



PET FOOD INGREDIENT ANALYZER

How To Use The Pet Food Ingredient Analyzer

1. Click on an ingredient in the index below
2. Instantly know whether the ingredient is healthy, questionable or dangerous
3. Check the score of your dog's food.

A

NO YELLOW OR RED INGREDIENTS

B

LESS THAN 0-5 YELLOW INGREDIENTS

C

5-10 YELLOW OR 0-3 RED INGREDIENTS

D

**MORE THAN 10 YELLOW OR MORE
THAN 3-5 RED INGREDIENTS**

F

**MORE THAN 5 RED OR MORE
THAN 10 YELLOW INGREDIENTS**

INGREDIENT INDEX

ALFALFA

ANIMAL FAT

ANIMAL MEAL

ARGININE

ASCORBIC ACID

AUTOLYZED YEAST

BARLEY

BEEF

BEEF

BEEF BY-PRODUCT

BEEF FAT

BEEF FLAVOR

BEEF MEAL

BEEF TALLOW

BEETS

BEET ROOT

BETA-CAROTENE

BHA

BHT

BIOTIN

BISON

BISON

BLOOD MEAL

BLUE #1

BLUE #2

BONE MEAL

BROWN RICE

BREWERS RICE

BY-PRODUCT MEAL

CALCIUM
CASEINATE

CALCIUM
PROPIONATE

CANE MOLASSES

CANOLA OIL

CARRAGEENAN

CELLULOSE

CEREAL FINES

CHICKEN

CHICKEN

CHICKEN
BY-PRODUCT

CHICKEN FAT

CHICKEN
FLAVOR

CHICKEN LIVER
FLAVOR

CHICORY

CHLORIDE
(ANY INGREDIENT
THAT ENDS IN
CHLORIDE)

CHOLINE
BITARTRATE

CHOLINE
CHLORIDE

CITRIC ACID

COBALT
CARBONATE

COBALT AMINO
ACID CHELATE

COLORS

COPPER

COPPER AMINO
ACID CHELATE

CORN

CORN

CORN GLUTEN MEAL

COTTONSEED

COTTONSEED HULLS

COTTONSEED OIL

CYSTEINE

D-ALPHA-TOCOPHEROL

DICALCIUM
PHOSPHATE

DIGEST

DISODIUM
GUANYLATE

DISODIUM
INOSINATE

DL-ALPHA
TOCOPHEROL

DYES

DUCK

DUCK

EGGS

EGG FLAVOR

ELK

ETHOXYQUIN

FERROUS SULPHATE

FISH BY-PRODUCTS

FISH MEAL

FISH MEAL

FISH OIL

FOLIC ACID

FREE GLUTAMATE

FRUCTO-
OLIGOSACCHARIDES

GARLIC

GARLIC EXTRACT

GARLIC FLAVOR

GARLIC OIL

GARLIC POWDER

GELATIN

GLUTAMIC ACID

GOAT

GOAT
BY-PRODUCT

HEART

HERRING OIL

HYDROLYZED

YEAST

HYDROLYZED
YEAST NUTRIENTS

HYDROLYZED
(ANYTHING WITH THE
NAME HYDROLYZED)

IRON

ISOLATE, ANY
(IE, SOY ISOLATE)

KANGAROO

KIDNEY

LAMB

LAMB

LAMB MEAL

L-CARNITINE

LIVER

LIVER

LIVER FLAVOR

L-LYSINE

LUNG

MACKEREL

MAGNESIUM

MANGANESE

MEAT

MEAT BY-PRODUCT

MEAT MEAL

MEAT MEAL

MENADIONE
SODIUM BISULFATE

MENHADEN FISH

MENHADEN FISH

METHIONINE

MILLET

MONOPOTASSIUM
GLUTAMATE

NATURAL FLAVOR

NIACIN

NICOTINIC ACID

OATS

OAT GROATS

OAT HULLS

OSTRICH

PANTOTHENIC ACID

PEAS

PEAS

PEA FLOUR

PEA PRODUCTS

PEA PROTEIN
CONCENTRATE

PEA STARCH

PEANUT HULLS

PHEASANT

PORK

PORK FAT

POTASSIUM

POTASSIUM IODIDE

POTATOES

POTATO PRODUCTS

POULTRY MEAL

POWDERED MILK

**PROPYLENE
GLYCOL**

PROTEIN
(ANY PROTEIN)

