

Winn Feline Foundation Awards \$127,411 in Grants

Projects include studies of kidney failure, raw-food diets.

Posted: April 9, 2009, 3 a.m. EDT

The Winn Feline Foundation recently awarded \$127,411 in grants for projects aimed at improving feline health. Out of the 36 proposals the foundation received for 2009, 12 were selected.

One of the projects is a study of whether a commercially produced raw-food diet and a homemade raw diet are nutritionally adequate for feeding kittens and whether these diets enhance immune function and improve digestibility. The outcomes to be measured include growth rate, feed efficiency, digestibility and various blood and immune-status parameters.

The long-term goal is to evaluate ways of improving feline immune function through diet, according to researchers Beth Hamper, Claudia Kirk and Joseph Bartges, all from the University of Tennessee.

“Nutritional Adequacy and Performance of Raw Food Diets in Kittens” was awarded \$14,878.

Another project is seeking a measurable component of a hyperthyroid cat’s urine that is associated with hidden kidney failure. To do this, the Kansas State University researchers will apply mass spectrometry, a technique that they say is capable of identifying thousands of urine components.

The long-term goal is to devise a test to assess the presence of hidden kidney problems in hyperthyroid cats before treatment is undertaken, thus maximizing the chances for a successful outcome, according to researchers Thomas Schermerhorn, Gary Gadbury, Ruth Welti and Richard Jeannotte.

“Identification of a Biomarker for Masked Renal Failure in Hyperthyroid Cats” was awarded \$15,000.

To read about other projects, to see project details or to sponsor a project, go to the foundation website.