

Self-styled holistic vet, front man for junk raw food company AMP and barfer, Nick Thompson's deluded anti-RMB musings

<http://www.ukbarfclub.co.uk/nm/anmviewer.asp?a=68&z=2> March 2003

Today I flicked through the [ukbarfclub discussion forum](#), the discussion site affiliated with AMP, and saw that there was some discussion on the non-meat (fruit and veg) component of dog diets - quality and quantity. I just thought I'd give you my penny's worth.

Firstly I have to state that dogs are not carnivores. [Tom Lonsdale, in his book Raw Meaty Bones](#), gives guidance for cats *and* dogs as if they were had similar eating habits. I'm sorry Tom, cats are not just small dogs, they have a completely different nutritional need, dental pattern, gastrointestinal set up and behaviour, reflecting their differences. Cats are carnivores, yes. Dogs are omnivores; carnivorous omnivores, perhaps, but omnivores all the same.

Omnivores eat meat (including everything else in a carcass - perhaps we should call them carcassivores?) and non-meat. Even in the frozen wastes of Siberia or Northern Canada they will eat mainly herbivore carcasses - carcasses full of vegetation. Even if, in these extreme circumstances, wolves can survive, they do not thrive as the diet is minimal in quantity and quality. We can feed our dogs a lot of good quality fruit and veg to optimise the diet. I think we should.

Man has survived on a sub optimal diet for his/her entire evolution until about 100 years ago. This does not mean we should *continue* eating roots and the odd rabbit. One of the major contributors to human health, alongside the sterling work of Mr. Crapper and all the other sanitation engineers through the ages, is diet (not doctors, vaccines and antibiotics as some will tell you). Improved diet means improved health. Always. Incontrovertibly - always. If we are doing it for us, why not for our dogs? Eating well is easy to do and makes so much sense.

Dog's digestion is more like man than a cat's, so this is why I suggest a 30-50% inclusion of meat in the diet I recommend. Raw meaty bones are on top of this, so at a push the meat proportion could reach 60% for the very fit and very young (if high protein suits them). Fruit, vegetables, seeds, nuts and herbs all contain components that are not found in carcasses. Offering a good variety of all of these things takes our wolf model from scraping an existence on the nutritional edge to thriving in nutritional plenty.

Blending the fruit is a good idea. The same goes for root and leaf veg. Plenty of variety is a good thing. Most meals should have a green tinge if you can. Colour is a good way to ensure variety - if you're giving a good variety of colour, then you can be pretty sure you're getting all the food groups. Grinding the nuts and seeds mimics the action of herbivore teeth allowing greater digestion of these things. Herbs are not just for flavour - they contain minerals and vitamins and contribute to a rounding of the diet.

If you find preparing fruit and veg a bit of a pain, then please note that those nice people at AMP have thought of this and done all the dirty work for you. Nature's Menu Frozen Range offers a choice of diets where raw meat and veg have been mixed and frozen for you. They are ideal for those too busy to do the whole BARF diet or for those who can, but find holidays and trips difficult.

So, I hope this helps to clarify my position on the how much non-meat should I feed my dog question. Please feel free to write to Jon and I via the Anglian Meat Product website.

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