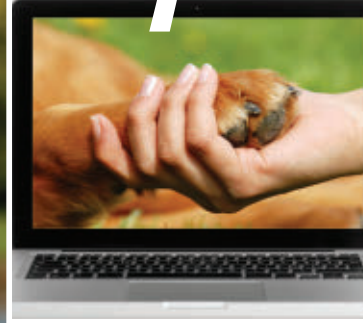


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coat health

PRODUCTION
UPDATE:
What's new
in dry food
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ROBBIE DAWG NAILS THE DETAILS

Lisa Fortunato of Robbie Dawg, p. 26.

Digital version at www.petfoodindustry-digital.com

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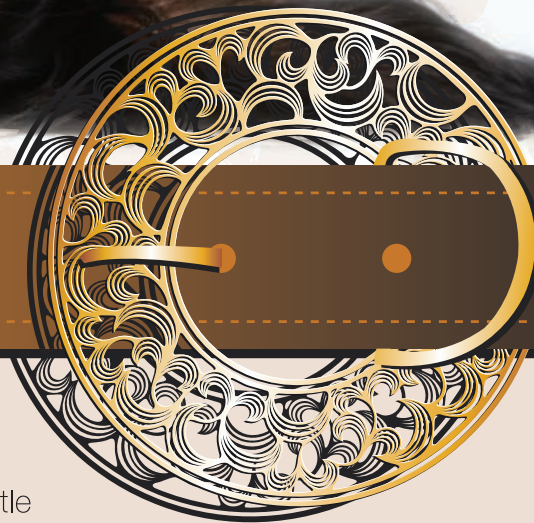


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On the cover: Lisa Fortunato
of Robbie Dawg with Delilah.
Photo by Images Photography.

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Video: The details on Robbie Dawg

Watch Lisa Fortunato and John Hickey explain what makes their company so unique in our new video at www.petfoodindustry.com/RobbieDawgvideo.aspx.

Research: Skin and coat supplements

Brush up on your skin and coat care knowledge at www.petfoodindustry.com/FosterSmithFAQ.aspx.

Article: New extrusion research

Explore the science behind extrusion technologies in "Applying polymer science to extrusion and drying of petfoods" by engineers from Wenger at www.petfoodindustry.com/ExtrusionResearch.aspx.



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PetfoodConnection.com Ranking petfood

<http://www.petfood-connection.com/profiles/blogs/how-does-your-pet-food-rank>



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Something to Chew On

Debbie Phillips-Donaldson

Find more

For more insights on the petfood market, see www.petfoodindustry.com/marketinformation.aspx.

Presaging consumer behavior for 2011



Market research firms look into their crystal balls and identify consumer trends that might have important implications for our industry.

FOR BETTER OR worse, I'm not one to make New Year's resolutions, and I find most lists predicting what will happen in the coming year to be fairly trite and, well, predictable. (Sorry, bad pun.)

But I do pay attention to ones from market research firms like Packaged Facts and Mintel, because I think they identify consumer trends that have implications for our industry. Packaged Facts (www.packagedfacts.com) especially has information pertinent to petfood (see p. 52)—though heading into the new year, the outlook is not altogether positive.

Mintel (www.mintel.com) tends to offer consumer insights at a broader but no less helpful level. It released several forecasts for 2011; one on consumer packaged goods trends might spur a few ideas for petfood manufacturers, marketers and suppliers:

1. Quiet reduction—well-known ingredients experiencing “covert” decreases in formulations for human food products, as opposed to becoming key labeling issues that are overtly communicated or claimed. Mintel mentions sodium, sugar and high fructose corn sugar. Are there parallels among petfood ingredients?

2. Redefining natural—this perhaps has the most relevance to petfood, which has been seeing growth in “natural” claims that rivals the surge in claims for human food products. “Terms that are vague or not well understood will come under fire, and we are due to see an intervention of regulatory bodies,” Mintel says. “Also, expect to see a new focus on accentuating the positives of what is in a product, rather than emphasizing what is not in it.”

For an example of possible regulatory intervention, in early October the US Federal Trade Commission released proposed revisions to its

Green Guides, which give guidance for making environmental marketing claims. Though the proposals involve tweaks rather than outright changes, they are more specific as to what marketers can (and cannot) do. (See www.ftc.gov/opa/reporter/greengds.shtm.)

3. Professionalization of the amateur—the prevalence of products that help consumers get near-professional results with the convenience and lower expense of doing it themselves at home. Among human products, an example is “salon-style” hair treatments; in petfood, it could be the kits that allow pet owners to create “home-made” meals for their pets that ensure complete and balanced nutrition. (See www.petfoodindustry-digital.com/petfoodindustry/200809/#pg58.)

4. Sustainability stays focused on the basics—such as reduced packaging. Mintel isn't predicting sustainability will become any less important to consumers, but the emphasis will be on “new twists” to existing elements (e.g., boxless cereal bars) rather than any truly new developments. The exception, Mintel says, could be in water consumption and conservation.

5. Blurring categories—innovation taking place via more “hybrid forms” of products (think of all the new types of sparkling beverages, Mintel says) as well as new ways that consumers use products (e.g., beverages consumed as snacks and snacks as meals). How does this play out in petfood?

6. New retro—more big brands returning to old products and ad campaigns, including old formulations, packaging designs and marketing with a retro feel. Mintel sees nostalgia overall as an escalating trend.

“Understanding the major trend areas and how they change from year to year is essential for companies to be successful when developing and launching new products,” says Lynn Dornblaser, director of innovation and insight for Mintel. What's next for your company? ■

Debbie Phillips-Donaldson is editor-in-chief of *Petfood Industry* magazine. Email her at dphillips@wattnet.net.

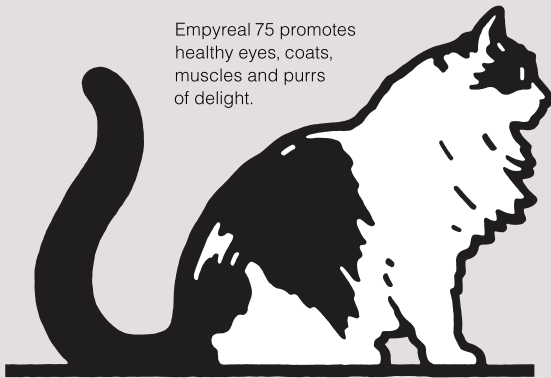


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Industry News

Learn more

The latest news and updates are always on www.PetfoodIndustry.com.

Quick hits

- Glenroy Inc. launched a new website, www.glenroy.com.
- Startup Petflow has raised US\$5 million to start selling petfood online.
- Bravo! has closed on a distribution deal with Monarch Pet Products LLC.
- WellPet appointed Thano Chaltas as chief marketing officer.
- Mocon Inc. received a Governor's International Trade Award from the Minnesota, USA, Trade Office.
- Erich Erber, chairman of the executive boards of Erber Holding and Biomin, was honored with an "Ernst & Young Entrepreneur of the Year" award.
- Stella & Chewy's hired Mike Valentine as director of operations for the company.
- Allegiance Capital announced that BHC Interim Funding III LP has completed a US\$3 million investment in Chenango Valley Pet Foods Inc., an Allegiance Capital client.

PetfoodForum 2011

Speakers announced for Petfood Forum 2011

A full listing of updated speakers and topics for Petfood Forum 2011 is available at www.petfoodindustry.com/PFF2011.aspx. Speakers are still being confirmed, so please bookmark the page for updates, along with www.petfoodindustry.com/PetfoodWorkshop2011.aspx as speakers and topics for Petfood Workshop: Safety First are announced.

