

## ***MYTH #2: "BUT IT'S ALL FIXED NOW."***

What do manufacturers, nutritional scientists and regulators do when faced with the discovery that their 100% complete processed foods are causing disease? First, they deny and attack critics. Then, when faced with mounting evidence, research is focused on the problem. When the nutrient problem is identified, it is quickly repaired – usually “reformulation” with added synthetic nutrients – and the event heralded as a marvel of pet food science. The new, repaired food is “100% complete.” The former, un-repaired food was also “100% complete”... See a problem?

The industry doesn't. After all, the problem has been fixed. Further, why should anyone expect perfection? Mistakes are made. Shouldn't we measure others by their willingness to discover the problem, admit error and make the necessary corrections? Does an eventual explanation of causes justify results?

Things would be more forgivable if they weren't claiming perfection in the first place – and not causing disease by so doing. “100% complete” means total, absolute perfection. Look it up. 100% does not mean 99.99%. Complete does not mean incomplete.

Neither is it valid to argue that “100% complete” has a special loose definition qualified by matching NRC minimal standards or feeding trial tests. The average person should be able to read a package and understand “100% complete” to mean just that, not a special case definition based on esoteric pet food industry argot and *caveat emptor*.

Real food consists of dozens of nutrients, perhaps over a hundred. Some known, some not. Processing destroys

or alters practically all of them. Correcting nutritional errors after disease results is commendable only if the food is not being foisted on the public as 100% complete.

There is also every reason to believe that only the more obvious tip of the iceberg has been noticed and corrected. The hidden jagged edges of exclusively fed 100% complete foods will continue to tear at the health bow of companion animals, robbing them of vitality in numerous subtle ways until they ultimately sink from decoys such as infection, old age, degenerative disease, genetics or unknown causes (see A, p.17; D & E, p.18; F, p.19; and L, p.21).

All is not well if 100% complete and balanced (fixed) foods are fed exclusively. Although the pet food industry is charitable with themselves for past errors (and the thousands of animals diseased from reliance on the 100% complete claim) the caring pet owner should not be. The lesson is, become cynical and skeptical, or the past will be prologue.



I'm starving –  
There's nothing around here with a “100% complete” AAFCO label.

### **MYTH #3: "PET FOOD INGREDIENTS MUST BE APPROVED."**

To assure safety and wholesomeness of pet foods, state and federal regulatory agencies control what can be used as ingredients. Additionally, ingredients listed on labels must be depicted by precise nomenclature dictated by these agencies.

The problem is, those who sit on the committees deciding what can or cannot be approved may have commercial links (see P, p.22). They can push through ingredients that should not be in foods, and prevent the approval of those which either rub prejudices the wrong way or which may create unwelcome competition to their own interests. On the other hand, state regulators (a manufacturer must get approval from each individual state) may have little nutritional knowledge, few if any academic credentials of note, but a lot of power.

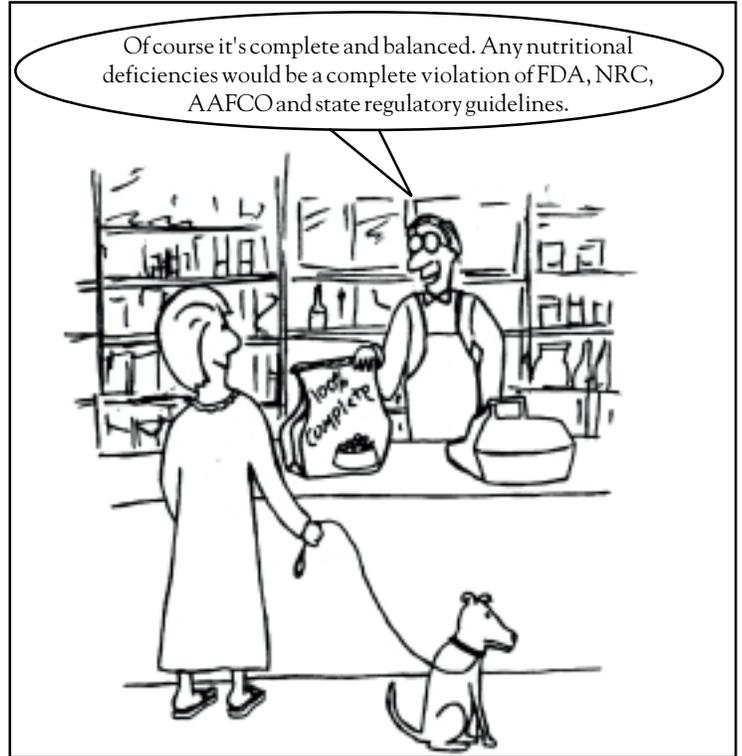
Nutritionists who are used to help make decisions about approval are steeped in the reductionistic point of view. Since they believe nutrition boils down to percentages – % protein, % fat, % fiber, etc. – almost anything can be an approved ingredient provided these numbers are known. Where there are deficiencies, a few synthetic vitamins here, a few additives there (all properly approved of course), and all is well. The end result of this unholy marriage between commercial interests, prejudice, scientific naivete, and regulatory dictatorship is the official AAFCO listing of approved pet food ingredients. Here are examples of what has been officially approved... and I'm not kidding:

"...dehydrated garbage - polyethylene roughage - hydrolyzed poultry feathers - hydrolyzed hair - hydrolyzed leather meal - some 36 chemical preservatives - peanut skins and hulls - corn cob fractions - ground corn cob-ground clam shells - poultry - cow and pig feces and litter - hundreds of chemicals - a host of antibiotic and chemotherapeutic pharmaceuticals - a variety of synthetic flavorings - adjuvants - sequestrates - stabilizers and anticaking agents..."

