

# RAW FEEDING GUIDE

for healthy, happy dogs



with bonus content by Kymythy R Schultze CN, AHI





# RAW FEEDING GUIDE

## for healthy, happy dogs

### Raw Feeding Guidelines

Raw feeding isn't as complicated as the vets and pet food manufacturers would have you believe. Here are the basic and simple rules you need to follow if you want to feed a raw diet.

### Balance the Calcium and Phosphorus

Calcium and phosphorus aren't fancy words to be feared. Meats are high in phosphorus and bones are high in calcium. In order to balance out these essential

minerals, then, about half to two thirds of your dog's diet should be meat and organs and about half to one third should be meaty bones such as lamb necks, chicken backs, beef ribs, pork tails and turkey necks. You can also feed whole fish, raw eggs with the shell on and green tripe, and these super foods all have the correct ratio of calcium to phosphorus.

Don't be fooled into thinking a meat and bone based diet is lacking in vitamins and minerals either. Your dog doesn't need the carbohydrates and grains that kibbles contain – it's just there to hold those kibbles together and provide a cheaper source of protein. Meats contain all of the essential amino acids (the basic structural building blocks of proteins) your dog needs, and they

do so in a ratio that's ideal for their complete use.

Meats also contain 12 of the 13 essential vitamins in large quantities. Meat is a very concentrated source of vitamins A, E, and the entire B complex. Vitamins D and B12 are found only in animal products (although adequate amounts of vitamin D can be attained with sufficient sunlight). The thirteenth vitamin, vitamin C, is found only in very small quantities in meat. However, unlike us, dogs can manufacture their own vitamin C because Mother Nature kindly provided them with the right tools to eat a meat based diet.

### Organ Meat Should Be About 15% Of The Diet

It's important to feed your dog all the parts of an animal, not just meat and bones. The organs, also known as offal, are the most nutrient dense parts of the animal. Compared to regular cuts of muscle meat, organ meats are more densely packed with just about every nutrient including heavy doses of B vitamins such as B1, B2, B6, folic acid and vitamin B12.

Organ meats are also loaded with minerals like phosphorus, iron, copper, magnesium and iodine, and provide the important fat soluble vitamins A, D, E and K. It's important to note that animals raised outside on grass contain even higher levels of these essential nutrients than their grain fed counterparts.

Liver is known to be one of the most concentrated sources of naturally occurring vitamin A of any food. Vitamin A aids digestion, keeps the reproductive organs healthy, and is a powerful antioxidant. Liver also contains one of the best, most usable sources of iron. Iron is necessary for many functions in the body, including the formation of hemoglobin, brain development and function, regulation of body temperature, muscle activity and catecholamine metabolism, to name just a few. A lack of iron will have a direct effect on the immune system; it diminishes the number of T-cells and the production of antibodies.

Feed liver once a week (or several small servings per week) and try to find an organic source whenever possible because the liver is responsible for filtering toxins out of the body. Other organs to consider include kidneys, lung, pancreas and ickier choices like eyeballs and brains. Tongue and heart are considered muscle meat, not organ meat, so throw them into your daily rotation.

### Byproducts Rule!

Feel free to feed other weird and wonderful things such as chicken feet, tracheas, tails, testicles and pizles (if you have to ask what those are, you don't want to know). Beef trachea, pig ears, chicken and turkey feet are loaded with natural chondroitin and glucosamine, which help to build healthy joints.

### How Often Should You Feed?

Most people feed their dogs twice per day. **Many raw feeders feed once a day and twice a day and some days not at all.** Dogs are built for periods of gorging and fasting. Fasting dogs once a week can create a healthier dog because the majority of immune function is in the gut. If the dog's digestive system is continually digesting meals, there is no time for house cleaning and the dog's immune system will suffer. **Once every week or two, try fasting your dog;** give him a nice beef neck bone to chew on and nothing else. The exception is puppies under six months of age who should eat three times per day.

