

Quick Tips: Taste and Palatability

What causes a cat to choose one food over another? Researchers look at several factors.

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Taste and palatability are not the same thing. Palatability is crucial to a cat's decision to eat something. Cats are sensitive to the taste, texture and physical shape of their food, and these factors determine palatability. Experiments show that cats surprisingly prefer a new or novel shape or flavor of food. Food ingredients that have been determined to affect palatability for cats are moisture, animal fats, protein hydrolysates, meat extracts, certain proteins and acidity. Pet food manufacturers use this information to maximize palatability when formulating diets for cats.