PROTEINATE
(ANY INGREDIENT
THAT ENDS IN
PROTEINATE)

**PYRIDOXINE
HYDROCHLORIDE**

QUAIL

QUINOA

RABBIT

RABBIT

RED #3

RED #40

RETINYL ACETATE

RETINYL PALMITATE

RIBOFLAVIN

RICE

RICE HULLS

SALMON OIL

SALMON

SALMON

SALMON MEAL

SARDINES

**SHEEP
BY-PRODUCTS**

SMELT

SODIUM

SODIUM BISULFATE

SODIUM CASEINATE

**SODIUM
HEXAMETAPHOSPHATE**

SORBIC ACID

SORGHUM

SOY
(ANY PRODUCT
WITH SOY)

SOY PROTEIN

SOYBEAN

SOYBEAN GERM

SOYBEAN HULLS

SOYBEAN MEAL

SPLEEN

SULFATE
(ANY INGREDIENT
THAT ENDS IN
SULFATE)

SULPHUR

SUNFLOWER OIL

SUGAR

SWEET POTATO

TALLOW

TAPIOCA

TAURINE

TBHQ

TETRA SODIUM
PYROPHOSPHATE

TEXTURED
PROTEIN

THIAMINE
HYDROCHLORIDE

THIAMINE
MONOHYDRATE

THIAMINE
MONONITRATE

TITANIUM DIOXIDE

TRICALCIUM
PHOSPHATE

TROUT

TURKEY

TURKEY

TURKEY
BY-PRODUCT

TURKEY MEAL

VEGETABLE OIL

VENISON

VITAMIN A

VITAMIN B1

VITAMIN B12

VITAMIN B2

VITAMIN B3

VITAMIN B5

VITAMIN B6

VITAMIN B7

VITAMIN B9

VITAMIN C

VITAMIN D

VITAMIN D3

VITAMIN E

VITAMIN K3

WHITEFISH

WHITEFISH

WHEAT

WHEAT GLUTEN

WHITE RICE

YEAST EXTRACTS

YEAST FOOD

YELLOW #5

YELLOW #6

ZINC

HEALTHY INGREDIENTS



BEEF
DUCK
GOAT
OSTRICH
RABBIT
SMELT
VENISON
KANGAROO

BISON
EGGS
LAMB
PHEASANT
SALMON
TROUT
MENHADEN FISH
QUAIL

CHICKEN
ELK
MACKEREL
PORK
SARDINES
TURKEY
WHITEFISH

Dogs are carnivores and have different nutritional requirements than we omnivorous humans do. Our teeth, digestive tracts and enzyme activity are quite different and this means our diets should be different. Dogs should eat diets that mainly come from animal sources.

HEART

KIDNEY

LIVER

SPLEEN

LUNG

Organs are nature's multivitamin! They're packed with important vitamins and minerals. Foods with a good helping of organ meat don't need to be fortified with synthetic vitamins and minerals. Naturally occurring vitamins and minerals are more bioavailable and less likely to reach toxic levels than their synthetic counterparts.

FRUITS

Most fresh fruits are a great addition to your dog's food and contain a healthy helping of vitamins. But look where the fruits are located on the ingredient panel - if they come after salt, then there's less than 1% in the bag and not enough to provide any benefit to your dog.

VEGETABLES

Most fresh vegetables are a great addition to your dog's food and contain a healthy helping of vitamins. But look where the vegetables are located on the ingredient panel - if they come after salt, then there's less than 1% in the bag and not enough to provide any benefit to your dog. But you'll want to avoid starchy vegetables such as peas, potatoes, sweet potatoes and corn.

QUESTIONABLE INGREDIENTS



BEEF

DUCK

RABBIT

MENHADEN FISH

BISON

LAMB

SALMON

CHICKEN

WHITEFISH

TURKEY

Whole chicken, beef or other animals can be a high quality ingredient, but this comes with a caution. The ingredients on a pet food label are listed by weight, from most to least. Most meats have a moisture content of about 78% when added to the pet food - but after the food is processed and dried, the meat will have moisture of less than 10 percent. So the chicken or beef loses 68% of its weight. Low quality pet foods can have chicken as the first ingredient, but still contain very low amounts of high quality animal protein.