Some highlights for Petfood Forum, scheduled for April 11-13, 2011, at the Renaissance Schaumburg, Chicago, IL, USA, are:

- Keynote speaker Timothy Hunt, DVM, who has worked the Iditarod as a veterinarian and has mushed in the race;
- Don Shandera, PhD, of Cargill offering an ingredient manufacturer's perspective on sustainability in grain-based ingredients;
- Greg Aldrich, PhD, of Pet Food & Ingredient Technology on the effects of processing on pet nutrition;
- A panel discussion on using social media to reach your target audience;
- Melissa Brookshire, DVM, on how to send a positive and relevant message to consumers; and
- Paul Kearns of Exopack on using the 7 R's to develop more sustainable petfood packaging.



Registration for both Petfood Forum 2011 and Petfood Workshop: Safety First is now open, with early bird discounts available, at registeruo.niu.edu/iebms/wbe/wbe_p1_main.aspx?oc=40&cc=WBE4011176.

PetfoodWorkshop 2011



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INDUSTRY NEWS

2011 AAFCO labeling workshop to be held in Florida

The 2011 Association of American Feed Control Officials (AAFCO) Pet Food Labeling Workshop will be held on January 17, 2011, in St. Pete's Beach, Florida, USA.

The event is relevant to anyone who makes treats, is a food control official, is a petfood marketer, handles petfood label compliance or writes copy for catalogues, labels or the Internet. Registration is due by January 1, 2011, and is limited to 200 attendees.



PetfoodForum EUROPE

After four years, Petfood Forum Europe is back!

Petfood Forum returns to Europe after four years, held in conjunction with Victam International 2011 (www.victam.com). Sign up to be in beautiful and historic Cologne, Germany, for a day of learning and networking.

The theme for Petfood Forum Europe 2011 is "Innovation in Petfood." The one-day conference on May 4, 2011 will include topics and speakers like:

- Lee Linthicum of Euromonitor on consumers and Web 2.0: impact on the global petfood market;
- Edwin Grim of Ralco Nutrition on open innovation;
- Brian Plattner of Wenger on applying polymer science to petfood production; and
- Aurore Chemineau or Marie-Jane Fallourd of SPF on advances in palatability for dogs.

Find more information at www.petfoodindustry.com/PFFEurope2011.aspx. Registration is now open for at registeruo.niu.edu/iebms/wbe/wbe_p1_main.aspx?oc=40&cc=WBE4011249. Register by March 14 to save 10%.

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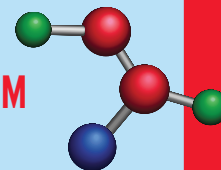
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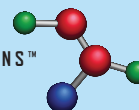
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For Consumers

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Cloud Star Corp.
+1.800.361.9079
www.cloudstar.com

Eagle Pack Natural Pet Food

WellPet LLC Eagle Pack Natural Pet Food dry foods for dogs and cats are designed to balance proteins, fats, carbohydrates, antioxidants and omega fatty acids. The food comes in varieties catering to specific nutritional needs, preferences, lifestages and lifestyles, according to the company. The line also includes wet food for dogs.

WellPet LLC
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www.wellpet.com



Limited Ingredient Treats

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www.naturalbalanceinc.com

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For Consumers

Beef Meal & Lamb Meal diet



Nature's Variety Instinct Beef Meal & Lamb Meal diet is part of the company's grain-free product line, offering a red meat protein option for dogs. The line provides allergy relief for food allergies and helps dogs maintain a healthy weight, according to the company. It also features a freeze-dried raw coating.

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Therapeutic Weight Reduction Program

Hill's Pet Nutrition Inc. offers its



Prescription Diet Therapeutic Weight Reduction Program aimed at improving pet owner feeding compliance for overweight, obese or obese-prone dogs. The program combines pre-measured Prescription Diet r/d Canine Weight Loss Low Calorie Dry petfood, low-calorie biscuits and a Therapeutic Weight Reduction Guide.

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+1.905.826.5655

www.hillspet.com

Grilled Tuna cat treats

PetPlay Inc. Petite Cuisine

Grilled Tuna cat treats come in a 4.2-ounce package. Each package has three filets that have been grilled and hand cut. The wild-caught tuna is high in omega 3 fatty acids, according to the company.



PetPlay Inc.
+1.800.293.2171

www.petitecuisine.com

Yappy Gourmet dog food

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For Consumers

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Virbac Corp.
+1.800.338.3659
www.virbacvet.com



Canidae wet dog foods

Canidae is offering its seven 13-ounce wet formulas for dogs to retailers in a can rack dispenser system. The wet formulas include protein sources, vitamins and amino acid chelated minerals and are free of corn, wheat, soy and grain fractions, according to the company. Formulas include Lamb & Rice, Canidae Platinum and Grain Free Salmon.

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For Manufacturers

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For Manufacturers

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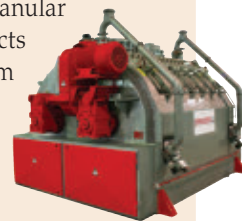
erate. The system uses frame-mounted pneumatic bag agitators to maintain an uninterrupted flow of slug-gish materials from bulk bags. Controls vary from panels to free-standing options with choice of PLC and communication protocols.



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Pegasus Vacuum Coater

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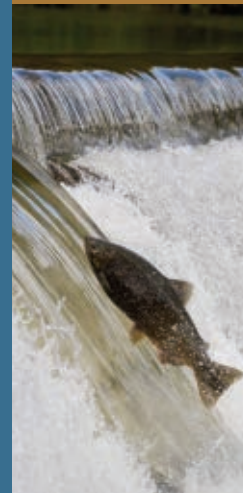
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Mocon Inc. has the MultiCheck 300—a system that measures oxygen headspace coupled with leak detection and seal strength. The company has brought together its Lippke 4000 series (leak detection/seal strength) and its handheld Pac Check 302 oxygen headspace analyzer to create the MultiCheck 300 combination unit. It's designed to be an all-in-one system and to reduce the time, labor and samples needed to conduct three separate tests.

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Online extra!

Watch Lisa Fortunato and John Hickey explain what makes Robbie Dawg so unique in our new video at www.petfoodindustry.com/RobbieDawgvideo.aspx.

Lisa Fortunato started Robbie Dawg in her Brooklyn kitchen in 2003. Now the company has 15 flavors, contract-baking clients, a new chief managing partner and will soon have a new, larger facility.



Robbie Dawg nails the details

By Debbie Phillips-Donaldson

JUST THE FACTS

Headquarters: Brooklyn, New York, USA

Officers: Lisa Fortunato, president; John W. Hickey III, chief managing partner

Sales: Has seen quadruple growth in 2010, expects to reach US\$2.5 million in 2011

Products: Organic dog and cat treats in about 15 flavors, including seasonal ones

Distribution: Throughout the US, plus Canada, Japan and South Korea; just earned approval to sell in the European Union and Australia

Facility: Also in Brooklyn

Employees: 10 full-time, six part-time

Website: www.robbedawg.com

Proudly based in Brooklyn, New York, this organic treat company has enjoyed quadruple growth by focusing on every element of its product and packaging

GO TO ANY pet trade show and you can be nearly overwhelmed by the number of treats on display. Yet for Robbie Dawg, standing out has never been a problem. "It's the detail, from the packaging to the presentation to the flavors to the look of everything," explains Lisa Fortunato, president of the organic treat company. "That's what's really important to us."

