

Choosing the right fiber for the future of pet food

By Lynzee Glass, Director of Communications

Perhaps the biggest challenge in the pet food industry today is switching from diets that include grain to grain-free diets, while still maintaining economic value. As pet food manufacturers look toward the future, they need to consider that the market isn't just moving toward all-natural, non-grain ingredients; there's a dramatic shift towards domestically-sourced ingredients, too.

Today's Challenge: Grain-Free

Grain-free dog and cat food accounted for 34% of all pet food sales, and 48% of the natural category in 2015. Grain-free dog and cat food brought in an astonishing \$2.6 billion last year (October 2014 to September 2015), which was a growth rate of 25%. (source: GfK)

As consumers demand grain-free diets, you must supplement your formulas with alternative fiber sources. This is where ingredients such as vegetable and fruit fibers, cellulose and beet pulp come in to play.

Vegetable and Fruit Fiber

As you may know, there are a variety of ingredients available under the vegetable and fruit fiber category. Fruit and vegetable fibers are all-natural, high-fiber sources. These sources of fiber have a positive connection to human health and can potentially provide added nutritional and health benefits for pets. Generally, these fiber ingredients are byproducts from the human food market, allowing the entire product to be used and not wasted.

However, price point is a huge disadvantage of these fiber sources. Vegetable and fruit fiber tend to be more expensive than traditional fiber sources because they are used in the human food market.

Wood Cellulose

Wood Cellulose has long since been the standard in pet food fibers, but as consumers demand natural ingredients, it just doesn't fit the bill. On a pound-for-pound basis, wood cellulose can be one of the most expensive ingredients in the formula.

M-Fiber offers a reliable, affordable and natural alternative to fibers, such as wood cellulose. Unlike other fibers, it's completely sustainable and traceable.

Beet Pulp

Beet pulp, a byproduct of sugar beets, is the second most widely used fiber ingredient. However, nearly 100% of all beet seeds in the USA are genetically modified, which is a major disadvantage. The other option for manufacturers is to import beet pulp, which can be costly and hard to trace.

Challenge of Tomorrow

In the pet food market, we are seeing increased consumer demand for transparency and information about the ingredients used in their pet's food. In particular, American pet owners seek products made in the USA.

M-Fiber Solves the Problem

Pet food manufacturers like you need to stay ahead of the curve by selecting U.S.-grown, grain-free fiber ingredients. Luckily, there is a fiber that does this and more.

M-Fiber is processed from Miscanthus, a perennial non-grain crop grown and processed in the Midwest United States.

Our vertically integrated agribusiness model means more than American made; it means complete product integrity and traceability. We work alongside local farmers in the Midwest to ensure quality and safety.

Our all-natural, certified non-GMO fiber ingredient is unlike anything else on the market today. When manufacturers add M-Fiber to their formulations, they are meeting consumer demands for wholesome, grain-free ingredients while supporting a domestically grown market.



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