



Raw Food Diets for Kittens

Progress report, Winn grant 09-002

Nutritional adequacy and performance of raw food diets in kittens

Investigators: Beth Hamper, Claudia Kirk, Joe Bartges. University of Tennessee

This study examined the feeding of a raw diet and its effects on kittens. The feeding trials have been completed using 24 kittens and two different raw food diets (homemade and commercial). The control diet was a commercially available kitten food. Weight gain over a 10-week period was at the high end of previously determined data for all kittens. Male kittens had higher weight gain than females, but all diets performed equally well. Blood protein and amino acid levels were in the normal range. Evidence of *Salmonella* infection was evident in some kittens fed the raw diet, but was not clinically significant.

Both raw diets met the claims for nutritional adequacy. White blood cell counts were slightly elevated in the kittens fed the homemade raw diet, likely a reflection of the higher microbial content. Innate immunity appeared to function at a higher level in the kittens fed a raw diet. One litter of 4 kittens experienced diarrhea. Overgrowth of *Clostridium perfringens* was later documented; this bacterium thrives in the gut on high protein diets. Two of the litters had diarrhea due to *Anaerobiosprillum* spp, a normal flora but capable of causing disease. Digestibility was highest for the raw diets, leading to less fecal matter. A final report will be available upon completion of the primary investigator's dissertation. [MK]

Related articles: [Stiver S, Frazier K, Mauel M and Styer E. Septicemic salmonellosis in two cats fed a raw-meat diet. J Am Anim Hosp Assoc. 2003; 39: 538-42](#)

Source: Winn Feline Foundation

Town of Cary Considers Neutering Programs

The town is considering official recognition of local groups' "trap-neuter-return" programs, which slowly eliminate feral feline colonies by ending cats' reproduction, returning them to the wild and feeding them for the duration of their lives. The Cary Town Council voted Wednesday without discussion to have staff draft the proposed ordinance, which will recognize "TNR programs and their contribution to the issue of feral cat colonies." The town will take no responsibility for maintenance of the cat colonies. The draft rules will go back to Council members for discussion.

Under the current law when a feral cat complaint is received the cats can be trapped and taken to the animal shelter where most are euthanized. The proposed ordinance would directly involve local nonprofits in the town's cat management. Under the new ordinance, local animal control officers would allow complaining residents to choose euthanasia or sterilization for nuisance cats.

According to an NC State University study, a neutering program steadily shrank colonies. Once neutered and tagged, the feral cats are returned to where they were captured, and a caretaker provides food and water. Managed colonies disappear in an average of 13 years, according to the study.

Full article at Cary News: <http://tinyurl.com/7vpx9cu>

Dunn Officials Say No to Pit Bull Ban

ABC Local reports that Dunn city leaders have refused to consider a ban on pit bulls. Previously the Dunn chief of police wanted the city to pass an ordinance banning pit bulls. However, council members instead decided to form a committee to study the problem and promised to work with the police chief to beef up the town's existing animal ordinance. The city manager hopes to have recommendations ready before July 1.

NCRAOA is opposed to breed specific legislation. Over the decades it has been the custom to point angry fingers at different breeds of dogs to designate them as dangerous or potentially dangerous. Today, the dog that was the mascot of the "Our Gang Comedies" and the trademark of Buster Brown Shoes, the pit bull or his look-alike is called the most dangerous dog on earth. Unsupervised dogs, no matter what the breed, have the potential to become dangerous. Since the United States dog population numbers in the tens of millions NCRAOA maintains it is hysteria rather than factual research that designates certain breeds as being dangerous. Breed specific dangerous dog laws are unfair, unnecessary, and target specific dog owners and their pets without justification. Read more at <http://www.ncraoa.com/licensing.html>

Local Pit Bull Wins 2nd in National Contest

Leah Brewer couldn't wait to enter her dog, Elle, in "Dog Whisperer" Cesar Millan's Pit Bull of the Year contest on his website in February. However, coming in as one of the top three in the national contest was a definite surprise.

Elle is a registered therapy dog, a certified Canine Good Citizen and member of the Halifax County Canine Good Citizens Group. She helps with children's reading programs, makes lots of public appearances and actively works to promote the good name of the pit bull breed across the Roanoke Valley. Brewer contends people need to be responsible for their animals, but people who are interacting with the animals need to be respectful of the animals, too. Elle is also an ambassador for pit bulls at www.imnotamonster.org. To learn more about Elle and her escapades, visit her on Facebook at Elle the Pit Bull.

Source: *The Daily Herald* <http://tinyurl.com/8xk8734>

Retail Spending on Pets Over \$50 Billion Annually

Americans spent \$50.96 billion on their pets in 2011.

That's an all-time high and the first time in history more than \$50 billion has gone to the dogs, cats, canaries, guppies and the like, the American Pet Products Association (APPA) said in a report issued Thursday. Food and vet costs accounted for about 65 percent of the spending. But it was a service category — one that includes grooming, boarding, pet hotels, pet-sitting and day care — that grew more than any other, surging 7.9 percent from \$3.51 billion in 2010 to \$3.79 billion in 2011.

APPA President Bob Vetere predicts services will grow 8.4 percent to an estimated \$4.11 billion in 2012. Spending in 2011 was up 5.3 percent from 2010, when it totaled \$48.35 billion, Vetere said. He estimated 2012 sales would total \$53 billion.