Robbie Dawg started the way many small treat or petfood companies do: in the founder's kitchen. In 2003, Fortunato, then an event planning and graphic design professional, decided to throw her dog a birthday party and couldn't find the kind

of treats she wanted for the goodie bags. So she baked her own, creating a recipe based on the lessons she had learned from her father: Always use fresh, wholesome ingredients and make everything from scratch.

The treats she made were such a hit that Fortunato eventually decided to make them for sale. By December of that year, she was taking orders from local stores. Since then, the company has outgrown its original facility in Brooklyn, New York, USA, and is preparing to move to a new, larger facility. Fortunato has added a chief managing partner, John W. Hickey III, and has made such a mark with her treats that

she's now approached by other companies for contract baking.

SOON AFTER THAT fateful doggie birthday party, Fortunato was laid off from her job and decided to go into business for herself. "Somehow, I decided to become a manufacturer of dog biscuits!" she says. The New York International Gift Fair happened soon after, and Fortunato was able to research her business idea by walking the show. "I knew I wanted to have a high-end product, organic from the very beginning. Certainly I believe we were one of the first companies that was organic."

Fortunato applied what she learned to roll, cut and bake organic dog



Robbie Dawg uses a rotary moulding cookie machine with dies that gives a very definitive design and definite shape to its products.

biscuits by hand in the 60-square-foot kitchen of her apartment. "It was all about the presentation. I designed the packaging, I did the flavor profiles," she says. Product in hand, she started visiting local stores. "If I was able to meet someone who could make a decision, I always got an order."

In spring 2004, wanting to validate her business concept, Fortunato exhibited at the H.H. Backer Annual Spring Pet Industry Trade Show, then in Atlantic City, New Jersey, USA. Robbie Dawg was obviously a success: "We still have about 40% of the same customers from that show," Fortunato says.

Soon the company outgrew Fortunato's kitchen. "It was either get a contract baker or become a manufacturer. Because organic was so new then and the ingredients were so expensive, and it was my baby, I didn't trust anyone else," she explains. She refinanced her mortgage, found a former machine shop in Brooklyn and renovated it. "We've been there until now, we've exploded to where we have to relocate to be able to fulfill orders."

FORTUNATO CREDITS HER company's swift success partially to good timing. "It was just at that time, say 2005, when boutiques started to emerge. It wasn't just the pet boutique, it was home furnishing stores, lifestyle stores, a whole range from grocery to bigger stores to anywhere people go shopping. So that really allowed us to build up the number of stores," she says.

But the biggest factor behind the rapid growth is the product itself. "People know us for the flavor profiles," says Fortunato. "It's always the 'mother' of the dog doing the shopping, and she's attracted to the packaging. She'll pick it up and say, 'Ah, turkey sausage and romano cheese, that sounds really good.' She'll take it home and the dog loves it, and we have a customer."

The flavors now number about 15, including the first, Peanut Butter and Carrot, still one of the company's best-sellers; seasonal flavors such as Little Lulu's Cranberry Crunch (named after Fortunato's other dog, since Robbie had the company named after him); and even two flavors for cats.

Another popular product attribute is what Fortunato calls "snapability." Robbie Dawg biscuits are free of wheat

The Brooklyn connection

Here's some trivia you may not know: One in five Americans has ties to Brooklyn, one of the boroughs in New York City. That's the reason Lisa Fortunato named her company Robbie Dawg (and pronounces the second word purposely with a Brooklyn accent). Her dog Robbie is from Brooklyn, and she wanted to use that angle as "our little hook," she says. "On our packaging, we have a logo, Real Brooklyn, that you're only allowed to use if you manufacture in Brooklyn."

Besides being proud to be able to use the logo, Fortunato says she makes a point to give back to the community. "When I was a teenager, I went to high school across the street from a no-kill shelter called Bide-A-Wee that has three locations in New York. From the very beginning, we've donated broken biscuits to all different kinds of organizations. It's really important for me to feel that we give in ways that we can. Not necessarily monetarily, but we can donate product."

While Fortunato says the company donates mainly to organizations in the New York City-Tristate area, it has made donations elsewhere, including to US military service dogs in Iraq and Afghanistan. "These German Shepherds will lay down their lives for their handlers. How can you find that kind of dedication anywhere?"



Because it's based in Brooklyn, New York, USA, Robbie Dawg is allowed to use a Real Brooklyn logo on all its packaging.

ROBBIE or gluten, which tends to make some dog biscuits heavy, she says. "Our biscuits are such that you can snap them easily. We make a little treat that looks like a piece of kibble and is scored into four, and you can actually snap it

into the size of a kernel of corn. This helps whether it's an older dog that's losing its teeth or an overweight dog that you want to give separate small treats rather than one big piece."

Fortunato adds that all Robbie Dawg

products are still handcrafted, baked fresh daily and free of corn, soy, added salt, sugar, preservatives, flavors, dyes, colors or anything artificial. "Also, we use a rotary moulding cookie machine that has dies so you can have a very definitive design and definite shape; it's a look that is different because it's not extruded."



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All Robbie Dawg treats are organic—some with a meat base (US Department of Agriculture grade A chicken or turkey), some with dairy (organic cheese) and some with peanut butter plus organic pumpkin, pears or berries.

WITH A FELLOW entrepreneur as a partner now to help her chart the company's growth, Fortunato sees many opportunities. "We feel there are other avenues to explore in treats: for instance, creating a soft treat that doesn't have chemicals or preservatives, creating treats with probiotics or glucosamine that really do something," she says, as opposed to products with functional ingredients that may lose their efficacy because of the high heat used in some processing methods.

Hickey brings a renewed energy, Fortunato says. "Because when you're doing it by yourself, you have to wear so many hats." It seems unlikely that Robbie Dawg will ever get too big. "People want to know that there's a face and a conscience behind a brand. We're still the face and the conscience behind ours, and we always will be."

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Millions of people have developed long-lasting, committed relationships with a product or service. These brand marriages generate huge profits as long as the brand continues to provide consumers with what they value.

Photos by Francesco Chinazzo, Fotolia.com and Vukto, BigStockPhoto.com



Connecting with pet owners online

By Jessica Taylor

How can your company work with today's connected and involved consumers whose perceptions are often shaped by online resources?

TODAY'S PET OWNERS are increasingly aware and interested in how their pets' food is made. Some even share their perceptions online and by word of mouth. How can you work with these highly involved consumers? And just as importantly, how can you fight negative consumer perceptions and work with bloggers and other consumer activists (online or elsewhere) to help educate and sway pet owners about the benefits of your petfood products? The only way to answer these questions is to better understand today's consumers.

Millions of people have developed long-lasting, committed relationships with a product or service. These brand marriages generate huge profits as long as the brand continues to provide consumers with what they value. The Gallup Organization has been conducting consumer interviews for over 50 years to find out how companies can develop such enduring, meaningful bonds between their brands and their customers. This research found that:

- The company must uphold and reinforce the brand promise at every touch point during every interaction; and



Blog Paws is a group of pet parent bloggers, with an annual event sponsored by petfood brands.

An American flag is shown waving, with the stars and stripes clearly visible. The flag is the background for the top half of the advertisement. The stripes are red and white, and the stars are white on a blue field.

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■ Emotions need to be taken seriously, because emotionally engaged customers generate profits.

