

International Vegetarian Union (IVU)



Frequently Asked Questions

Animals

Can you feed a cat or dog a vegetarian/vegan diet?

Both animals can be fed a vegetarian diet, although neither is a vegan by nature -- dogs are omnivores, and cats are carnivores. While both dogs and cats belong to the class carnivora, this doesn't mean a lot, so does the panda bear which is near vegan.

By nature cats and dogs wouldn't eat anything like what is commonly found in a can of pet food either. Special diets must be provided for cats, as they require an amino acid called taurine -- found in the muscles of animals.

Synthetic taurine has been developed, and is used in commercial (non vegetarian) cat foods. Vegetarian cats should be fed it as a supplement. Taurine deficiency can result in blindness and even death. Cats also require pre-formed vitamin A and arachidonic acid.

All known vegan cat foods contain these essential ingredients and the companies listed below provide them in their cat foods. Ask your vet about changing your pet's diet if concerned.

Not only is it POSSIBLE to feed most cats and dogs a non-meat diet, it is also DESIRABLE. Buying "normal" pet food is supporting the same meat industry with its attendant cruelty, exploitation, waste, and environmental damage that veganism is so opposed to.

Why should ten horses/cows/chickens/ducks or something have to suffer and die every year just to support your pet cat/dog?

This is not a matter of "imposing your beliefs" on your pets (or companion animals, or whatever you call them) since you are not forcing them to eat it and you are not stopping them eating local wildlife on their wanderings round the neighbourhood.

Also animals don't have morals or beliefs. They do whatever is necessary to survive, with no preference one way or the other about the impact on anything else. We however can make moral/ethical decisions - like the decision to be vegan.

In the wild, surviving may mean "kill something or else starve to death," but if your animal is being fed anyway, this becomes unnecessary. It is also no more unnatural for a pet cat/dog to be eating vegan food than any other food.

Firstly, the domesticated cat/dog bears little resemblance to its wild cousins so we're already in an artificial situation.

Secondly, the whole act of feeding it from a tin (as opposed to letting it find food for itself) is unnatural, so you might as well make the best of it. Thirdly, the actual contents of the tins of commercial pet food bear no resemblance to what a cat/dog would eat in the wild anyway... Could you imagine your darling moggy killing horses and cows and going deep sea ocean fishing for tuna?

Products:

Wow-Bow Distributors

309 Burr Rd., East
Northport, NY 11731
(516) 449-8572,
1-800-326-0230 (outside of
NY only)
Dogs: 20lb. bag is \$20.35 +
shipping
Cats: supplement, 15oz. is
\$15.95
Call: Nature's Recipe for
location of a distributor near
you.
Phone: 1-800-843-4008

Canine/Feline Anergen III,

a vegetarian diet for food
sensitive cats, contains
special high-protein
vegetables.
Wysong Corporation, Dept.
CF, 1880 N. Eastman Ave.,
Midland, MI 48640.
Phone: (800) 748-0188

Harbingers of a New Age

717 E. Missoula Ave, Troy
MT 59935-9609
Phone: (406) 295-4944
[vegecat supplement for
vegan or
lacto-ovo-vegetarian cats]

Nature's Recipe

341 Bonnie Circle, Corona,
CA 91720
Phone: (714) (800)
843-4008 or 278-4280
[Vegan canned food and
kibble for dogs]

Pet Guard

P.O. Box 728, Orange Park,
FL 32067-0728
Phone: (800) 874-3221
[vegan canned dog food]

Famous Fido's Doggie Deli Inc.

1533 W. Devon Ave.,
Chicago, IL 60660
Phone: (312) 761-6028

See also:

- [Dogs - a Vegetarian Diet?](#)
- [Cats - a Vegetarian Diet?](#)
(*Vegetarian Society UK Information Sheets*)

What about those bugs, flies etc.?

Why kill even insects if we don't have to? The same applies to using killed insects for broaches, crushed insect wings for iridescent eye shadow, or dying insects in jumping beans. Why promote even at this level a callous disregard for living things around us?

For good reason, based on ethical intuition, that we are more impressed by the kind-hearted soul who nets the flies to let them out of the house alive versus the person hunting them down for certain chemical death with a bottle raid.

Even if our great White Suburban hunter of houseflies uses a fly-swatter for ecological reasons, the more admirable course pertains to the person who uses a butterfly net to simply capture the fly for relocation outside.

This doesn't mean we have to let our houses be over-run by pests or let our gardens be destroyed either. Common sense should prevail. See also:

- [Getting Rid of Pests](#)
(*Vegetarian Society UK Information Sheet*)

My friend says she'll become a vegetarian the moment I can prove to her that pigs, cows etc. have feelings. How can I prove this without taking her to meet the animals?

from a reader in the USA:

The friend can be shown one of those videos of a cow or pig in a slaughterhouse that is put out by such places as www.navs.org

What would happen to all the animals if humans didn't breed and eat them?

They would live happy, humane lives. There wouldn't be overpopulation - people think that because there are so many of them...but there are so many of them because we're breeding them so we can kill and eat them.

[Vegetarian cookies, croissants and bagels for dogs]

Natural Life Pet Products, Inc.

Frontenac, Kansas 66762.
Phone: 1-800-367-2391
(For dogs) Available from veterinarians and pet food centers.

Evolution Healthy Pet Food

2950 Metro Dr. Ste. 102,
Bloomington, MN 55425
1-800-524-9697 or
1-612-858-8329

What Animal Rights Organizations are there?

See:

[Animal Rights Resource Site](#)
[World Animal Net](#)

[FAQ index](#)

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