In 2011, people spent \$19.85 billion on food, \$13.41 billion on vet care, \$11.77 billion on supplies and over-the-counter medicines, \$3.79 billion on other services and \$2.14 billion on live animal purchases. In 2010, they spent \$18.76 billion on food, \$13.01 billion on vet care, \$10.94 billion on supplies and over-the-counter medicines, \$3.51 billion on other services and \$2.13 billion on live animal purchases.

APPA numbers indicate that animal sales and adoptions are flattening out and the number of people who switched over to high-end food products is topping out. *Source: ABC News*

NC Appeals Court Says Pets Are Property

The North Carolina Court of Appeals on Tuesday agreed with state officials about the value of a pet's life, ending a long legal battle over how a family should be compensated for the loss of their Jack Russell terrier five years ago.

Herb and Nancy Shera's 12-year-old dog, Laci, died almost five years ago when veterinarians at North Carolina State University accidentally inserted a feeding tube in her trachea instead of her esophagus, drowning the dog over a seven-hour period. The school's College of Veterinary Medicine admitted negligence and has since changed its procedures to ensure similar incidents don't occur again. State regulators also reprimanded the veterinarians who oversaw Laci's care at the small-animal hospital on campus.

Under North Carolina law, pets are considered property, and the North Carolina Industrial Commission, which handles tort claims against the state, awarded the couple \$350, which commissioners said was the cost of replacing Laci with another Jack Russell. The Shera's were seeking an award of more than more than \$28,000 since that is what they spent for cancer treatment at the NCSU small animal hospital.

Source: WRAL

Activist Ordered to Remove Online Posts

A Florida animal-rights activist accused of threatening a Detroit researcher has been ordered to scrub any online rants about him or possibly face jail. Donal O'Leary of Wayne State University has a personal-protection order against Camille Marino, founder of the group "Negotiation is Over" in Wildwood, FL. But his lawyer says the order has been violated with online threats and publication of O'Leary's address and personal information. Marino calls O'Leary a "war criminal" and worse for using dogs for cardiovascular experiments. A Wayne County FL judge on Wednesday ordered her to remove critical online posts about O'Leary as a condition for her return to Florida. She was arrested at a Florida protest last month and sent to Michigan after missing court hearings. Marino's lawyer says she has free-speech rights. The next hearing is May 2.

Marino and her followers praise the tactics of suicide bombers. In an interview Marino described her actions against researchers. "What I can do, however, is shatter their sense of privacy, safety and complacency outside of their labs, by exposing them where they live, where they worship, where their kids go to school and where they gather for festive occasions. Abusers should get used to having their atrocities exposed and I will do everything in my power to shatter their peace of mind."

Animal Undercover Filming Bills Now Law in Iowa and Utah

Legislatures in seven states — Illinois, Indiana, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, New York and Utah— have considered laws that would enhance penalties against those who secretly record video of livestock, though the efforts have stalled in some states.

The Iowa measure establishes a new penalty for lying on a job application to get access to a farm facility, making it a serious misdemeanor. A second conviction would be an aggravated misdemeanor.

The Los Angeles-based group Mercy for Animals, which has released undercover videos depicting conditions for chickens and hogs in Iowa, has planned a demonstration at the Iowa Capitol on Thursday. Members of the group will dress in black and wear blindfolds and gags to illustrate what they call an ag-gag bill. "Iowa has some of the weakest animal cruelty laws in the nation," Nathan Runkle, the group's spokesman, said in a statement. "Lawmakers should be focusing on strengthening these pathetic laws, not silencing whistleblowers who expose animal abuse or other serious issues involving the safety and security of the American food supply."

Craig Hill, president of the Iowa Farm Bureau Federation, said "I hope that we can display some success here and other states can follow suit and gain from the experience that we've had here developing this bill in Iowa," he said. "We don't want to do anything that amends somebody's right to turn somebody in if they're a bad actor or limit the freedom of speech. That's not the goal here."

Gov. Terry Branstad on Monday defended his decision to sign into law a measure making Iowa the first state where it's a [crime](#) to lie in order to gain access to a livestock operation to record animal abuse. "My feeling is if somebody comes onto somebody else's property through fraud or deception or lying, that is a very serious violation of people's rights," Branstad said at his weekly news conference. "People should be held accountable for that."

Utah bill goes to Governor for signature

The bill, which passed the House 60-14 Friday, would make it a misdemeanor to film on private agricultural property without the owner's consent. The prohibition is needed because "national propaganda groups" are hiding cameras on agricultural property and using the footage as part of their larger agenda of shutting down the operations, said Rep. John Mathis, R-Vernal, the sponsor of House Bill 187. The Senate passed HB187 on a 24-5 vote, then the House approved Senate amendments 62-13. The bill now goes to Gov. Gary Herbert for his signature. The first version of the bill would have banned any photos of farm animals and operations without permission. Sen. Dave Hinkins, R-Orangeville, the Senate sponsor, amended the measure so that it "doesn't include people who are going to a farm on a field trip" and said it targets just "people who gain access under false pretenses."

Sources: *Wall Street Journal*; *The Republic*; *Salt Lake Tribune*

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