With the increasing popularity of social media like Twitter, Facebook and Tumblr, pet parents have all-new channels easily available to vent their frustrations. It's easy to forget that just one mistake in a customer touch point could result in an irreversible repercussion for your brand. Execution is extremely important today, and marketers have to ensure that a consistently good experience is your customer service standard.

In a recent article in *Wired* magazine, John Winsor, CEO of the ad agency V&S and author of a book on co-creation (brand/consumer collaborations), *Beyond the Brand*, said

What are brands doing to engage consumers online?

Several petfood companies are already very proactive in the way they communicate with their consumer base online. Take, for example, Mulligan Stew. The blog on its website (<http://www.mulliganstewpetfood.com/forums.php>) is a mix of both consumer posts and the company's own blog and responses.

Another example of a consumer/company blended blog is <http://holisticpetfood.wordpress.com>. At first glance, the website appears to be a typical consumer-driven blog touting the merits of a holistic diet for pets but, on closer inspection, is actually a blog run by the dog food company Life's Abundance, with easy links to other places on the internet where its products are sold.

Blog Paws (<http://www.blogpaws.com>) is a community of petsumers that not only discusses the petfood industry online but also holds live events for its users to get together and interact face-to-face. Companies like Purina, Iams and Eukanuba not only sponsor such events, but also make downloadable widgets, banners and documents available to Blog Paws users to use on their blogs or email to interested friends and readers.



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ad agencies are trying desperately to protect the old way of doing business while bigger cultural trends are shifting the sand below their feet. If your company refuses to adapt, be prepared to lose consumer interest and, in the long run, profit.

People are having conversations these days, only not with brands but about them. I'd like to suggest that we're at the start of something larger in scope than simple engagement or



People are having conversations these days, only not with brands but about them. Blog Paws unites users who usually only engage each other on the internet by giving them the chance to communicate their ideas face-to-face.

entertainment, and something that goes far beyond the merits of friends and followers on social technology

platforms. It's time for companies to meet their consumers on a level playing ground. It's time to target the very blogs, forums and social networks pet parents are retreating to and engage them. Take this time to use your engagement to actually inform consumers. The real challenge isn't to find ways to avoid the truth or distract consumers from it (or shudder when it is revealed), but rather to creatively present it and make sure "petsumers" understand it. ■

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Coat care treats and petfoods fortified with healthy skin-boosting ingredients are popular perhaps because they are a long-term and more cost-efficient solution to what can sometimes be a lifelong health problem for some breeds.



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Nourishing nutrition for pet skin and coat health

By Jessica Taylor

The latest ingredients and products to help cats and dogs have healthy, shiny coats and skin



Dr. Foster and Smith's Premium Plus Bites are liver-flavored treats meant to provide an extra boost for dogs already using skin and coat supplements or to help maintain an already healthy coat.

FUNCTIONAL PETFOODS CONTINUE to gain popularity with pet parents because of a simple fact: Food and treats that promise improved health for their animals appeal to consumers. Skin and coat health seem to be particularly important to dog and cat owners. Coat care treats and petfoods fortified with healthy skin-boosting ingredients that relieve itchy, dry skin caused by allergies are popular perhaps because they are a long-term and more cost-efficient solu-

tion to what can sometimes be a lifelong health problem for some breeds.

What kind of skin and coat products are available on the market and what benefits do they promote to potential consumers?

One example is Dr. Foster and Smith's Premium Plus Bites. These liver-flavored treats are meant to provide an extra boost for dogs already using skin and coat supplements or to help maintain an already healthy coat. The Bites

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Another carefully selected blend of ingredients, Hilton Herb's Seaweed & Rosehip supplement mix relies on its simplicity to aid in canine coat health.

Hilton Herb's Top Coat blend contains a mix of marigold flowers, chamomile flowers, nettle leaf, cleaver herb, burdock root, dandelion root and kelp.



Made of nothing but kelp seaweed and rosehip shells, the herb blend supports dogs' digestive, nervous and circulatory systems, ensuring strong nails and great coat and skin condition, says the company. Hilton Herb's Top Coat blend contains a more complicated mix of marigold flowers, chamomile flowers, nettle leaf, cleaver herb, burdock root, dandelion root and kelp. These plants support and maintain depth of coat color and skin pigmentation, help the dog's natural resistance to allergens and cool, soothe and cleanse, according to Hilton Herb.

Available in the UK, Hills Science Plan has also released a line of treats targeting skin and coat problems in dogs. The line includes Puppy Skin & Coat Dog Treats, Adult Skin & Coat Dog Treats and Skin & Coat Jerky—all of which promise to help keep skin and coats smooth and flake free.



Skin and coat health seem to be particularly important to dog and cat owners.

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What ingredients are being touted as the best boosts for pet skin and coat health?

1. Salmon. Along with other fatty fish, walnuts and flaxseed, salmon is high in fatty acids that are key to achieving healthy skin.

Essential fatty acids such as omega-3s help keep cell membranes healthy by keeping out harmful substances as well as allowing nutrients to enter cells and exit with waste products.

Omega-3s also reduce the animal's production of inflammatory agents that can damage the skin.



2. Blueberries. Considered by sources like NaturalNews.com to be the highest food source of antioxidants, blueberries target free radicals that can wreak havoc on a pet's skin cells. The antioxidants and phytochemicals in blueberries neutralize DNA-damaging free radicals, reducing cell damage.



3. Oatmeal. Oatmeal may be relatively new to the petfood industry as a whole but is a nutritious and effective, natural and holistic ingredient for both dogs and cats, according to petfood companies like Holistic Select. "Many vets feel that the protein in oatmeal is very hypoallergenic (less likely to cause an allergic reaction) and therefore an ideal nutrient to be included in a diet formulated for pets suspected of having a food sensitivity or skin allergies," states the Holistic Select website.



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Online: research behind the innovations

Explore the science behind extrusion technologies in the online article "Applying polymer science to extrusion and drying of petfoods" by Wenger engineers at www.petfoodindustry.com/ExtrusionResearch.aspx.

Production update: What's new in dry food processing

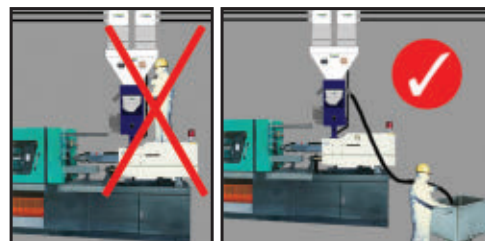
By Jessica Taylor

Advances in extrusion, drying and cooling technology and products

THE US FOOD and Drug Administration has told our industry that it is the manufacturers' responsibility to produce *Salmonella*-free food. "Food safety was at the forefront of product design," Galen Rokey, process technology manager of Wenger, said about the company's latest upgraded extrusion equipment. "There are a number of trends currently impacting the petfood industry that affected the design process behind each of these new innovations. Among them are higher energy costs, concerns about water availability and the current economic recession, which is impacting consumer buying habits. Consequently, manufacturers desire the ability to react quickly to new market directions."

And the quickest way to adapt? Making sure your production line is up to date in sanitation, speed and consistency. Here's a roundup of some of the most

innovative advances in extrusion, drying and cooling technology to recently emerge on the market. All of them promise to streamline the production of your dry food and treat recipes while saving you money, energy and time.



1 Auto-cleaning blender

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— Geert Jacobs, Radar Automation NV

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PRODUCTION

changes. The “auto-cleaning” integrated feature allows for rapid order and color changes while limiting the machine downtime and eliminating cross-contamination, according to TSM. The blending system uses a uniquely designed five-step control process. The process empties the hopper bins and entirely cleans from the loader down to the mixing chamber. The TSM blender also provides a safer working environment as it is no longer necessary for the operator to climb on top of the machine to clean the system.

