

PROMOTING GOOD NUTRITION HABITS FOR FAMILIES AND PROFESSIONALS

The number of ways the millions of UK pet owners can learn about the importance of a healthy, rounded diet for their companions and small animals

It has been a busy start to the year for PFMA with the launch of the results from our 2019 pet population survey and the unveiling of the second year of the PFMA Pet Food Vision which throws the spotlight on pet food nutrition - our raison d'être.

PFMA members are responsible for feeding the nation's 50 million plus pets and this is a role we take very seriously. With research suggesting that 50% of the nation's pets are overweight or obese, promoting healthy feeding and weight management continues to be essential.

Cats and dogs are owned by more UK households than any other pets. Our latest estimates are that there are around 7.5 million cats and nine million dogs in the UK.

In purely numerical terms, more fish are kept than any other pet and there are approximately 2.7 million indoor tanks and 1.3 million ponds in the UK.

There are around two million small animals kept as pets including rabbits, guinea pigs, hamsters, gerbils, rats and more.

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Retailers, alongside other pet care professionals, play an important role helping owners choose a diet that suits the needs of their pets and providing them with advice on how to keep them fit and healthy.

At PFMA, we work with many pet nutrition experts who have helped us create numerous useful posters, tools and resources to support the healthy weight management of pets. They are written by professionals for professionals - to be shared with pet owners.

HEALTHY WEIGHT HUB

A new addition to the PFMA website is the 'Healthy Weight Hub'. This dedicated section of our website contains all the Pet Size O-Meters, obesity posters, weight management logs and food diaries.

Here you will also be able to access the relevant health related media articles and calorie calculators. These tools are great for in-store training, sharing with customers or even just pointing owners in the right direction.

Please visit www.pfma.org.uk/weight-hub and if you have any thoughts and feedback on what information you would like to have in this hub, please let us know.

NUTRITION FACTS AND FACTSHEETS

Our highly respected series of factsheets cover a wide range of pet food and nutrition topics from Labelling and Additives to Homemade diets and Raw Feeding continues to expand. Latest additions look at vegan diets and allergies in pets: www.pfma.org.uk/fact-sheets

SOURCING GOOD QUALITY INFORMATION ON PET FOOD NUTRITION

The internet is a brilliant tool helping people access a wealth of information around the clock at the push of a button. However, with the benefits also come downsides and sometimes even dangers.



Pet nutrition is a popular topic and there are thousands of websites and forums promoting certain feeding regimes or rating and ranking pet food products. But how can we be sure the information we're given is credible, factual and of good quality? When it comes to making informed decisions on the best diet for our pets, we want to make sure we are using the best sources to reach our verdict.

PET FOOD RATING SITES

The World Small Animal Veterinary Association (WSAVA) advise us to watch out for rating sites as most sites rank foods on opinion or a set criteria which do not accurately assess the quality of the food. They encourage owners to check that the site uses objective criteria such as science, quality control etc rather than price, size of company etc. Whilst these sites can be popular with owners as they perceive them to be independent, this is not always the case and it's useful to look in to the background a bit more.

USEFUL SOURCES OF ACCURATE, GOOD QUALITY INFORMATION ON THE INTERNET:

Professional veterinary bodies

- The British Veterinary Association: www.bva.co.uk
- The British Small Animal Veterinary Association: www.bsava.co.uk
- World Small Animal Veterinary Association: www.wsava.org

Pet food industry

- The European Pet Food Federation: www.fediaf.org. FEDIAF produces the Nutritional Guidelines for Cats and Dogs – these detail the nutritional needs of cats and dogs at varying life-stages. They are peer reviewed by independent veterinary experts throughout Europe
- PFMA: www.pfma.org.uk
- A full list of PFMA members is available at www.pfma.org.uk/about