LIVER

If the type of animal the liver came from isn't listed, it means the quality is low and the manufacturer is free to frequently change protein sources, making these foods a disaster for any dog with allergies.

**TURKEY
BY-PRODUCT**

**SHEEP
BY-PRODUCT**

GOAT BY-PRODUCT

**BEEF
BY-PRODUCT**

**MEAT
BY-PRODUCT**

**FISH
BY-PRODUCT**

**CHICKEN
BY-PRODUCT**

By-products can be good or bad - it really depends on how they're produced. AAFCO defines meat by-products as "The non-rendered, clean parts, other than meat, derived from slaughtered mammals. It includes, but is not limited to, lungs, spleen, kidneys, brain, livers, blood, bone, partially de-fatted low temperature fatty tissue, and stomachs and intestines freed of their contents. It does not include hair, horns, teeth and hoofs." Additionally, if the meat is labelled chicken by-product, then it must come from chickens. If it's called beef by-product meal, it must come from beef.

The organs are packed with vitamins and minerals and are the most nutrient-dense source of protein. So if the manufacturer uses organs for their by-products, then they're a good thing. But if they're from fatty tissue or intestines, then by-products will be a low-quality source of protein. Unfortunately, AAFCO doesn't require pet food manufacturers to disclose the source of by-products, so you'll need to trust the manufacturer. But if the generic by-product is used (meat by-product) then this is a very low quality ingredient.

**SOY PROTEIN
CONCENTRATE**

PEAS

**CHICKPEA
FLOUR**

BEETS

**DEHYDRATED
CARROTS**

These ingredients all contain high amounts of sugar. Dogs love the taste of sugar, so they prefer foods high in sugar, even though they are less healthy and cause insulin spikes. When their owners see them eager to eat a new food, they think it's healthier for them when it's really just higher in sugar. But sugary foods sell because dogs appear to love them.

BEEF MEAL MEAT MEAL

FISH MEAL SALMON MEAL

LAMB MEAL TURKEY MEAL

Unlike meats and by-products, meals are rendered. It's critical to know and trust the company using meals. While some rendering plants have high standards, others have deplorable standards and will offer products containing cellophane wrapping, roadkill and euthanized livestock and zoo animals. Even if a pet food manufacturer wants to put the highest quality ingredients in their food, they're at the mercy of the rendering plant they buy their meals from.

Meat Meal is defined by AAFCO as "The rendered product from mammal tissues, excluding any added blood, hair, hoof, horn, hide trimmings, manure, stomach and rumen contents, except in such amounts as may occur unavoidably." Like meats and by-products, if the source of the meal is named, like beef meal, then it must be derived from beef. Meat meal can be from any mammal, not just cattle, pigs, sheep or goats, without further description. Poultry meal has the same definition as poultry, which is no feathers, heads, feet and entrails, but like meat meals, it's in rendered form with the water and fat removed.

By definition, generic meals can contain road kill, dead zoo animals and dead and diseased livestock. Euthanized animals can also make an appearance in rendering plants, and there is an allowable level of barbiturates allowed in rendered meats. It's much safer to look for specific meat meals such as beef meal or turkey by-product meal to avoid low quality, potentially harmful ingredients. While the heat used in rendering will kill any pathogens, it won't necessarily reduce the amount of antibiotics and drugs that would be found in meats. The rendering industry also admits that meat wrappers can be mixed in with raw materials, as discarded grocery store meats will go to rendering.

Of course, generic meals are of very questionable origin and they're often an inconsistent mixture of several protein sources. This gives the manufacturer more flexibility in their ingredients without having to get a new label approved by AAFCO. But because they can use any meat in their products, generic meals are a poor choice for animals with allergies or intolerances.

BARLEY

MILLET

POTATOES

SORGHUM

WHEAT

BROWN RICE

OATS

QUINOA

SWEET POTATO

CORN

PEAS

RICE

WHITE RICE

Carbohydrates are the least expensive source of nutrition in pet foods. When kibble became popular, the need for ingredients such as corn, rice, potatoes and other starchy carbohydrates became important not just to keep costs down, but because starch is needed to manufacture kibble. Higher quality foods will choose other sources of starch, such as whole grain oats, rice and barley as opposed to corn, wheat and soy, but dogs and cats have no dietary need for these ingredients and they're put in the food not because they're necessary, but because they're cheap. But as consumers continue to demand low cost pet foods, carbohydrates will continue to be used in pet foods and will continue to cause metabolic disease in the animals eating them.