2. Polytwin Twin-Screw Extruder Buhler/Aeroglide
www.buhlergroup.com or
www.aeroglide.com



The PolyTwin Twin Screw Extruder from Buhler/Aeroglide boasts an Aero-Flex oscillating feeder that ensures consistent drying by

spreading the product evenly across the conveyor bed. Adjustments can also be made to the machine while in operation without interrupting production, the company says. Product tracking also enables the activation of energy-saving modes, temperature or moisture control and aids in product change-over.

3. Thermal Twin Screw Extruders Wenger Manufacturing
www.wenger.com

Wenger’s new Thermal Twin Screw Extruders are ideal for manufacturers that want to shift their



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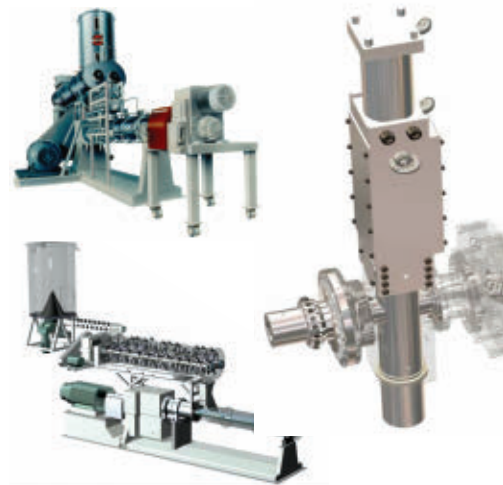
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PRODUCTION process to more favorable energy sources. Unique in the industry, the Thermal Twin not only provides exceptional performance with a broad range of raw materials but also offers a thermal-to-mechanical energy ratio of 14-to-1, according to the company. Capacities range up to 12 tons per hour. "The ultimate goal in every case is to help our customers meet requirements and regulations while reducing production costs and increasing flexibility," says Rokey.



4. Maxxim series extrusion systems
Extru-Tech Inc.
www.extru-techinc.com

Extru-Tech Inc. now offers the Maxxim series extrusion systems. This line of single screw extruders are capable of 20% to 30% production rate increases over previous models with the same barrel diameter, according to the company. Various models in the series are versatile enough to expand with production demands and grant any company or institution the ability to test different types of formulations, colors,

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Or visit www.petfoodindustry.com/ExtrusionExtras.aspx for additional information on the companies spotlighted in this article.

flavors, shapes, textures, densities and cook characteristics.

5. Model SD45-12 rotary dryer system Baker-Rullman's www.baker-rullman.com

Triple-pass technology is what makes Baker-Rullman's Model SD45-12 rotary dryer system unique and easily adaptable, according to the company. The mobile rotary dryer system is

Baker Rullman

mounted on a standard 53-foot trailer to accommo-

date transportation and ease of setup. The unit accepts up to 1 ton per hour in-feed, and if needed for stickier products, a complete recycle loop may be added. ■

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David A. Dzanis, DVM, PhD, DACVN

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The GRAS process for petfood ingredients



How to submit a notification to FDA to ensure you're covering your GRAS.

THE IMPLEMENTATION of a “generally recognized as safe” (GRAS) notification process for animal feed ingredients has been eagerly awaited for years. It is not surprising, then, that the announcement by the US Food and Drug Administration (FDA) Center for Veterinary Medicine (CVM) of its intent to start accepting notifications this past summer was met with great enthusiasm by the petfood industry.

However, many in the industry are confused as to how to take advantage of this process. I have been told by outside parties that the notifications submitted to FDA to date have not been of suitable quality to effectively evaluate the safety of the substance in question.

To help address this problem, Cantox Health Sciences International recently held a workshop, “How to utilize the ‘new’ GRAS process for animal food ingredients.” I was honored to be invited to speak along with Cantox employees and a representative from the Association of American Feed Control Officials (AAFCO).

THE “NEW” PROCESS is not really that new. FDA first proposed the GRAS notification process to replace the GRAS affirmation process over a decade ago (see www.petfoodindustry-digital.com/petfoodindustry/200906/#pg34). Although the regulations proposed in 1997 have yet to be finalized, the center within FDA responsible for human food safety evaluation has been accepting GRAS notifications for years. However, CVM started doing the same for animal feed ingredients only a few months ago.

Legally, a company has had the ability to conduct a self-determination of GRAS without submission to FDA since enactment of the Food

Additives Amendment Act of 1958. However, the newly implemented notification process, wherein a summary of the data considered in the GRAS determination is voluntarily submitted to FDA, has distinct advantages.

While FDA review of the submission does not constitute formal approval, it does offer some reassurance to the company that its determination of GRAS was not without basis. With public acknowledgment that a reviewed substance raised “no questions” with FDA, consumers and state regulators have a way to verify that the data to support safe use have been evaluated by someone other than the company itself.

THE FIRST STEP in GRAS notification is to

Useful links

- **Federal Register Notice on GRAS Notification Proposed Rule** (April 17, 1997)
<http://www.fda.gov/Food/FoodIngredientsPackaging/GenerallyRecognizedasSafeGRAS/ucm083058.htm>
- **Federal Register Notice on GRAS Notification Pilot Program for Animal Feed Ingredients** (June 4, 2010)
<http://edocket.access.gpo.gov/2010/pdf/2010-13464.pdf>
- **FDA “Letter to Industry”** (October 15, 2010)
<http://www.fda.gov/AnimalVeterinary/GuidanceComplianceEnforcement/ComplianceEnforcement/ucm229734.htm>
- **How to submit a GRAS Notification**
<http://www.fda.gov/AnimalVeterinary/Products/AnimalFoodFeeds/GenerallyRecognizedasSafeGRASNotifications/ucm192219.htm>
- **Cantox Health Sciences International—Services re: GRAS Notifications**
<http://www.cantox.com/us-gras.aspx>

Dr. Dzanis is a writer and consultant on nutrition, labeling and regulation.

compile a dossier of all available information on the substance. To be generally recognized as safe, the bulk of information—and particularly all of the pivotal data to support safe use—must be in the public domain (e.g., published in peer-reviewed scientific journals). Components of a dossier may include:

- Description of the substance (name, composition, physical form, etc.);
- Description of the manufacturing process;
- Stability, methods of analysis, other specifications;
- Intended use (utility, species, inclusion rates, etc.);
- Data to support safety (target animal, human, environmental);
- Any evidence that potentially contradicts safe use;
- An unbiased expert panel must then review the dossier. A minimum of three panelists

should vary in expertise so all aspects are covered. For example, a veterinary nutritionist, a veterinary toxicologist and a scientific authority on the substance in question may be a good complement of expertise for evaluating many petfood ingredients.

The panel discusses the dossier and may ask for more information or investigate further on its own. The panel must reach a consensus that there is reasonable certainty of no harm under the intended conditions of use before a determination of GRAS may be reached. Only then may the sponsor submit the GRAS notification to FDA.

AAFCO DEFINITIONS RELY on “enforcement discretion,” not a formal approval or notification process. Concern has been raised about having so many feed ingredients exist in this regulatory limbo. Thus, with implementation of the GRAS notification

process, FDA has indicated its desire to phase out the AAFCO definition process, possibly by the time the FDA/AAFCO Memorandum of Understanding expires in 2012 (see www.petfoodindustry-digital.com/petfoodindustry/200801/#pg36).

