

Uncover the Mystery Ingredients in Cat Food

Cat foods come in a range of flavors, formulas and types. Learn how to decipher the labels and choose the right food for your cat.

By Lisa Kobs

"People do not understand the legal definition of these ingredients or their benefit to the animal," she says. "You have to consider the natural instincts of the cat. Cats eat whole mice, not just the skeletal muscle. The mouse diet is probably the ideal optimal nutritional level for a cat. Many pet food companies have studied the nutritional content in the mouse diet and base their nutritional knowledge on it."

Matching the nutritional content of the whole mouse is often best achieved through the use of meat by-products.

Industry Gets an AHow do today's processed foods rank with experts?

"I think the pet food industry is doing a great job at meeting the nutritional needs of cats and kittens," Dr. Churchill says. "Because pet foods are sold as complete diets, they are manufactured with greater attention to nutritional detail than many human-processed foods. Nutritional deficiencies are rarely seen in pets fed commercial products."

"My bigger concern is education about the management or feeding plan with these diets. They are very palatable, and owners frequently feed too much," she says. "The result is the very high incidence of obesity that we now see in our pet population."

Considering their cats' specific nutritional needs and health concerns such as obesity and understanding what ingredients are in foods, cat owners must take many factors into account when they purchase cat food. With improved technology and research and an overall greater concern for feline nutrition, there is no better time to choose the best food your cat.

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