



My Drift

Title: Dog Food

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Date: 20 May 2022

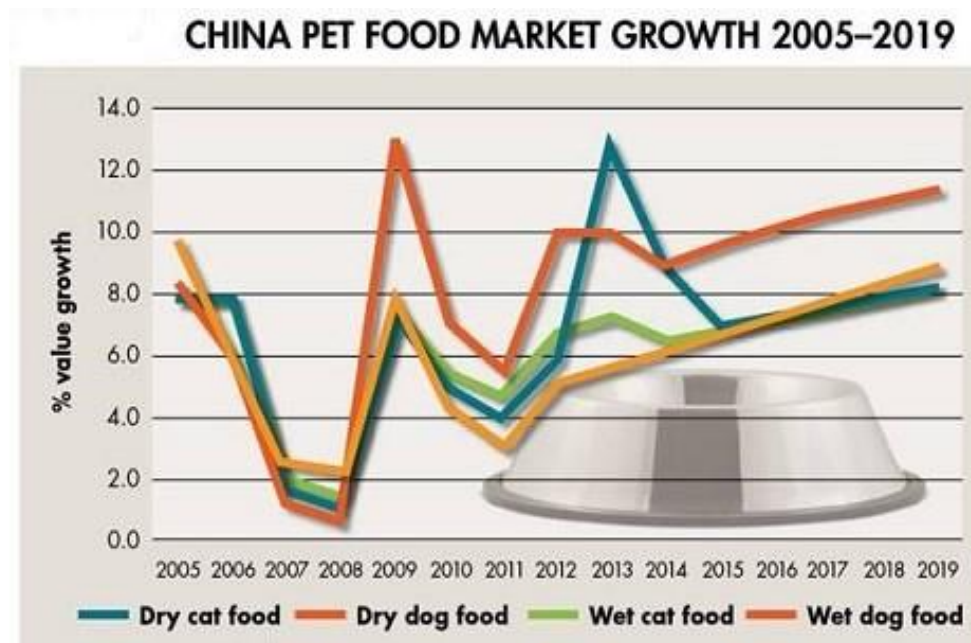
Article Number: 389-2022-10



For years now we have been hearing that much of the food we feed our pets comes from China. There are also many reports saying some of this pet food is unhealthy and might make our pets sick or even kill them. Is this true? In this article, we are going to find out a few things about the dog food from China and dog food in general.

Some Facts about the China Pet Food Market

The market is segmented by product type (dry pet food, wet pet food, treats/snacks, and other product types), animal type (dog, cat, bird, and other animal types), and sales channel (specialized pet shops, internet sales, supermarkets, and other sales channels). For purposes of this article, I have lumped all pet foods together and the China export market size was valued at \$1.5 billion U.S. dollars in 2021. In other words, that is how much money we U.S. pet owners spent on pet food products that came from China.



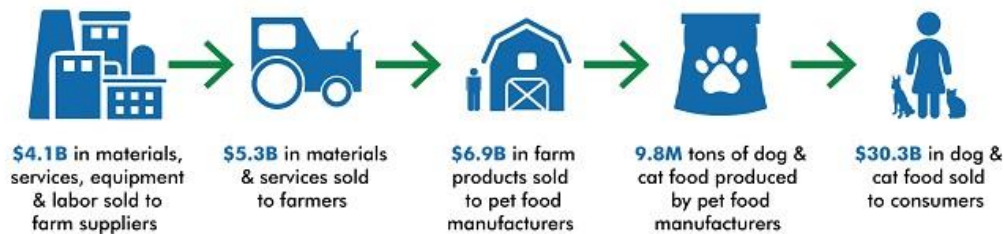
Yes, the largest import supplier of pet food to the U.S. is China, posting an impressive 70% import market share in the industry for the year 2021.

Okay, I think the above information shows that a lot of the pet food sold in the U.S. comes from China. There are many kinds of pets, but for the rest of this article, I'm going to narrow my research and reporting to dogs and cats only.



There are about 90 million dogs and 96 million cats living in the United States today in 2022. They all like to eat. With over two-thirds of U.S. households owning at least one dog or cat and more than \$30 billion in pet food sales annually, the pet food industry is big business.