In fact, there is discussion that many existing AAFCO definitions (especially those established after 1958) will eventually need to be reexamined, and some ingredients may be removed if safe use cannot be resubstantiated.

FDA intends to post GRAS notifications and its responses on its website. It is hoped AAFCO will include in its *Official Publication* a list of those substances to which FDA had no questions. This listing of GRAS notifications would be of great service to state feed control officials, the industry, consumers and others who may use this resource to determine the acceptability of petfood ingredients. ■



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Why is rye rarely used in petfood?



There are no substantial technical, nutritional or performance issues associated with rye that would limit its use for pets.

RYE IS A fairly common ingredient in human foods and beverages. The most prevalent occurrence is in crackers and breads, be it a light American rye, a dark German rye, heavy whole-grain pumpernickel rye or a slightly bitter rye with caraway. It is also the trademark ingredient in Canadian rye whiskey.

However, a quick survey of petfood labels turned up only a few instances in which rye was listed as a conspicuous ingredient. In these few cases, it was a part of several ultra-premium or very high-end boutique dog products. Surprisingly, no examples of its use in cat foods or in canned foods were found.

In the home-prepared arena, there are some petfood and treat recipes that encourage the use of rye, but other than these rare cases it is a blank slate. So, why isn't rye found in more petfoods?

The easy answer might be cost, but rye is no more expensive than other grains. It could be limited availability, a technical factor, some health issue associated with rye in petfoods or just lack of recognition.

WHILE NOT AS prevalent as wheat or rice, rye is generally available in the raw ingredient market; global production of rye (*Secale cereale* L.) ranks eighth among cereal grains. It is a winter hardy crop that grows well on marginal soils, and its growth cycle matches well with cooler climates and the availability of seasonal moisture.

Because of this, rye is more commonly available in the northern temperate climates of North America, Europe and Asia. Poland, Germany, Russia, Belarus and Ukraine produce nearly three quarters of the world's crop. In these production areas rye is considered a key crop for agricultural

sustainability, and it fits well with various crop rotation schemes.

About the only impediment to its production and effective utilization is an ergot fungus (*Claviceps purpurea*) that produces a mildly toxic alkaloid. However, this fungus only thrives under unique growing conditions, and screening fungal affected seeds is an effective control measure.

BEYOND SIMILARITIES IN agronomic practices, rye is comparable in many ways to wheat. For example, rye and wheat are the only grains that produce leavened bread. While rye does not

The overall nutritional composition of rye, down to the micro-nutrients, is comparable to wheat.

possess the same type of sticky-stretchy gluten proteins as wheat, it does contain its own functional protein—secalin—which has similar, albeit less cohesive, properties.

Because of this, yeast breads made with rye do not rise as well or have as soft a texture as wheat breads. But, the overall nutritional composition of rye, down to the micro-nutrients, is comparable to wheat: 10 to 12% protein, 2 to 3% crude fiber, 1.5 to 2.25% ash, 1 to 2% crude fat and around 60% starch.

Nutritionally, where rye deviates from wheat is in the content of pentosans (arabinoxylans; 9% vs. 6%, respectively) and beta-glucans (2.5% vs. 1%, respectively). These are non-starch polysaccharides that evade digestion in the stomach and small intestine but are fermentable in the colon.

Dr. Greg Aldrich is president of Pet Food & Ingredient Technology Inc.

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On the negative side, if a large quantity of rye pentosans is included in the diet they can increase the viscosity of the stomach contents to such a point that digestive enzymes are unable to completely penetrate the meal, thus resulting in lower nutrient utilization. This is why livestock producers

RYE, LIKE OTHER plants, produces some of its own natural chemical defenses to ward off insect and herbivore predation. Rye seeds contain such compounds as measurable levels of trypsin inhibitors that diminish protein digestion, phytate that obstructs mineral utilization and

substantially lower than that found in raw soybeans, and it is effectively destroyed by thermal (e.g., cooking, extrusion) processing. Phytates are no higher in rye than in other cereals. The alkyl resorcinol is concentrated in the bran fraction and is diluted by other constituents in plump, well-formed (not stunted) seeds and insignificant in flour once the bran has been removed.

Milling rye into flour is comparable to wheat with a good yield and flour consistency. Rye flour handles much like wheat flour in standard conveyance, weighing and mixing equipment. Likewise, in extruded foods rye behaves much like wheat where it can be an effective ingredient to aid in expansion of the kibble.

As a bonus, extrusion effectively eliminates the anti-nutrient compounds such as the trypsin inhibitors and converts some of the non-starch polysaccharides into digestible sugars. So, common petfood processes

Common petfood processes like extrusion actually improve the prospects for rye use.

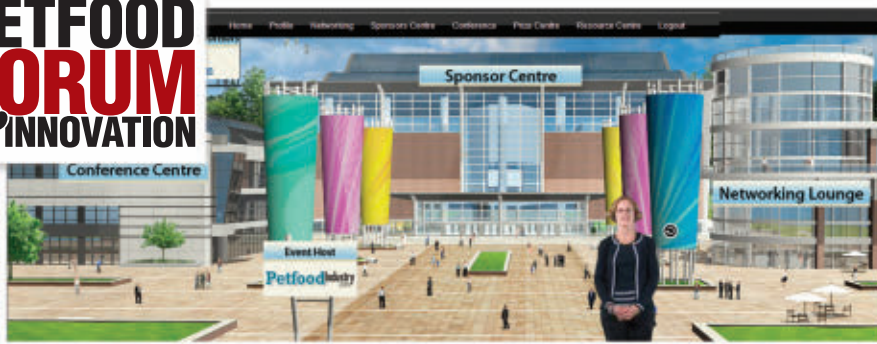
discount the value of feeding rye over other grains. On the positive side, when fed in moderation the beta-glucans and pentosans are fermented by colonic bacteria, which subsequently produce short-chain fatty acids and promote gastrointestinal health.

an alkyl resorcinol. This latter polyphenolic compound is unique to rye and at high levels can irritate intestinal and mucous membranes and retard growth. However, each of these plant defense mechanisms can be controlled.

The trypsin inhibitor in rye is

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like extrusion actually improve the prospects for rye use.

SURPRISINGLY, THERE IS no readily available research that has evaluated the nutrition or functionality of rye in petfoods. So, one has to extrapolate from feeding experiences with other animals. For stockmen, rye has been a staple early cover crop that works better than wheat in some applications, and whether forage or grain it has been a constant part of cattle, pig and poultry diets for centuries.

However, most livestock diets are not thermally processed, so rye is commonly limited to no more than 30% to dilute the impact of the trypsin inhibitors and pentosans on digestion. Since most petfoods are processed sufficiently, this should not be an issue. Yet given the large quantity of pentosans and beta-glucans that could potentially reach the colon, the value we place on consistent stools and our intolerance of flatulence in pets, it is probably prudent to limit rye in pet diets to less than 30% until we can substantiate more is well tolerated.

For those petfoods in which wheat is verboten, rye is probably not a wise inclusion, either. While rye does not technically contain gluten, animals

with gluten sensitivities, celiac disease and other such reactions may cross-react. So, the limited popularity of rye in petfoods may stem from this perception of wheatlike gluten allergies, it could be due to the limited knowledge people have regarding rye or it could possibly be from misperceptions about the taste of rye bread.

