

RMB Newsletter 6:2 June 2006
www.rawmeatybones.com

Dear Reader,

How's 2006 treating you? Well I trust.

Here in Australia the days race by with ever new information to chew and digest. Changing the way dogs, cats and ferrets (and zoo animals) are fed is a big task needing many shoulders to the wheel. Initially we need to look after our own animals. With our domestic arrangements in place it's then a case of tackling the triple plague of the junk pet-food industry and their veterinary and faux animal welfare allies.

Although the junk pet-food alliance is the main scourge there is perhaps a more immediate obstacle to feeding our pet carnivores as Nature intended. In the mid-nineties barf (vomit) mania swept across North America and much of Europe too. Pet owners were conned into believing that dogs are omnivores, not carnivores, and need lashings of vegetables and bottled supplements. Here in Australia barfmania has not taken hold to the same extent. But where ever it spreads it does harm. If we want to take decisive action against the junk cooked pet-food alliance I believe we first need to tackle the barfmaniacs and their raw junk pet-food scam.

Best wishes,

Tom Lonsdale

BARFMANIA: THE JUNK RAW PET-FOOD SCAM

We humans are an odd lot. We can put a man on the moon but we can't agree on how to feed a dog. How crazy is that?

Having lived with this conundrum for a few years now, I still find it disturbing. And in my opinion both the problem and the solution lies with the veterinary profession.

Where understanding and certainty exists the room for debate and chatter shrinks almost to zero. That's how it is regarding the moon's orbit, rocket

fuel technology, electrical conduction and differential calculus, the necessary building blocks of a successful moon landing. Experts agree about these things. Universities teach the subjects and the population at large is satisfied that genuine experts are in control.

When it comes to feeding pets, the community can have no such confidence. The self-appointed but non-genuine experts in this field, veterinarians, are variously cowed, incompetent and in notable instances corrupt. It's largely by default that veterinarians have been given authority over pet diets. Vets are supposed to know about health and disease and an assumption is made they will be trained to put prevention first – in keeping with the first rule of medicine 'First do no harm'.

In reality young vets start their induction in kindergarten. They watch their parents feeding pets out of the can and packet; watch the TV ads and the celebrity vets feeding junk food too. By the time they have come top of their class, passed their exams and been admitted to vet school the young vet students are filled with misplaced assumptions about the world, their position in it and that pets should be raised and maintained on junk food. Doing harm for most budding vets is a way of life.

Nothing at vet school tells them otherwise. In fact nutrition courses are frequently taught by pet-food company guest lecturers and the text book, if there is one, will likely have been supplied by a pet-food company. Courses in medicine and surgery are taught by lecturers receiving pet-food company research money, or by lecturers eyeing the money and hoping their turn will soon come.

In the final years at vet school diagnosis and treatment of disease is the priority focus. Assumptions about diet continue and little or no time is spent thinking about preventive medicine. A raw diet, where it is discussed, is used as an object of ridicule to warn the students of the alleged risks of bacterial disease, parasitic disease, broken teeth, and choked, obstructed and constipated dogs. With the preventive benefits of natural feeding upended and replaced with scaremongering the students dutifully absorb the diagnosis and treatment options in readiness for the final exams.

I pity the new graduates. I was one once. The first weeks in practice are, for many young vets, a nightmare experience. Attempting to recall diagnosis and treatment options from the textbooks and fit them to real life patients is

a scary business with pitfalls at every turn. Small wonder prevention never gets a moment's consideration. And thus the scene is set for a professional life spent treating animals that are fed the canned and packet junk food displayed in the vet's waiting room.

There are other nuances, but you get the idea. Vets live in a culture that puts them in charge of pet health care, but they generally know nothing and care little about the benefits of a natural diet. Governments innocently bequeath self-regulatory status on the veterinary profession meaning that vets themselves decide what is and what isn't good practice. The veterinary leadership, veterinary schools and veterinary research establishments decided long ago to accept junk food as the norm – it's what defines the culture. (You and I know it also makes the vets a lot of money treating the diet-affected animals.)

Once a culture is established it's real hard to divert or change it. Where vets are put in charge of identifying, researching and communicating good preventive options, but where they abrogate their responsibilities a vacuum develops. And as the saying goes: 'Nature abhors a vacuum.' This brings us to the predicament we now face – a cacophony of voices filling the vacuum with their pronouncements about the dog's bowl and what should go in it.

It's a free for all where the well-meaning jostle with the naïve and the devious -- where those with nothing to sell spread confusion and others exploit the confusion to sell junk raw food and bottled supplements. The major aspects of the junk pet-food fraud amounting to 95 % of the issues we face <http://seureshop.rawmeatybones.com/newsletter/view.epl?id=37> don't get a mention or, worse still, are specifically frowned upon by the self-styled experts in pet nutrition.