In nature, the highest carbohydrate content of unprocessed foods is found in fruit, which averages 6% to 8%. Compare that to the 30% to 60% found in dry dog and cat foods. When dogs eat carbohydrates, insulin is released to move the resulting blood sugar into the cells and to convert glucose into fat and store it in the body. So foods high in carbohydrates can cause obesity in pets. Carbohydrates are also the preferred food source of many pathogenic bacteria in the gut, causing an imbalance in the intestinal flora and the immune system. This is why many dogs with allergies and joint pain see rapid relief when their owners stop feeding them kibble or foods with large amounts of carbohydrate.

EGGS

AAFCO defines egg product as "... obtained from egg graders, egg breakers and/or hatchery operations. This product shall be free of shells and/or other non-egg materials, except in such amounts which might occur unavoidably in good processing practices." Eggs can be added to foods to boost the amino acid content, so can commonly be found in foods with low levels of animal protein. Egg product can be a disaster for dogs that have allergies as the source isn't listed.

**BIFIDOBACTERIUM
LACTIS**

**BIFIDOBACTERIUM
ANIMALIS**

**LACTOBACILLUS
ACIDOPHILUS**

**BIFIDOBACTERIUM
LONGUM**

**BIFIDOBACTERIUM
BIFIDUM**

**ENTEROCOCCUS
FAECIUM**

**LACTOBACILLUS
CASEI**

**LACTOBACILLUS
RHAMNOSUS**

**LACTOBACILLUS
BULGARICUS**

BACILLUS COAGULANS

Probiotics are a great way to promote good gut health and help dogs maintain overall gastrointestinal health but, when added to pet food during processing, the extreme temperatures kill off the beneficial bacteria leaving them ineffective and giving pet owners the false sense of security that their dogs are getting live probiotics in their food.

CHICORY

BEET ROOT

FRUCTO-OLIGOSACCHARIDES

Prebiotics are added to the diet to feed beneficial bacteria in the gut. The problem with prebiotics is that they will also feed unhealthy bacteria. So any dog with leaky gut, allergies, yeast or digestive upset will likely not benefit from added prebiotics - in fact, they can often worsen their health issues because they only increase the imbalance in the gut bacteria that causes these common issues.

GARLIC **GARLIC POWDER**

GARLIC OIL **GARLIC FLAVOR**

GARLIC EXTRACT

Whole raw garlic and garlic oil have antioxidant and antibiotic properties and can be good for dogs, but there's probably not enough in pet food for any real health benefit. Also, these ingredients often come from China and quality may be suspect.

GUAR GUM

XANTHAN GUM

These are used as thickening agents in canned foods. They're not the highest quality thickeners and can cause changes in blood glucose and GI issues, but they're safer than carrageenan, which is another thickener.

BEEF FAT

CHICKEN FAT

PORK FAT

Fats are skimmed from meats when they're rendered at high temperatures then added back into the food. Fats can oxidize and chicken fat is much more likely to oxidize and turn rancid than beef or pork fat. Because these are products of the rendering industry, they're mid to low quality ingredients, depending on the quality of the rendering plant.

DANGEROUS INGREDIENTS



BY-PRODUCT MEAL

Animal by-product meals are defined by AAFCO as the “rendered product from animal tissues, exclusive of added hair, hoof, horn, hide trimmings, manure, stomach and rumen contents, except in such amounts as may occur unavoidably in good processing practices.”

Poultry by-product meal is defined as the “rendered carcasses of slaughtered poultry, such as necks, feet, undeveloped eggs and intestines, exclusive of feathers, except in such amounts as might occur unavoidably in good processing practices.” If the label states turkey by-product meal, the meal must be from turkey.

By definition, generic meals and by-product meals can contain road kill, dead zoo animals and dead and diseased livestock. Euthanized animals can also make an appearance in rendering plants, and there is an allowable level of barbiturates allowed in rendered meats. While the heat used in rendering will kill any pathogens, it won’t necessarily reduce the amount of antibiotics and drugs that would be found in meats. The rendering industry also admits that meat wrappers can be mixed in with raw materials, as discarded grocery store meats will go to rendering.