Yet rye is well accepted by dogs and cats in palatability testing and, when incorporated into the diet at moderate levels, results in satisfactory stool consistency. Thus, perceptions aside, there are no substantial technical, nutritional or performance issues with rye that would limit its use in petfoods. ■

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Pet owners carry economic restraint into 2011

THE FIRST-QUARTER 2010 installment of this column stated that, true to its recession-resistant claim to fame, the US pet industry added US\$2.5 billion in the midst of the biggest economic crisis since the Great Depression, rising 4.8% in 2009 to reach a total of US\$53 billion.

But it also noted that economy-wise, 2010 would not be a cake-walk, as the word “restraint” continued to characterize how Americans shop and what they buy, making petfood appeals based on health, safety, convenience, comfort, practicality and professionalism more important than ever.

As of December 2010, these words are ringing true with reverberations certain to carry over into 2011 and perhaps 2012. In Packaged Facts’ February 2010 poll of pet owners, only 29% of respondents agreed that they anticipated spending less on petfood/supplies in the next 12 months; this figure was up to one-third (34%) in Packaged Facts’ May/June 2010 pet owner survey.

Moreover, there are strong signs that this

belt-tightening cohort includes its fair share of premium product consumers, since purchasers of natural dog or cat food were more likely than dog or cat owners overall to report that they’ve been cutting back.

More sobering news: According to Experian Simmons consumer survey data for winter 2010, the percentage of pet owners who expect to be economically better off in 12 months is not rising. In fact, the percentage was slightly lower in that survey than in one Experian Simmons conducted in fall 2008 (Figure 1).

ZEROING IN ON petfood, the overall news isn’t better. During the 52 weeks ending Oct. 3, 2010, sales of dog food rose 2.3%, while cat food sales were up 0.6% and “other” petfood sales (for species other than dogs and cats) were down 10%, according to SymphonyIRI data for US supermarkets, drugstores and mass merchandisers other than Walmart. This marks a significant slowdown from full-year 2009, when the comparative rates were 8.1%, 4.8% and -1.0%, respectively.

However, considering the various petfood types, there are some bright spots. During the

Petfood prices will continue to be a factor as pet owners adjust to the “new normal” of these still tough economic times.

Figure 1. Economic outlook of US pet owners, current vs. 12 months out

Experian Simmons regularly asks US pet owners if they expect to be economically better off in 12 months. The responses have remained consistent since fall 2008 through earlier this year.

Classification	Fall 2008	Winter 2009	Spring 2009	Summer 2009	Fall 2009	Winter 2010
Significantly worse off	6%	7%	7%	7%	7%	6%
Somewhat worse off	16	18	19	17	16	14
About the same	36	35	34	38	40	40
Somewhat better off	25	25	24	24	24	24
Significantly better off	6	6	6	6	5	6

Source: Pet Insurance in North America, 4th Edition (November 2010). Compiled by Packaged Facts based on data from Experian Simmons National Consumer Study, Fall 2008 through Winter 2010.

Figure 2. US petfood sales, October 2009-October 2010

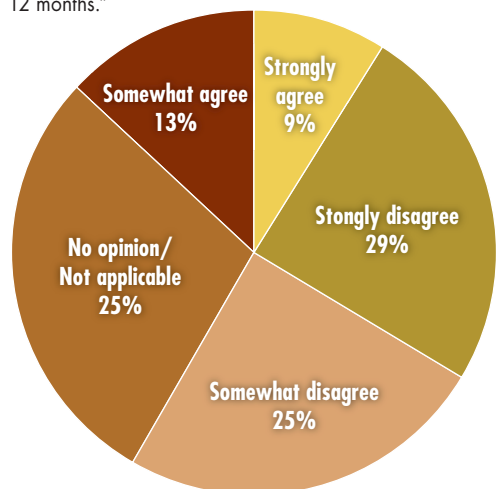
According to SymphonyIRI data for supermarkets, drugstores and mass merchandisers other than Walmart, US sales of petfood for the 52 weeks ending October 3, 2010, have been mixed depending on category.

Category/segment	Sales in US\$	% year-over-year change
Dog food	\$3,731.5	2.3%
Dry dog food	\$2,123.8	0.6
Dog biscuits/treats/beverages	\$828.7	6.9
Wet dog food	\$694.7	2.0
Semi-moist dog food	\$45.5	-3.9
Frozen/refrigerated dog food	\$38.8	13.2
Cat food	\$2,416.4	0.6
Dry cat food	\$1,152.0	-1.5
Wet cat food	\$1,067.6	1.2
Cat treats	\$195.5	10.0
Frozen/refrigerated cat food	\$0.8	2,853.8
Semi-moist cat food	\$0.5	11.0
Other petfood	\$239.7	-10.0

Source: U.S. Pet Market Outlook 2011-2012 (upcoming in early 2011); SymphonyIRI; compiled by Packaged Facts

Figure 3. What will pet owners do in 2011?

A May/June 2010 survey by Packaged Facts asked US pet owners their level of agreement with this statement: "I anticipate spending more on pet products over the next 12 months."



Source: Natural, Organic and Eco-Friendly Pet Products in the U.S., 3rd Edition (July 2010). Figures are based on ownership of dogs, cats and other types of pets. Packaged Facts national online survey executed in May/June 2010.

same 52-week period, US sales of dog biscuits/treats rose 6.9% and sales of cat treats rose 10%. In addition, frozen/refrigerated dog food remained a highlight, up 13% to US\$39 million, with the fledgling frozen/refrigerated cat food segment up almost 3,000% to US\$800,000 (Figure 2).

LOOKING AHEAD, THE news isn't all bad. Although 34% of US pet owners admit to reduced pet product spending, the exact same percentage said they were planning to ramp up in the coming year, according to Packaged Facts' May/June survey (Figure 3). And chances are higher-income consumers will rebound the fastest.

But whereas the petfood market has been driven to a large degree by the high level of receptiveness of consumers to premium products, 2011 will likely see continued strong demand for value-priced products.

In other words, while the human/animal bond, pet health and convenience will continue to intersect as factors determining where pet owners shop and what they buy, the additional factor of price will at least as often continue to have the last word as pet owners struggle to adjust to the "new normal" of these still tough economic times. ■

Information provided by Packaged Facts (www.packagedfacts.com) based on reports including *Pet Food in the U.S., 9th Edition* (due out February 2011).

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Body weight and GI transit times in dogs

This study assessed the relationship between body weight (BW) and gastrointestinal (GI) transit times in healthy dogs, measured by a wireless motility capsule (WMC) system. After not eating overnight, 31 healthy dogs each received an orally administered WMC, then a test meal.

Gastric emptying time (GET) ranged from 405 to 897 minutes, small bowel transit time (SBTT) from 96 to 224 minutes, large bowel transit time (LBTT) from 427 to 2,573 minutes and total transit time (TTT) from 1,294 to 3,443 minutes. There was no positive relationship between BW and transit times. A nonlinear inverse relationship between BW and GET and between BW and SBTT best fit the data.

Dogs with the lowest BW appeared to have longer GET and SBTT than did large- and giant-breed dogs.

Source: C.S. Boillot *et al.*, 2010. Assessment of the relationship between body weight and gastrointestinal transit times measured by use of a wireless motility capsule system in dogs. *AJVR* 71: 898-902. doi: 10.2460/ajvr.71.8.898

Dietary fat, protein and growth in rabbits

Isoenergetic substitution of dietary corn oil for carbohydrates enhances growth in rabbits. It was hypothesized identical amounts of metabolizable energy in the form of corn oil are more effective than those of carbohydrates in reducing protein catabolism, thus sparing it for growth, implying the fat effect is greater on a marginal protein diet.