## Never Feed Cooked Bones

Raw bones are soft enough to bend and digest easily but cooking bones makes them sharp and dangerous. For optimal safety, meal times should also be supervised.

## Balance Over Time

There's no need to be a slave to raw feeding. You don't have to mix all of the above in the exact proportions and mince them into little complete and balanced patties so your dog has every nutrient, every day. In essence, what you want to do is a little technique called frankenprey. Over the course of a week or a few days, you want to assemble a complete animal, to make sure your dog gets the right proportions. Think of what a chicken or goat is made of, inside and out, and try to assemble that into your dog's meals over several days, keeping the approximately same proportions of meat to bone and meat to organ meat. Now that is real balanced and complete nutrition for our carnivorous friends!

## Throw Away The Scoop

Are you nervous because there are no label instructions showing you how many cups to feed your dog? Start by feeding him about 2% of his body weight (if he's a puppy, feed 2.5% of his expected adult weight). Now you're going to put your common sense and good observation skills to work. If he starts looking plump, feed less. If he starts looking thin, feed more. It's not really scientific but it works.

## Know Where Your Meat Comes From

Here is one last important note and this is what makes raw feeding really attractive for many people: we know where our dog food comes from.

Whenever possible, try to get your dog's meat from lo-

cal producers instead of the grocery store. Try farmers' markets, local butcher shops, farmers and co-ops. The closer you get to the meat producers, the more you'll know about how those animals were treated. This applies to both the treatment of the meat as well as the ethics and sustainability behind the treatment of the animals themselves.

If you can afford it, try to find organic, grass fed and pasture raised animals. Their meat will contain fewer toxins and will be more nutritious. If you can't afford organic, try to find grass fed animals. If you can't afford that, then you will still be better off than feeding most commercial kibbles so just find the best quality meat source you can afford and watch for sales on the grass fed and organic meats.



# Raw Diets & Vitamins and Minerals

One of the main reasons pet owners are reluctant to switch their dog to a raw diet is the fear their dog wouldn't get enough vitamins and minerals. Many others feed plant and vegetable matter for an added vitamin and mineral punch. But if you're one of those raw feeders who's tired of mincing veggies – or you worry that carnivorous dogs shouldn't be eating that many veggies – then here's a guide to help you see the vitamin and mineral content in animal proteins.

Although it's hard to improve on a fresh, natural diet of species appropriate foods, you may have a dog who you feel needs extra nutrition (perhaps extra vitamin C for immune function or iodine for thyroid function). Luckily, there are nutritional herbs you can use to give your dog an additional boost without needing to mulch up those veggies. Most importantly, these whole food sources of vitamins and minerals are a much healthier choice than their synthetic counterparts. And unlike synthetic vitamins and minerals, herbs provide essential nutrients complete with the cofactors they need to make a healthy change in your dog – just as nature intended!

## Vitamins

### VITAMIN A

Enhances immunity, prevents eye problems and skin disorders. Important in bone and teeth formation. Protects against colds and infection. Slows aging process.

MEAT SOURCES: Chicken, pork, egg, salmon, halibut, haddock, sardines, liver, kidney, brain, tuna

HERBAL SOURCES: Alfalfa, borage leaves, burdock root, cayenne, chickweed, eyebright, fennel seed, hops, horsetail, kelp, lemongrass, mullein, nettle, oat straw, paprika, parsley, peppermint, plantain, raspberry leaves, red clover, rose hips, sage, uva ursi, violet leaves, watercress, yellow dock

### VITAMIN B1 (Thiamine)

Promotes growth, improves mental attitude, aids digestion, helps strengthen nervous system and prevent stress.

MEAT SOURCES: Liver, rabbit, chicken, turkey, pork, lamb, goat, ostrich, buffalo, egg, beef, salmon, halibut, haddock, sardine

HERBAL SOURCES: Alfalfa, bladder wrack, burdock root, catnip, cayenne, chamomile, chickweed, eyebright, fennel seed, fenugreek, hops, nettle, oat straw,



### VITAMIN B2 (Riboflavin)

Needed for red blood cell formation, aids growth and reproduction, promotes hair, skin and nail growth. Important in the prevention and treatment of cataracts.

