)

[Back to start of this chapter](#)

[Back to Table of Contents](#)

## **What feeding would be like in Nature...**

The wolf's main kill will generally be a herbivore, very rarely another carnivore. I have slaughtered sheep that approximately contained

- 15% bone (including hooves and skull)
- 20% fat
- 10% skin and ligaments
- 35% muscle meat
- 15% organs, including lungs and throat
- 5% contents of stomach and intestines.

You will find something similar for other possible prey animals, like rabbits, mice, deer, etc., although probably less fat on a wild animal...

The first portion of the herbivore to be eaten is the intestinal tract, including the stomach and its contents. A herbivore's stomach is designed to process vegetables. The contents of a herbivore's stomach will mainly consist of

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

pre-digested plant fiber and grain material. A dog's stomach is designed to process **raw** meat and organs as its primary raw material. It is actually not very good at digesting vegetables, yet the dog does depend quite heavily on also getting vegetable nutrition. By getting the vegetables from a herbivore stomach, the wolf also ingests those enzymes in the herbivore stomach that were meant for digesting the food for the herbivore. These enzymes constitute a very important supplement for the wolf's capability of digesting vegetables effectively.

When the wolf has eaten the guts of its prey, it will turn to the muscle meat next, maybe several days later. The muscle meat will constitute the largest part of the diet, by weight or volume. Although it might be unfit for human consumption at the time of being ingested, wolves/dogs have no problem dealing with those natural bacteria that perish the meat. The natural level of pH in their stomach is so low that all such micro-organisms get killed. In a human stomach with its pH level far closer to neutral, they would cause disease.

During the feeding on the muscle meat, the wolf will also eat a significant amount of bone, particularly smaller bones and joints with cartilage.

Finally, when all meat is gone, the wolf will have the bigger bones for dessert. Maybe it will dig the bones down for later times - or it might simply leave the carcass, possibly to return to it later.

Again, this will make the perishing processes continue, but that doesn't matter for the value of the food, as long as the bacteria involved are all natural. (You should know that when many processed *human grade* foods are left to perish, they decompose under *anaerobic* conditions, giving growth to anaerobic bacteria that are dangerous, for both and for your dog. The anaerobic conditions are created by the preservation chemicals and taste enhancers that are added to the meat in order to make it look fresher than it is.... Meat that does *not* turn gray on the surface when exposed to air *has* been treated with such chemicals!)

All that will be left of the prey will be teeth, hooves, antlers, and some fur. Maybe some of the bigger bones, like the skull, the pelvis, and the shoulder blades.

*(To be continued...)*