

PET FOOD INDUSTRY TRENDS

Nicole Paley, communications manager for the Pet Food Manufacturers' Association looks at recent changes within the sector

The value of the pet food market is steadily growing and currently stands at £2.6 b. Higher value pet foods are increasing in sales and continue to be the strongest area of growth. For example, the value of the dog treat market is up 7 percent and cat treat market up 17 percent. These figures speak volumes!

HUMANISATION

Pets are undeniably close to our hearts with 12m UK households owning a pet and treating them as one of the family. Indeed, while 16 percent admitted cutting back on their own food shopping for financial reasons, only 4 percent had changed their pet food shopping habits..

Humanisation is the biggest and most impactful trend in the pet food industry and the majority of pet parents refer to their dog or cat in terms traditionally reserved for children. In the same way that

the toddler food aisle is growing with a colourful variety of pureed fruits and vegetables, the pet food aisle is expanding to meet the need for a wider range of tailored products.

PREMIUM PRODUCTS FOCUSING ON WELLNESS

In the same way that humans are looking for healthier options, pets are increasingly being treated to premium products with a focus on wellness (added vitamins and antioxidants for example). These products appear in all life stage and life style categories from kitten, puppy and senior through to working, active and indoor.

MARKETING AND PACKAGING

Almost as important as the pet food content is the way it is marketed and packaged. Manufacturers are sure to continue investing in innovating their packaging with designs to

ensure their products stand out as 'premium,' 'organic' or 'natural'.

An excellent example of innovating to meet consumer needs was the recent announcement that a bird food brand had been designed and packaged to fit through the letterbox, giving those out at work no excuse not to feed the birds.

OBESITY

We know that 70 percent of consumers and 85 percent of veterinary professionals agree that a commercially prepared diet provides optimum nutrition when fed correctly. However, many are over-indulging their pets. 73 percent of vets believe obesity is getting worse and 85 percent of vets think more education is needed on feeding correctly. Accordingly to the annual PDSA research, treating with human food scraps continues to be a source of unconsidered calories.

With increasing waistlines, education is critical to stress the importance of a nutritionally

balanced diet. It's critical that owners log their pet's food intake and adapt portions accordingly. Keeping a pet at the correct weight can add years to their lives so it's worth it!

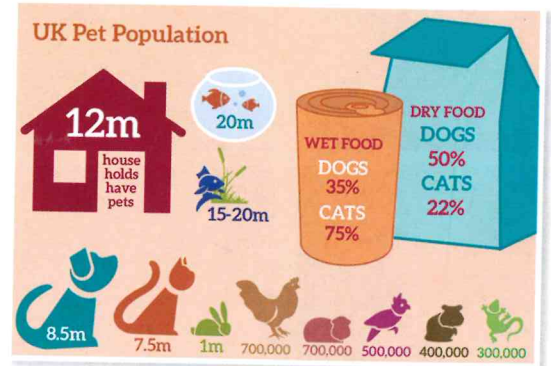
EDUCATION

Pet food manufacturers, the veterinary profession and many other sectors of the pet industry are working together to educate the public on pet food nutrition and how to keep your pet fit and healthy.

At pfma.org.uk, we have an excellent 'Toolkit' section, which contains lots of educational tools for the industry to use in training or to pass onto customers. Our popular Pet Size-O-Meters are available for dogs, cats, birds, rabbits and guinea pigs. We also have newly updated weight logs and food diaries – critical if a pet has a problem with its size and weight.

We are also producing monthly fact sheets on subjects such as labelling, additives. Plus we have produced a short two

minute animation on the pet food manufacturing process – clearing up any queries you or your clients may have. 🐾



Pet Food Market Data



80% of the raw materials used in pet food come from the UK

Food Diary

Name of pet: _____ Pet species: _____ Breed: _____ Neutered (y/n): _____
 Age: _____ Starting Weight: _____ Starting Pet Size-O-Meter (PSOM) score: _____ Target PSOM score: _____

This food diary will help you keep a record of what your pet is eating - you may be surprised at the end of the week just how many treats have been given!

Everyone in your household needs to fill in this chart in and it's important to note what amounts have been given too. In doing this you will be able to see where problem areas may lay and, when used in conjunction with our weight and body condition log, will help you make changes to your pet's lifestyle and diet to ensure they reach a good body condition.

	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
Food							
Food Measured?							
All Treats							