MEAT SOURCES: Liver, heart, kidney, rabbit, chicken, turkey, pork, lamb, goat, ostrich, buffalo, egg, beef, salmon, halibut, haddock, sardine

HERBAL SOURCES: Alfalfa, bladder wrack, burdock root, catnip, cayenne, chamomile, chickweed, eyebright, fennel seed, fenugreek, ginseng, hops, horsetail, mullein, nettle, oat straw, parsley, peppermint, raspberry leaves, red clover, rose hips, sage, yellow dock

### VITAMIN B3 (Niacin)

Essential for proper circulation and healthy skin. Increases energy, aids digestion, helps prevent migraines.

MEAT SOURCES: Rabbit, chicken, turkey, pork, lamb, goat, ostrich, buffalo, egg, beef, salmon, halibut, haddock, sardine, tuna

HERBAL SOURCES: Alfalfa, burdock root, catnip, cayenne, chamomile, chickweed, eyebright, fennel seed, hops, licorice, mullein, nettle, oat straw, parsley, peppermint, raspberry leaf, red clover, rose hips, slippery elm, yellow dock

### VITAMIN B5 (Pantothenic Acid)

Enhances stamina, prevents anemia, helps wounds

heal, fights infection, strengthens immune system.

MEAT SOURCES: Liver, heart, kidney, rabbit, chicken, turkey, pork, lamb, goat, ostrich, buffalo, egg, beef, salmon, halibut, haddock, sardine

HERBAL SOURCES: Alfalfa, burdock root, nettle, yellow dock

### VITAMIN B6 (Pyridoxine)

Needed to produce hydrochloric acid. Aids in absorption of fats, and protein. Mildly diuretic, helps prevent kidney stones. Helpful in treating allergies, arthritis, and asthma.

MEAT SOURCES: Liver, heart, kidney, rabbit, chicken, turkey, pork, lamb, goat, ostrich, buffalo, egg, beef, salmon, halibut, haddock, sardine

HERBAL SOURCES: Alfalfa, catnip, oat straw

### VITAMIN B9 (Folate, Folic Acid)

MEAT SOURCES: Liver, rabbit, chicken, turkey, pork, lamb, goat, ostrich, buffalo, egg, beef, salmon, halibut, haddock, sardine

HERBAL SOURCES: Rosemary, dandelion, parsley, spirulina

### VITAMIN B12 (Cyanocobalamin)

Helps prevent anemia. Protects nervous system, improves concentration, aids digestion.

MEAT SOURCES: Liver, heart, kidney, rabbit, chicken, turkey, pork, lamb, goat, ostrich, buffalo, egg, beef, salmon, halibut, haddock, sardine

HERBAL SOURCES: Alfalfa, bladderwrack, hops

### VITAMIN C (Ascorbic acid)

Helps calcium and iron formation. Enhances immunity. Helps prevent cancer. Aids in production of anti-stress hormones. Antioxidant required for proper tissue

growth and repair, and adrenal gland function.

MEAT SOURCES: Liver, kidney, heart, fish

HERBAL SOURCES: Alfalfa, burdock root, cayenne, chickweed, eyebright, fennel seed, fenugreek, hops, horsetail, kelp, peppermint, mullein, nettle, oat straw, paprika, parsley, pine needle, plantain, raspberry leaf, red clover, rose hips, skullcap, violet leaves, yarrow, yellow dock

### VITAMIN D

Essential for calcium and phosphorous utilization. Prevents rickets. Needed for normal growth of bones and teeth. Helps regulate heartbeat. Prevents cancer and enhances immunity. Aids thyroid function and blood clotting.

