

Preserving For Your Pets

Building a Food Security Plan for Your Dogs and Cats

Pet Food Security

- Our pets rely on us for every meal, and some have special dietary needs.
- Preparedness plans should account for supply disruptions, recalls, and emergencies.
- Include pets when calculating your household food supply.

Dogs vs. Cats

Dogs: Omnivores with a carnivorous bias. They thrive on animal protein and can also use digestible carbohydrates, vegetables, fruits, and healthy fats.

Cats: Obligate carnivores. They require high animal protein, taurine, moisture, and healthy fats, with minimal carbohydrates.

Taurine: Especially important for cats and certain dog breeds with deficiencies; good sources include heart, liver, dark poultry meat, and sardines.

Foods to Avoid

Dogs: Grapes & raisins, onions & garlic, all sugars (especially xylitol), macadamia nuts, avocado. No Nutritional Value: radishes, cucumbers, celery.

Cats: Chocolate, onions & garlic, chives, leeks, grapes & raisins, all sugars (especially xylitol). No Nutritional Value: banana, apple, strawberries, peas, corn, potatoes.

Preserving Food for Your Pets

- Pressure canning
- Dehydrating
- Freezing
- Freeze drying

Pressure Canning Keys

- Three key factors: Time, Temperature, and Acidity (pH).
- Low-acid foods have a pH of 4.6 or higher and must be pressure canned.
- Bacteria grow fastest between 40°F and 140°F.
- Low-acid foods such as meat, vegetables, and soups require 240°F+.

Dehydrating / Freeze Drying

- Dehydrating removes moisture using low heat and airflow; freeze-drying freezes food and removes moisture through sublimation.
- Both methods are excellent for creating lightweight treats, snacks, and individual ingredients for dogs and cats.
- Great options include liver, chicken, fish, and sweet potatoes, prepared for treats or later meal use.
- Freeze-dried foods may be rehydrated before feeding when additional moisture is desired.

Proper Storage

- Remove rings and wash jars with hot soapy water.
- Label lids and bags with the recipe name and date.
- Store below 95°F; 50°F–70°F is best for quality retention.
- Choose a low-humidity location away from direct and indirect sunlight.
- Avoid storage above appliances.
- Limited space? Consider linen or coat closets, under beds, or rarely accessed kitchen cupboards.

How to Detect Spoilage

- A swollen lid or broken seal.
- Streaks originating at the top of the jar.
- Rising air bubbles or unnatural color.
- Foul smell when opening.
- Mold on the food surface.

If any of these are present, DISCARD.

Notes