Of course, these meals are of very questionable origin and they’re often an inconsistent mixture of several protein sources. While AAFCO definitions state the source of the protein for meals, they don’t specify the freshness of the sources or how they were handled. So any meat not for human consumption, such as spoiled or rancid meats that might sit in the hot sun at the farm or rendering plant, would also be allowed in by-product meals.

ANIMAL MEAL

RICH HULLS

MEAT MEAL

POULTRY MEAL

BLOOD MEAL

BONE MEAL

MEAT

Meat is defined by AAFCO as the clean flesh derived from slaughtered mammals and is limited to muscle meat, the tongue, diaphragm, heart or esophagus, with or without accompanying fat, skin, sinew, nerve and blood vessels that would normally accompany the flesh. If the meat is labeled beef, then it must be beef. If it's labeled chicken, it must be chicken. If the generic term meat is used, then it must come from a mammal like goat or venison and can't be from poultry or fish.

You want to see the type of animal named on a pet food label. If you see generic meat or poultry used, it means the quality of the meat is probably low and the manufacturer is free to frequently change protein sources, making these foods a disaster for any dog with allergies.

FISH MEAL

Fish meal is a rendered product. The quality of the meal really depends on the freshness of the fish used, but the oil is extracted with hexane first and the resulting waste is cooked down and used for fish meal. The main issue with fish meal is that it needs to be stabilized because its fatty acids easily oxidize. This is often done with controversial synthetic antioxidants such as ethoxyquin or BHT (which have been linked to cancer and other health issues). Some fish meals are stabilized with vitamin E but most contain the more dangerous synthetic antioxidants.

TAPIOCA

Tapioca is used in some "grain-free" foods as a starch substitute. It's a source of carbohydrates and has no nutritional value.

CORN GLUTEN MEAL

The presence of corn gluten meal is usually an indication that the corn is being used to boost the protein content in a food that's lacking in animal protein sources. Most corn is also genetically modified and GMO foods have been linked to cancer and other health issues.

SOYBEAN MEAL

SOYBEAN GERM

Soybean meal has a biologic value of less than half that of chicken meal but with 48% protein content, it's frequently used to boost the protein content of foods that don't contain enough animal protein. Most soy is also genetically modified and can damage the intestinal flora.

ANY PRODUCT WITH SOY

Soy contains phytoestrogens called isoflavones. A phytoestrogen is an estrogen-like compound found in members of the legume family, in grains, and in some vegetables and fruits. Phytoestrogens mimic or interfere with estrogen production in the body by binding to estrogen receptors. This could lead to delayed puberty and infertility - and endocrine disruptors have also been linked to autoimmune diseases and developmental problems. While nearly all foods contain some amount of phytoestrogens, the levels found in soy are extremely high - and dogs are especially susceptible to soy-based food sensitivities.

TETRA SODIUM PYROPHOSPHATE

Used as a thickening agent in pet foods, this chemical compound is also added to remove calcium deposits on teeth. Tetrasodium pyrophosphate is sometimes used in household detergents. Any phosphate compound will be high in fluoride, which can ironically cause teeth decay as well as bone loss and bone cancer.

PEA PRODUCTS

PEA STARCH

PEA FLOUR

PEA PROTEIN CONCENTRATE

These products have become popular in pet foods, especially in grain-free foods. They have a similar protein level to soybean meal, so their presence on the label can also indicate low levels of animal protein in the food.

FISH OIL

SALMON OIL

HERRING OIL

Fats and oils are susceptible to oxidation, and fish oils are the least stable of the fats. When fat particles oxidize, they break down into smaller compounds such as malondialdehyde, which can damage proteins, DNA and other cellular structures. Good packaging may keep the fish oil intact, but once the bag is opened, the fat will oxidize (or turn rancid). And every time the bag is opened, the fats become more and more rancid. Fish oil is added because consumers want it, but it's too unstable to be in processed pet foods! If you want your dog to have fish oil, add it to the food but don't buy a food that contains it or you'll be feeding your dog rancid fats.

ANIMAL FAT

AAFCO defines animal fat as "obtained from the tissues of mammals and/or poultry in the commercial process of rendering."