MEAT SOURCES: Egg, sardine, liver, kidney, salmon, tuna

HERBAL SOURCES: Alfalfa, horsetail, nettle, parsley

### VITAMIN E

Antioxidant which helps prevent cancer and heart disease. Prevents cell damage. Reduces blood pressure and promotes healthy skin and hair.

MEAT SOURCES: Ostrich, buffalo, egg, halibut, haddock, sardine, kidney, liver, brain

HERBAL SOURCES: Alfalfa, bladder wrack, dandelion, dong quai, flaxseed, nettle, oat straw, raspberry leaf, rose hips

### VITAMIN K

Promotes healthy liver function. Helps bone formation and repair. Increases longevity.

MEAT SOURCES: Egg, halibut, haddock, sardine, liver

HERBAL SOURCES: Alfalfa, green tea, kelp, nettle, oat straw, shepherds purse

## MINERALS

### CALCIUM

Builds and protects bones and teeth. Helps maintain regular heartbeat. Prevents muscle cramping.

MEAT SOURCES: Rabbit, chicken, turkey, pork, lamb, goat, ostrich, buffalo, egg, beef, salmon, halibut, haddock, sardine

HERBAL SOURCES: Alfalfa, burdock root, cayenne, chamomile, chickweed, chicory, dandelion, eyebright, fennel seed, fenugreek, flaxseed, hops, horsetail, kelp, lemongrass, mullein, nettle, oat straw, paprika, parsley, peppermint, plantain, raspberry leaf, red clover, rose hips, shepherd's purse, violet leaves, yarrow, yellow dock

### COPPER

Converts iron to hemoglobin. Protects against anemia. Needed for healthy bones and joints.

MEAT SOURCES: Chicken, turkey, pork, lamb, goat, ostrich, buffalo, egg, beef, salmon, halibut, haddock, sardine

HERBAL SOURCES: Sheep sorrel

### IODINE

Needed in trace amounts for a healthy thyroid gland, and to help metabolize excess fat.

MEAT SOURCES: Salmon, haddock, seafood, egg

HERBAL SOURCES: Calendula, tarragon leaves, turkey rhubarb

### IRON

Essential for metabolism, and the production of hemoglobin.

MEAT SOURCES: Rabbit, chicken, turkey, pork, lamb, goat, ostrich, buffalo, egg, beef, salmon, halibut, haddock, sardine

HERBAL SOURCES: Alfalfa, burdock root, catnip, cay-

enne, chamomile, chickweed, chicory, dandelion, dong quai, eyebright, fennel seed, fenugreek, horsetail, kelp, lemongrass, licorice, milk thistle seed, mullein, nettle, oatstraw, paprika, parsley, peppermint, plantain, raspberry leaf, rose hips, sarsaparilla, shepherd's purse, uva ursi, yellow dock

### MAGNESIUM

Prevents calcification of soft tissue. Helps reduce and dissolve calcium phosphate kidney stones. Helps prevent birth defects. Improves cardiovascular system.

MEAT SOURCES: Rabbit, chicken, turkey, pork, goat, ostrich, buffalo, egg, beef, salmon, halibut, haddock, sardine

HERBAL SOURCES: Alfalfa, bladder wrack, catnip, cayenne, chamomile, chickweed, dandelion, eyebright, fennel, fenugreek, hops, horsetail, lemongrass, licorice, mullein, nettle, oat straw, paprika, parsley, peppermint, raspberry leaf, red clover, sage, shepherd's purse, yarrow, yellow dock

### MANGANESE

Minute quantities of this mineral are needed for healthy nerves, blood sugar regulation, normal bone growth, and thyroid hormone production.

MEAT SOURCES: Rabbit, chicken, turkey, pork, goat, ostrich, buffalo, egg, beef, salmon, haddock, halibut, sardine

HERBAL SOURCES: Alfalfa, burdock root, catnip, chamomile, chickweed, dandelion, eyebright, fennel seed, fenugreek, ginseng, hops, horsetail, lemongrass, mullein, parsley, peppermint, raspberry leaf, red clover, rose hip, wild yam, yarrow, yellow dock

### PHOSPHOROUS

Needed for teeth and bone formation, nerve impulse transfer, normal heart rhythm, and kidney function.