PET FOOD MANUFACTURERS GENERATE ECONOMIC VALUE THROUGHOUT THE SUPPLY CHAIN



Based on a 2020 report

Does China have a history of producing contaminated pet food? Yes.

I'm going to provide a few examples over the years that demonstrate this fact.

Beginning in March 2007, there was a widespread recall of many brands of dog and cat foods due to contamination with melamine. The recalls in North America, Europe, and South Africa came in response to reports of kidney failure in pets. Tens of thousands of our beloved pets were seriously sickened and/or died as a result of consuming contaminated pet food from China. As of 11 April 2007, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration had received reports of approximately 8500 animal deaths, including at least 1950 cats and 2200 dogs who died after eating the contaminated food. Several years later, many cats and dogs were still suffering from the devastating effects of this tainted food.



Menu Foods, a leading North American private-label manufacturer of pet products, announced a massive nationwide recall of over 50 popular pet food brands that were sickening and killing our cats and dogs. Over 60 million cans, pouches, and bags of pet food were contaminated with melamine. Melamine, an industrial chemical used to make a number of products, including plastics, glue and even concrete, was in the food we were feeding our pets!

Menu Foods was the largest manufacturer for big brand names like Eukanuba, Iams, Science Diet and Nutro Natural Choice, as well as many private-label store brands. This tainted pet food went to stores like Wal-Mart, Petsmart, Kroger, and COSTCO, who had to recall over 60 million containers of pet food due to contamination. And cross contamination resulted in even more brands being recalled.

Just how could this have happened? Well, it seems that Chinese suppliers added melamine illegally to artificially boost protein percentages to add more value as high protein products.

2012 ABC News Headline: Toxic Treats from China Killing U.S. Dogs

In just four months, the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) fielded over 530 complaints from pet owners claiming their dogs suffered illness or death after eating chicken jerky treats made in China.

After the 2007 massive contamination and recall, did you really think China would stop putting deadly chemicals in the dog and cat food sent to the U.S.?

In addition to Melamine, here are a few other chemicals found in pet food from China:

- **Antibiotics** - Especially in dog or cat food using chicken as their meat source. Most antibiotics are banned for use in poultry in the U.S. but are used freely in China, adding another layer of potential danger.
- **Propylene glycol** - A chemical used in the production of antifreeze. Dog food companies in China have been known to add it to wet foods to preserve the moisture content. Studies have shown adverse effects like seizures, nervous system toxicity, agitation, and cardiac arrhythmia.
- **Mycotoxins** - Toxic by-products that occur from mold metabolism in grains found in dog food, such as corn, wheat, rye, and barley. Studies show that they are highly toxic, causing anything from mild sickness to cancer and even death. Results from samples from pet foods from China show 96 percent were contaminated with mycotoxins.
- **Cyanuric acid** - A chemical often used in herbicides and disinfectants. It was discovered in pet food as part of the 2007 melamine recall and was thought to have made the toxic effects of melamine worse. In combination with melamine, it can form dangerous crystals in the kidneys, leading to damage and kidney failure.

Between 2008 and 2020, the FDA reported that dog foods imported from China resulted in 59 major recall outbreaks and over 3,300 illnesses and dog deaths.



The first question that comes to my mind when discussing the dangers of pet food from China is, “Why in the world does the U.S. government allow it to be imported at all?”

The reason is twofold. The amount of leftover waste from poultry production, in particular, has fueled the idea of turning it into pet feed. China produces, consumes, and exports a high amount of chicken meat, and the leftovers (also what we call “by-products” like feet, tendons, organs, anything not packed and sold become waste if they aren’t used. Since this waste wouldn’t be used otherwise, pet food companies have decided to use it as a cheaper option to produce their dog food instead of purchasing premium home-grown chickens in the U.S.

The second reason is due to production and labor costs. In the same way that it’s cheaper for technology companies to have phones, computers, and other high-end technologies in China, it’s also cheaper for pet food companies to pay to produce in China. Not to mention, China is also a major producer of Vitamin C and other vitamins that are common additions into pet foods, making those cheaper to add-in in the country.