Principal among the junk raw food merchants are the barfers who contend that dogs are omnivores not carnivores. Without protection from a competent veterinary profession many people fall victim to the barf absurdity. Trouble is the victims all too often become victimizers. They victimize their own pets and then seek to spread the barf nonsense to other defenceless pet owners who get caught in a web of confusion as illustrated by this commentary:

<http://www.ukrmb.co.uk/showcontent.toy?contentid=48238>

I decided when I started this the best thing for us was to follow some kind of recipe and grind it together in some sort of patty and go that route until we all were more experienced. I followed Dr. Billingham's recipe in his book for canine patties. The last time we made it we made a huge batch and if you don't mind me going on and on here's what we put in it:

80 lbs chicken necks and backs, 40 lbs chicken wings, 10 lbs beef liver, 10 lbs beef heart and kidney, 30 lbs various veggies, 10 lbs various fruits, 6 lbs yogurt, 6 lbs ground flax seed, 30 oz Kelp and 16oz garlic. We grind this all together and freeze it in daily amounts. I guess my question is...is this adequate? Does it sound like a fairly good recipe to be feeding daily? We do occasionally give [our two dogs] chicken wings whole; beef rib bones and larger beef bones they can't totally eat. The pup eats everything. Grimly (2 years old) is not eating this new batch very well at all. Is garlic necessary, it makes the mixture smell horrible? Any suggestions?

In reaction to barfmania a new strand of thought says that instead of a recipe for minced meat, vegetables and supplements pet owners need a recipe for different organs. 'Prey-model' is the term applied and imposes strictures on the amount of meat, bone and certain organs that should be fed to a pet. Head, hide and guts are left out of the reckoning. To my way of thinking, although well meaning, 'prey model' is another piece of jargon and best avoided.

What we can be sure of is that Nature has had lots of practice and practice makes perfect. If we feed our pets according to Nature's model we'll get the best available health, vitality and longevity. Whole carcasses of other animals set the standard in canine cuisine. Next, I suggest, comes a diet based on raw meaty bones. It's the physical side of ripping, tearing and chewing meat from bone that is central to the needs of a carnivore diet. By all means include whole carcasses as often as possible; include meaty bones and offal from a range of fish, mammals and birds. For fuller practical details on feeding dogs please see [Work Wonders: Feed your dog raw meaty bones www.rawmeatybones.com](http://www.rawmeatybones.com) For a fuller exposition on diet disease and the five facets of the pet-food fraud please see [Raw Meaty Bones: Promote Health.](#)

Australian College of Veterinary Scientists Award Nomination

Back in 2003 I complained to Dr Richard Malik that he had not read Raw Meaty Bones. Fortunately he was not offended by my remarks and continued to listen as I told him of efforts to get the book reviewed by veterinary journals. The journals of the American Veterinary Medical Association and the American Animal Hospitals Association had simply ignored all correspondence. Other journals refused to review the book, some giving excuses and some not.

Richard is well liked, respected and in the top tier of vets in Australia, possibly the world. <http://www.pgf.edu.au/courses/bio/malik.cfm> When he offered to review the book and then seek publication of the review I was delighted; especially given that two Australian journals said they were unable to find anyone to do the job.

After some months a letter arrived from Richard and a quick glance informed me that he was no longer planning to review the book. Imagine my disappointment -- that quickly turned to joy. Richard went on to say: 'I have taken the initiative....and thought of something that may achieve the same end. I have taken the liberty of putting you forward for the College Prize of the ACVS.' www.acvs.org.au

Dr Douglas Bryden, former President of the ACVS, <http://www.rawmeatybones.com/DBprofile.htm> seconded the nomination and together two of the most eminent veterinarians in Australia wrote magnificent nomination statements that fill me with pride.

The nomination stood for three years, 2004/5/6, and was unsuccessful each year including in 2005 when there were no other candidates. Now at the conclusion of the nomination period the statements are available for public scrutiny. <http://www.rawmeatybones.com/vetsay.html>

Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons Elections 2006

Followers of the Raw Meaty Bones campaign know that each year at around this time I report on the Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons elections. As ever I came a distant last with 263 votes (ten fewer than last year).

The quantity of votes may be low but the quality is high and I received some terrific messages of support. However, at 7.4% of the votes cast it's not

nearly enough to bring about the sought for reform – hence the need for committed political and legal action that vets cannot ignore.

Raw Meaty Bones U-turn Tour

The weekend trip to Caboolture in Queensland was made most agreeable by the sterling efforts of Lyndal Nichols and the team at the Suncoast Fundogs Agility Club www.suncoastfundogs.org.au About 50 people attended the Saturday seminar and stayed focused on the topics under discussion despite bucking bulls flying past the windows. The high schools rodeo was in full tilt in the ring next door. On the Sunday a relaxed gathering met to chat and enjoy a barbeque at Lyndal and George Nichols' farm. As a special treat Ray and Marie Sapwell showed us around their Canine Hydrotherapy and Exercise Centre <http://www.rawmeatybones.com/caboolturepics.html>

Thank you all for a wonderful weekend.

Now our thoughts turn to Belgium, Holland, Germany and the UK. Lots of people are busy making arrangements. The folks at UKRMB are sending out hundreds of individually addressed letters to Members of Parliament in readiness for the 12 July briefing.

Seven UK vet schools and 17 European vet schools were invited to host talks. None accepted.

<http://www.ukrmb.co.uk/showcontent.toy?contentnid=53801>

Students and graduates of those schools may, one day, question the failure to discuss diet and disease issues. Who knows? Perhaps some may hire lawyers to ask questions on their behalf.

For September there's a new venue added at the Victorian Canine Association in Melbourne, Australia. Details at

http://www.rawmeatybones.com/speaking_2006.html

RawMeatyBones Discussion List

<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/RawMeatyBones/>

Discussions get underway on the RawMeatyBones List. Beginners to raw feeding receive sage advice from the old hands. More experienced campaigners discuss the options and facets of the cooked and raw pet-food scams. All welcome. <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/RawMeatyBones/>