MEAT SOURCES: Rabbit, turkey, pork, lamb, goat, os-

trich, buffalo, egg, beef, salmon, halibut, haddock, sardine

HERBAL SOURCES: Burdock root, turkey rhubarb, slippery elm bark

### POTASSIUM

Regulates water balance, and muscle function. Important for health nervous system and regular heart rhythm.

MEAT SOURCES: Rabbit, chicken, turkey, pork, lamb, goat, ostrich, buffalo, egg, beef, salmon, halibut, haddock, sardine

HERBAL SOURCES: Catnip, hops, horsetail, nettle, plantain, red clover, sage, skullcap

### SELENIUM

Provides an important trace element for prostate gland in males. Protects immune system and helps regulate thyroid hormones.

MEAT SOURCES: Rabbit, chicken, turkey, pork, lamb, goat, ostrich, buffalo, egg, beef, salmon, halibut, haddock, sardine

HERBAL SOURCES: Alfalfa, burdock root, catnip, cayenne, chamomile, chickweed, fennel seed, ginseng, garlic, hawthorn berry, hops, horsetail, lemongrass, milk thistle nettle, oat straw, parsley, peppermint, raspberry leaf, rose hips, sarsaparilla, uva ursi, yarrow, yellow dock

### ZINC

Promotes growth and mental alertness. Accelerates healing. Regulates oil glands. Promotes healthy immune system, and healing of wounds.

MEAT SOURCES: rabbit, chicken, turkey, pork, lamb, goat, ostrich, buffalo, egg, beef, salmon, halibut, haddock, sardine

HERBAL SOURCES: Alfalfa, burdock root, cayenne, chamomile, chickweed, dandelion, eyebright, fennel seed, hops, milk thistle, mullein, nettle, parsley, rose hips, sage, sarsaparilla, skullcap, wild yam

# Bonus Content

Enjoy these article excerpts by Pet Nutrition Expert Kymthy Schultz as she discusses how to transition to a raw diet and what you should do about the fruits and veggies.

## Transitioning to a Raw Diet

You're probably familiar with the saying "life is a journey." And if you've recently decided to feed your dog a raw diet but aren't sure how to proceed, then you've hit a well worn fork in that road. Even if you've passed the speed bump and have experienced feeding a raw diet, it's always a good idea to get an occasional tune-up. You know, look under the hood, check the fluid levels and make sure you're good to go for the long haul. You want your dog friend to be happy and healthy for a lifetime.

**If you can't feed your dog a raw diet with love and confidence, perhaps you're not ready for the switch. It's not really fair to your dog to put down his bowl of raw food while your finger is poised over 911 on the telephone. That's not good for anyone's digestion.**

It's easy to see why a person could have a rough time figuring out exactly how to transition their dog to a raw diet. There's a world of information available on the subject and yet much of it is conflicting. Insecurity comes easily when one's caught in the crossfire of strongly held opinions and dictums. But please know, newcomer, that your very willingness to put time and energy into providing a better life for your dog through good nutrition is an effort that all raw feeders can agree to applaud you for.

So, here you are at that famous fork in the road and

you're ready to switch your furry friend's diet to that of nutrient rich, raw food.

Let's get your motor running and head out on the highway with these five tips on how to transition your dog to a raw food diet (remember, they were born to eat wild).

## Diet Decisions

How do you decide which diet advice to follow? Are you feeling overwhelmed with the research you've done? How can you be sure you're doing it right when all the "experts" say they have the answer and yet there seem to be 200 different answers? It's actually not very



difficult if you ask the real expert: your dog. As long as you keep your dog's digestive system in mind, you'll never go wrong. Your dog's entire body is perfectly designed to eat specific foods. Feed your dog according to its physiology.