Both of these reasons tell me that many pet food companies (in China and the U.S.) are more interested in profits than the health and wellbeing of our dogs and cats. Even when China companies play by the rules, the quality and nutritional benefits of the products being produced is highly questionable.

How Can I Avoid Dog Food from China?

Considering the not-so-pleasant aspects of dog food from China, it's obvious we'd all like to know how to avoid it. Some pet stores like Petco have even pulled brands manufactured in China from their shelves due to controversy; however, this doesn't mean the dog foods they are carrying don't contain ingredients from China. For instance, a brand could be labeled, "Made in the USA," but still contain ingredients sourced from China.

Partial List of Pet Food that contains Ingredients Sourced from China

Manufacturer	Label Names	Sourced from China
Artemis Company	Artemis	Yes
Petsmart Label Brand	Authority	Yes
Natural Balance Pet Foods Inc	Natural Balance	Yes
Hill's Pet Nutrition Inc	Hills Science Diet Hills Prescription Diet Hills Ideal Balance Hills Healthy Advantage	Yes
Costco's Brand	Kirkland	Yes
Mars Petcare US Inc	Eukanuba Evo Goodlife Recipe HealthWise Iams Innova Natura Pet Nutro Pedigree Royal Canin	Yes
Nestlé	Purina Pro Plan Purina One Purina Veterinary Diet	Yes

Examples of Dog Food with Ingredients Sourced and/or Manufactured in China



Pet Food Ingredients

Pet food manufacturers use an estimated 3.8 million tons of animal-based products, such as rendered products or meat and poultry. They also use 4 million tons of farm ingredients, such as grains, soy products and fruits and vegetables, and approximately 200,000 tons of seafood products. Many of these ingredients are left over from making food for people, such as parts of the animal that people do not eat, reducing food and environmental waste while still providing the nutrition pets need.

The Most Common Dog Food Ingredients

- Cereals, which are basic carbohydrates like grain, rice bran, and beet pulp.
- Vegetables.
- Fish, which provide both protein and calcium.
- Fats and oils, a source for vitamins, as well as the energy that dogs need to survive.
- Sodium and chloride.

Note: Corn is the most commonly used pet food ingredient – yearly almost one million tons of corn is included in cat and dog foods.



If you are looking for an “All American” dog food brand, you need to trace the source of the ingredients being used in the food first. Finding the source of ingredients, however, is far from simple.

Dog food companies that claim “dog food made in the USA” often intentionally mislead customers to think that their ingredients are also sourced in the U.S. They do this by slapping the “Made in America” stamp on their bag and adding claims like “No ingredients sourced in China” or “Responsibly sourced ingredients” as a distraction.

These claims are designed to put your mind at ease, yet they tell you nothing about where ingredients were sourced. **You need to find out for sure where the ingredients were sourced, and that country must be the U.S., Canada or another reliable country.** FYI – There are some countries worse than China!

Consumers tired of pet food companies tricking them into buying fake “Made in USA” pet foods have previously filed lawsuits against well-known brands for fake labels. Several of these lawsuits include J.M. Smuckers, Nestle Purina Petcare, Merrick Pet Care, Fromm, and Tyson Foods.

Some Pet Foods that are Sourced, Manufactured, and Packed in the USA



Other Dog Foods of Note (Made in the USA but are semi-sourced outside the USA)

Some other pet food manufacturers and companies source ingredients inside and outside the U.S. but have taken the pet food transparency pledge to ensure quality and report the ingredients' origin. None of the ingredients come from China.

This means that they are willing to be fully transparent about the ingredients that go into their dog food made in USA recipes. Here are all of them:

- Addiction Pet Food
- provide Pet Food
- Answers Pet Food
- Beau's To Go Pet Food
- Bobcat Raw Pet Food
- Carna4 Pet Food
- Care Pet Food
- Darwin's Pet Food
- Harvey's Pet Food
- Evermore Pet Food
- Farmina Pet Food
- Fresh is Best Pet Food
- The Honest Kitchen Pet Foods
- Just Food for Dogs
- K9 Natural Pet Food
- Maxota Raw Pet Food
- Mountain Dog Food
- Mulligan Stew Pet Food
- My Perfect Pet Food
- **Nature's Logic Pet Food**
- Nuggets Healthy Eats
- Open Farm Pet Food
- Primal Pet Food
- Rams Dog Food
- Souly Raw Pet Food
- Verus Pet Food

Nature's Logic Pet Food is high-lighted because that is what we feed our dog Apache. I have done the research and it is rated as one of the best dry dog foods on the market. I buy it at an exclusive Pet Store in Honolulu on South King Street. The store's name is "Heart of Town Pet Supply".