Like meats and meat meals, the quality of the fats can be somewhat determined by the animal source. So while generic animal fat can come from any species and from questionable sources, fish oil, beef fat, chicken fat and similar fats are a better assurance of quality.

VEGETABLE OIL

Look for olive oil or flax seed oil on the label and stay away from vegetable oil - this is often restaurant oil recycled from deep fryers!

**RETINYL
PALMITATE**

**SODIUM
BISULFATE**

**THIAMINE
HYDROCHLORIDE**

**CHOLINE
BITARTRATE**

**MENADIONE
SODIUM BISULFATE**

BIOTIN

BETA-CAROTENE

VITAMIN B9

VITAMIN B2

VITAMIN B1

VITAMIN B5

VITAMIN B3

**RETINYL
ACETATE**

**THIAMINE
MONOHYDRATE**

**DL-ALPHA
TOCOPHEROL**

**PYRIDOXINE
HYDROCHLORIDE**

**SORBIC
ACID**

NIACIN

RIBOFLAVIN

VITAMIN C

VITAMIN D

VITAMIN E

VITAMIN B6

NICOTINIC ACID

**D-ALPHA-
TOCOPHEROL**

**THIAMINE
MONONITRATE**

**PANTOTHENIC
ACID**

**ASCORBIC
ACID**

**CHOLINE
CHLORIDE**

FOLIC ACID

VITAMIN B7

VITAMIN B12

VITAMIN D3

VITAMIN A

VITAMIN K3

These are synthetic vitamins that are added to processed foods because either the ingredients are low quality or the processing caused a significant loss of naturally occurring vitamins. Most vitamins are manufactured in China and India, where food safety is questionable. Most vitamins are manufactured from waste products such as restaurant grease. There are also many research studies showing that synthetic vitamins don't work in the body the same way naturally occurring vitamins do, and toxicity is more likely to occur.

SULFATE	CHLORIDE	PROTEINATE	MANGANESE
FERROUS SULPHATE	DICALCIUM PHOSPHATE	TRICALCIUM PHOSPHATE	SODIUM SELENITE
MAGNESIUM	POTASSIUM	SODIUM	ZINC
COPPER	IODINE	SULPHUR	IRON
COBALT CARBONATE	COBALT AMINO ACID CHELATE	COPPER AMINO ACID CHELATE	POTASSIUM IODIDE

These are minerals that were added to processed foods because either the ingredients are low quality or the processing caused a significant loss of naturally occurring minerals.

ARGININE	L-CARNITINE	L-LYSINE	TAURINE
METHIONINE	CYSTEINE		

These are amino acids, which are the building blocks of proteins. While animal proteins contain a good array of amino acids, plant-based proteins will be lacking in many of them. So pet foods with added amino acids are likely to have low quality animal proteins or rely on plant proteins for their nutrition.

COTTONSEED	SOYBEAN	SUNFLOWER OIL
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These oils are most likely to harbor mycotoxin, which is a toxic mold.

**NATURAL
FLAVOR**

**CHICKEN
FLAVOR**

**LIVER
FLAVOR**

PROTEIN

CITRIC ACID

**HYDROLYZED
YEAST**

**YEAST
FOOD**

**DISODIUM
INOSINATE**

**FREE
GLUTAMATE**

**POWDERED
MILK**

GELATIN

**ARTIFICIAL
FLAVOR**

**CHICKEN LIVER
FLAVOR**

**TEXTURED
PROTEIN**

PEA PROTEIN

GLUTAMATE

**YEAST
EXTRACTS**

**SODIUM
CASEINATE**

**DISODIUM
GUANYLATE**

**MONOPOTASSIUM
GLUTAMATE**

**AUTOLYZED
YEAST**

**BEEF
FLAVOR**

**EGG
FLAVOR**

**SOY
PROTEIN**

CARRAGEENAN

HYDROLYZED

**HYDROLYZED
YEAST NUTRIENTS**

**CALCIUM
CASEINATE**

**GLUTAMIC
ACID**

**SOY
ISOLATE**

ISOLATE

These foods often contain MSG (monosodium glutamate), which is an excitotoxin and can damage or kill brain cells and lead to liver inflammation, obesity and diabetes. Disodium inosinate and disodium guanylate are flavor enhancers that are effective only in the presence of MSG.