## Get Your Ducks in a Row

Or chicken, or lamb, or beef. That is, be prepared. Don't just start giving handfuls of hamburger to your dog and leave it at that. Make a game plan. Find a source for the ingredients you'll be using.

Don't worry, it's not difficult. There's a grocery store near you and that'll do just fine. As you branch out, you may find good deals on meat, bone, and such at more exotic places such as the old fashioned butcher shop, or meat markets, farmers' markets, co-ops, and even online groups that deal exclusively with raw food for dog lovers. Unless you have a small number of small dogs, you may want to purchase a freezer to store all those great deals on meat that you're going to bring home.

## Drum Roll, Please

Okay, time to start giving your dog some of this great stuff you've bought. If you're nervous about transitioning your dog to a raw diet, take a moment to think it through. You've done your homework, you have the food, and the dog is probably creating puddles of drool as he's watched you bring home the raw goodies.

Give yourself a moment of empowerment. Nobody knows your dog and his habits better than you. So, if you're asking yourself whether you should transition to the new diet slowly or all at once, you are the best person to answer that question based on what you know about your dog. Unless you feel otherwise, simply preparing a good raw meal and putting the dish down usually works well. Keep in mind that a cooked kibble or canned food product is digested more slowly than raw meat. So, if you combine the two, you force the raw meat to stay in your dog's body longer than it

should. This could set up a situation where negative bacteria proliferate, in addition to other digestive impairment.

You may want to start with a slightly smaller meal of the new diet, to avoid overwhelming the dog's system



with something new. You can personalize the diet by feeding types and forms of raw food that you feel your dog will do best on. You can also customize the diet for a dog who currently has health issues.

## Change is Good

You've probably heard that changing your dog's food, even kibble to kibble, may cause loose stools. You may have also heard about "detox." Both conditions are possible when switching your dog to a raw diet. First, any change in food may disrupt your dog's digestive system and second, a good raw diet may give your

dog's body the renewed strength to do some body repair and healing (otherwise known as "detox" or "detoxification").

In this area, as in everything, there's no "one size fits all" guideline. Each dog will handle the switch and detox differently. The amount of inner house cleaning a dog does depends a lot on his current state of health and history. Look to your dog; he should be happy and headed in a good direction.

## Breathe!

If you cannot feed your dog a raw diet with love and confidence, perhaps you're not ready for the switch. It's not really fair to your dog to put down his bowl of raw food while your finger is poised over 911 on the telephone. That's not good for anyone's digestion. Meal time should be a time of love and happiness. You've done your homework and you've put together a fantastic meal for your dog. Let your love and care for your canine companion fill the kitchen.

## Bonus Tip: Don't Be a Jerk

Many people who feed a raw diet may have had to fight for their right to do so. Perhaps you've been up against major opposition and have become stronger

in voice. Maybe in your quest to do best by your dog, you've had to change some of your own beliefs and now you're quite vested in those ways. Or you're so pleased with your knowledge that you want to change the world! You are to be commended for sticking up for your dog and for wanting to help others. But, please do so in a manner in which you would want to be treated yourself. There are individuals and groups of raw feeders who are quite militant about how to feed dogs, using fear and condemnation as motivational tools. This is not what's needed. Healthy discussion and respect work much better towards education. So, avoid the party poopers and join the fun with your healthy dog. By the way, it's BYOB (bring your own bones)!

That's really all there is to raw feeding. If you want to know more, there are lots of good holistic vets and books to help you fine tune your dog's meals.

***Kymthy R. Schultze has been a trailblazer in the field of animal nutrition for over two decades. She is one of the world's leading experts on nutrition and holistic care for dogs and is a nutritional consultant for veterinarians, pet companies, and dog lovers alike. When not busy giving seminars, consultations, writing, or researching, she enjoys preparing delicious meals for good friends, furry and non-furry. Find Kymthy's books and more information by visiting her website at [www.kymthy.com](http://www.kymthy.com).***