Young growing rabbits were fed diets either relatively high (21.6 energy % protein) or low in casein (13.0 energy % protein) to which extra corn oil (21.1 instead of 5.3 energy %) was added at the expense of an isoenergetic amount of corn starch and dextrose. The addition of corn oil to the diet with 21.6 energy % protein increased weight gain, but the addition to the diet with 13.0 energy % protein left weight gain unchanged.

These results refute our hypothesis, because the low-protein intake did not limit growth. The enrichment of the high-protein diet with extra corn oil did not affect nitrogen retention, while urinary nitrogen excretion increased. These observations contradict the idea that additional fat would spare nitrogen for growth.

Source: A. Alhaidary *et al.*, 2010. Inter-related effects of dietary fat and protein level on growth performance in rabbits. *JAPAN* online August 2010. doi: 10.1111/j.1439-0396.2010.01044.x

Key concepts

- **Body weight and GI transit times in dogs** (*AJVR* 71: 898-902. doi: 10.2460/ajvr.71.8.898) Dogs with the lowest body weight appeared to have longer gastric and small intestinal transit times than did large- and giant-breed dogs.
- **Dietary fat, protein and growth in rabbits** (*JAPAN* online August 2010. doi: 10.1111/j.1439-0396.2010.01044.x) Low-protein intake did not limit growth. The observations contradict the idea that additional fat would spare nitrogen for growth.

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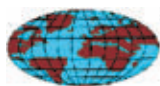
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	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
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	23/ ₃₀	24/ ₃₁	25	26	27	28	29

- AAFCO Pet Food Labeling Workshop, January 17, 2011. Tradewinds Island Grand, St. Pete Beach, Florida, USA. To register, visit www.aafco.org or email sharon@aafco.org.



- AAFCO Mid-Year Meeting, January 17-20, 2011. Tradewinds Island Grand, St. Pete Beach, Florida, USA. To register, visit www.aafco.org or call +1.800.808.9833.

- International Feed & Poultry Expo and Pet Food Conference, January 24-26, 2011. Georgia World Congress Center, Atlanta, Georgia, USA. For more details, visit www.petfoodconference.com.

- 21st Annual Practical Short Course on Feeds & Pet Food Extrusion, January 30-February 4, 2011. Texas A&M University, College Station, Texas, USA. For more information, please email mnriaz@tamu.edu or check out www.tamu.edu/extrusion.

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February			1	2	3	4	5
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- Packaging Conference 2011, February 7-9, 2011. ARIA Resort, Las Vegas, Nevada, USA. To register, visit www.thepackaging-conference.com or email info@plastictechnologies.com.

- Zoo Russia Professional Exhibition, February 18-20, 2011. Crocus Expo International Exhibition Centre, Moscow, Russia. For more information, go to www.zoorussia.ru/zoo/en or email info@zoorussia.ru.

- AFIA Spring Forum/Purchasing & Ingredient Suppliers Conference, February 28-March 4, 2011. Las Vegas, Nevada, USA. For more information, go to www.afia.org or email afia@afia.org.

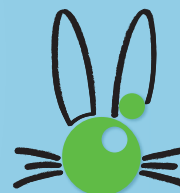
Online Events

- Global Macroeconomic Outlook Online Seminar, December 9, 2010. Presented by Informa Economics CEO Dr. Bruce A. Scherr. Register for this 60-minute presentation at

www.centrefocusllc.com/online_services/global_economic_outlook.

- AFIA Webcasts: Controlling *Salmonella* in Your Facility and Management Considerations for Salmonella/Microbial Control are available for download at www.afia.org.

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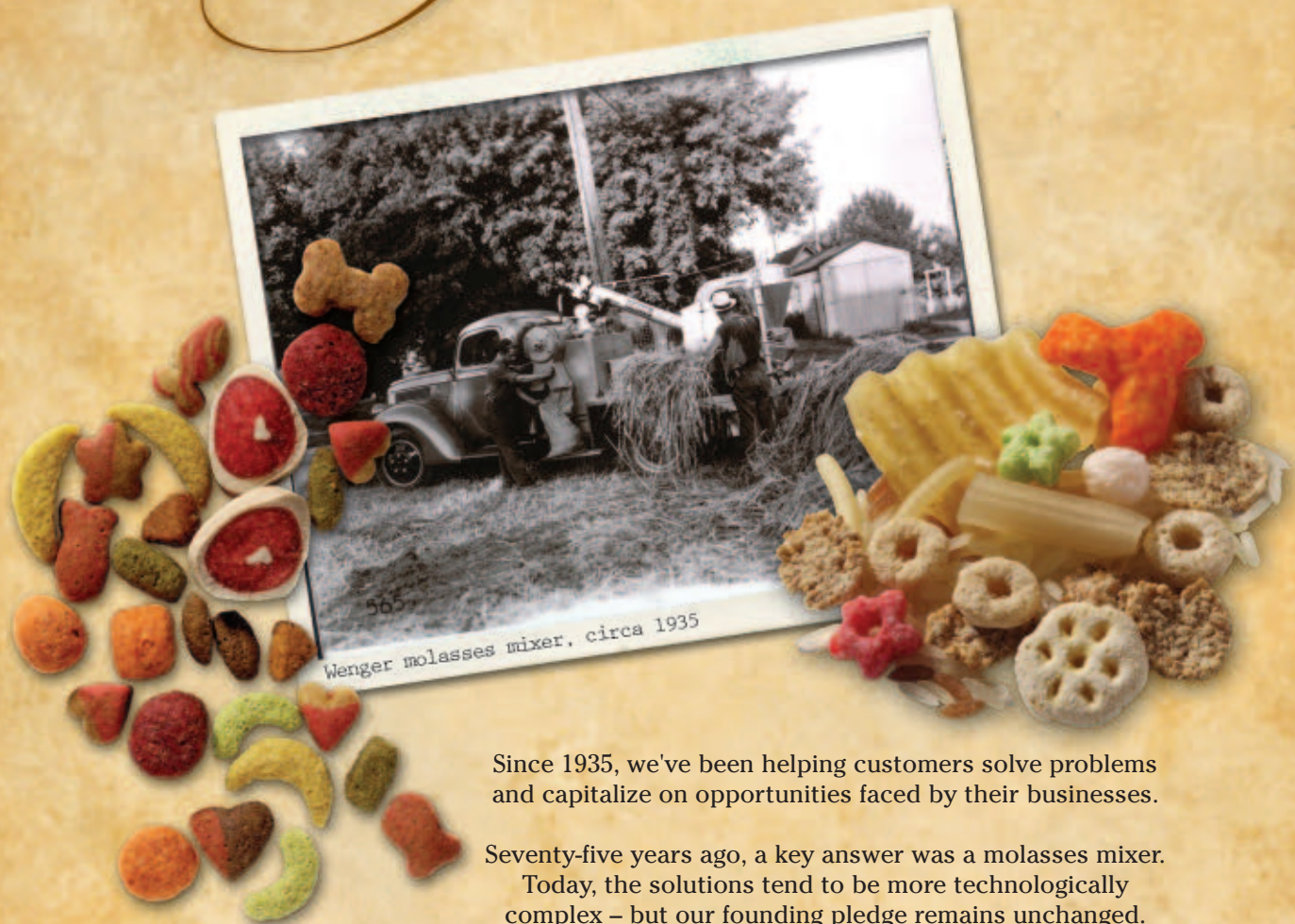


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