Nature's Logic Pet Food is manufactured in Mt. Pleasant, Texas (dry food), Emporia, Kansas (can food), Lincoln, Nebraska (raw food) and is available nationwide. Ingredients are sourced from the U.S., New Zealand, Italy, France, and Norway.

All Nature's Logic regulatory declarations are critically evaluated by board certified veterinary nutritionist David Dzanis, DVM, PhD, DACVN. All formulas are also run through specialized formula software on-site at production facilities and analyzed at 3rd party labs for accurate declarations.



Apache's Other Food and Treats

Apache likes chicken such as COSTCO's rotisserie chicken. Yes, these are cheap at \$4.99 each but they don't come from China. All of Costco's chicken products come from its own chicken farm and processing facility located in Nebraska.



Apache gets a steak (it is called a beef shank) every morning. Beef shanks come with a round bone in it. Apache eats the steak and then chews on the bone – it is good for his teeth. I buy them in bulk from Don Quijote in Waipahu – I know the head butcher Randy. They cost about \$7 a steak.

We believe that all these steaks help Apache maintain a healthy shinny coat.



Apache

For a snack, Apache gets a beef jerky. My wife buys two kinds online. I have not taken the time to check out these jerkies. So, we will do it now! I really hope they don't come from China.

FULL MOON Jerky Tenders

All Full Moon Beef Jerky treats are made with organic, grass-fed beef and are always 100% human grade. I guess this means this jerky is safe for us humans to eat if we really get hungry.



Full Moon beef treats are made in the United States using regionally sourced ingredients, including USDA approved beef raised on family ranches.

PAWSTRUCK Beef Jerky

Pawstruck Beef Jerky Treat COMPARISON		
		
		OTHERS
✓	Natural	✗ Artificial Ingredients
✓	Free-Range, Grass-Fed Beef	✗ Caged, Grain-Fed Beef
✓	Made in South America	✗ Questionable Sourcing
✓	Supports Joint Health	✗ Empty Calories
✓	Low in Fat, High in Protein	✗ High in Fat, Low in Protein

The only thing that bothers me about the above chart is that Pawstruck Beef Jerky is sourced and made in South America (Brazil and Colombia) – not made in the good ole USA. Pawstruck says that South America has some of the best beef available on the planet. They go on to say these single-ingredient treats are slow-cooked with free-range, grass-fed beef. I think they are safe for Apache.

And to wash all this good dog food down, Apache drinks only ice-cold Dasani water. My wife doesn't want him drinking that nasty tap water. The only one in our house who drinks tap water is me. Actually, I believe tap water is safer to drink than bottled water.

Regardless, our dog is spoiled rotten. I sure hope all this great food is not killing him.



Cost of Dog Food

The average monthly cost for dog food for one dog is about \$50 or \$600 a year. The average monthly cost for dog treats is about \$20 or \$240 a year.

The average monthly cost for our spoiled Rottweiler is about \$410 or \$4920 a year. (i.e., \$210 for steak - \$140 for dry dog food - \$40 for treats - \$20 for water)



As all responsible dog owners know, there are many other expenses such as:

- Trips to the vet
- Heart worm and flea/tick medicine
- Toys
- Harness, collar, and leash
- Shampoo, conditioner, and of course poop bags
- An airtight dry dog food container plus water and food bowls
- Dog tags

If you love your dog, no expense is too much!

Summary

What did we learn in this article?

- **The pet food industry is big business.**
- **Many pet food manufactures are more interested in profits than the health and wellbeing of our dogs and cats.**
- **Don't feed your pet food sourced or manufactured in China.**
- **The good and bad ingredients in dog food.**
- **Owning a pet can be expensive.**
- **Apache is a spoiled brat!**

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