CARRAGEENAN

Extracted from red algae, carrageenan is a thickener found in canned foods. Although it sounds natural, it's controversial as a thickener and has been linked to cancer and GI inflammation.

ETHOXYQUIN

BHA

BHT

TBHQ

Most higher quality foods no longer use these synthetic preservatives. Ethoxyquin is a pesticide and its use as a preservative in pet foods is controversial. Ethoxyquin is not approved as a direct food additive for humans. BHA and BHT are both artificial preservatives. Both BHA and BHT have been linked to cancer in lab animals. The EU classifies BHA as an endocrine disruptor. BHT has also been shown to cause developmental defects and thyroid changes, suggesting it too might be an endocrine disruptor.

TBHQ is derived from butane. Dogs are thought to be more sensitive to TBHQ than humans and studies suggest there's a wide margin of safety between a toxic dose and a safe one. Toxicity studies haven't lasted longer than a month, so its safety is still questionable. High doses of TBHQ in lab animals show pre-cancerous changes in their stomachs and even DNA damage.

PROPYLENE GLYCOL

Is a key component of antifreeze. It's used to preserve the moisture content in many moist foods. The FDA has banned its use in cat food because it can cause Heinz body anemia but it can be added to dog food. Its safety has only been shown in small, infrequent doses. No safety studies have been done on dogs eating regular amounts for months or years. This ingredient has been implicated in many pet deaths.

CORN

COTTONSEED OIL

SOY

CANOLA OIL

ALFALFA

BEETS

These foods are almost all genetically modified. GMO foods have been shown to cause liver and kidney damage, changes in the intestinal flora, endocrine disruption, allergies, digestive disorders and cancer.

TALLOW

BEEF TALLOW

Tallow is an inexpensive source of fat for the pet food industry used to make low-quality food more enticing for dogs and cats and is a by-product of the rendering industry. Tallow that doesn't identify the animal source can cause havoc in pets with allergies.

BEETS

MOLASSES

GLUCOSE

**MALT
EXTRACT**

CARAMEL

CORN

GLYCERIN

**CANE
MOLASSES**

CARROTS

SYRUP

PEAS

SUGAR

CANE

FRUCTOSE

SORBITOL

Sweetener is added to make processed foods more enticing to eat. It's also addictive, making it difficult to get your pet to eat healthier food and the glycemic load can cause insulin spikes and an imbalance in the gut bacteria, leading to allergies, joint pain, decreased immune function and other common health issues.

DIGEST

Digest is protein that's been either chemically or enzymatically hydrolyzed. It normally comes as a liquid but can be powdered. Pet food companies use digest as a palatant and spray it onto kibble or mix it in. It can also boost the protein content of a food. AAFCO defines digest as "material which results from chemical and/or enzymatic hydrolysis of clean and un-decomposed animal tissue." If the source isn't specified and is just called Animal Digest or Poultry Digest, then the animals used can be from any source.

SODIUM HEXAMETAPHOSPHATE

Commonly found in dental care foods and products, this chemical is a known human skin irritant and an inhalation irritant and is dangerous to consume in high doses.

COLORS

DYES

BLUE #1

BLUE #2

RED #40

RED #3

YELLOW #5

YELLOW #6

TITANIUM DIOXIDE

These are all controversial dyes that have been shown to cause behavior and other disorders in children. Since they add no nutritional value to the food and are only put in the food to make it more attractive to humans, they should be avoided.

WHEAT GLUTEN

Is used to boost the protein content of foods that don't contain enough animal protein.

**PEANUT
HULLS**

**SOYBEAN
HULLS**

CELLULOSE

**OAT
HULLS**

**COTTONSEED
HULLS**

**POTATO
PRODUCTS**

**OAT
GROATS**

**BREWERS
RICE**

**RICE
HULLS**

**CEREAL
FINES**

These forms of carbohydrate are all made from waste from the human food industry and are usually what's swept off the floor after the more nutritious parts of the plant have been used for human foods.

CALCIUM PROPIONATE

Calcium Propionate is a chemical preservative that's added to bread products to prevent mold growth. It has the potential to permanently damage the stomach lining by exacerbating gastritis and inducing severe ulcers; it's also a potential carcinogen.

INGREDIENT INDEX