On the other hand, if a manufacturer wants to be innovative and pack as much natural nutrition into products as possible, important ingredients are not approved. For example, even though it has been proven that the amino acid, L-Carnitine, is deficient in processed pet foods, it is not approved and cannot be used (see M & N, p.21). Proteoglycans such as glucosamine and chondroitin and other ingredients such as collagen, all of which have been proven to help prevent and alleviate arthritic conditions, are not approved. Special natural foods that are particularly nutrient dense, such as bee pollen, composted sea vegetation, omega-3 fatty acids, various biologically active phytonutrients (dozens of these have been discovered and their proven effectiveness has created a class of beneficial ingredients known as nutraceuticals) and even organic ingredients cannot be used because they are not "approved." There is no question of safety here – as regulators pretend – for these foods have been consumed for eons by animals and humans without ill effect and are currently sold everywhere.

The absurdity of animal food regulatory overkill becomes apparent when the very ingredients banned are sitting on shelves in grocery and health food stores fully approved for human consumption.

"Approved" ingredient regulations cannot be trusted. Banning organic ingredients and approving dehydrated garbage makes it clear that the agenda of regulation is something different than encouraging optimal nutrition. This points to the need for consumers to not rely on regulators and not to trust "approved" ingredients, but rather to take matters into their own hands by learning how to feed a variety of truly wholesome natural foods.

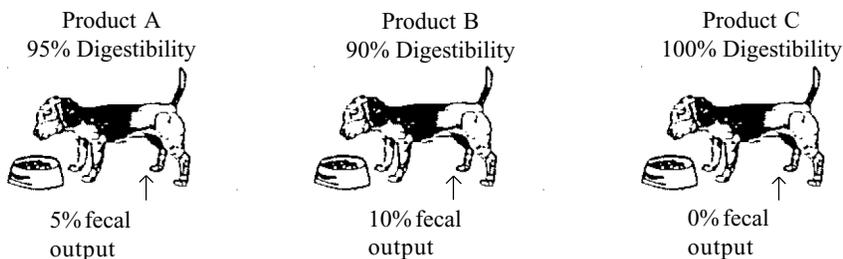


## **MYTH #4: “DIGESTIBILITY, ANALYSES AND AAFCO FEEDING TRIALS PROVE 100% COMPLETE.”**

Digestibility determines how much food is absorbed. Is food “A,” because it is 95% digestible, better than food “B,” which is 90% digestible? Not necessarily so. That would imply that if food “C” were 100% digestible, with zero fecal output, it would be the best food of all. Absurd. Also notice how each producers' advertisement claims that they win the digestibility war.

Feeding trials to “prove” “100% completeness” are short-term and deny that nutrition can have an effect beyond the few weeks used in a feeding trial. Undetected nutrient imbalance in youth has, for example, been shown to affect both animal and human susceptibility to many chronic degenerative diseases, and even impact the health of future generations by transferring genetic weakness.

### **DOES HIGHER DIGESTIBILITY EQUAL BETTER NUTRITION?**



If higher digestibility is the goal, then a 100% digestible food would be the ideal.  
But 0% fecal output would cause disease, not health.

Current regulatory emphasis is on feeding trials, since some animals fed foods meeting NRC analytical guidelines suffered nutrient deficiencies. However, such deficiencies have also been experienced by use of pet foods which have passed AAFCO feeding trials (see B, p.17; G & H, p.19; J, p.20; and N, p.21).

An AAFCO feeding trial requires a manufacturer to send food to a lab where it is fed to caged, often inbred, laboratory breeds for a period of 10-26 weeks. Hair, coat, weight, body measurement, and color of the blood are measured to determine nutritional perfection — “100% Completeness.” It’s like trying to measure the length of a virus with a yardstick. “Caged” human prisoners of war have *survived* for years on little more than water and rice. Survival,

or absence of crude measures of nutrient deficiency, does not equal nutritional perfection or “completeness.”

Additionally, results from an unfortunate laboratory-bred puppy living on concrete or in a stainless steel cage, under fluorescent lights, breathing conditioned air, does not necessarily correlate to real animals in homes and back yards.

Obviously, it doesn't. If it did, thousands of cats fed proven diets with “100% complete” claims would not have died from taurine deficiency (see A, p.17; D, p.18 and L, p.21). None of this speaks to the unnecessary subtle cruelty of caging animals for months and years for feeding trials to perpetuate a mythology.

Analyses can only prove that a food contains nutrients at a level that regulatory agencies say is necessary for the food to be “100% complete.” Again, since no one knows what “100% complete” is, proving that a particular nutrient reaches a certain level is meaningless in terms of actually achieving optimal nutrition.

### **THE GAME OF DIGESTIBILITY ADVERTISING**

