



PRESS RELEASE

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Comprehensive expert paper

How to feed a senior dog

In its commitment to safe and healthy pet food, FEDIAF, the European pet food industry federation, has published a new expert paper with key information about the nutritional needs of older dogs.

Brussels, April 2018 – The proportion of senior dogs in the total dog population is increasing. “There is a great need to take their specific dietary requirements into account”, declares Dr Thomas Brenten, Chairman of FEDIAF’s Nutrition & Analytical Science Group.. “Proper nutrition ensuring adequate intake of energy, protein, minerals and vitamins is essential to ensure good health and longevity for our pets.” Therefore, a FEDIAF expert group has formulated a new paper on the nutritional needs of senior dogs in order to inform both the industry and the public.

Nutrient requirements change due to age-related developments

This new paper includes a comprehensive collection of recent scientific data. It explains the different life expectancies of dogs related to their size, and defines when “old age” sets in. “Age-related changes in cognitive functions, behaviour, skin, digestive tract, cardiovascular system, respiratory tract, degenerative joint and skeletal function, as well as urinary disorders are the most common issues concerning older dogs”, explains Dr Brenten. “Many of these can be addressed

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via nutrition.” For example, degenerative joint problems may reduce the physical activity of the dog resulting in reduced energy requirements.

The paper gives practical guidance to pet owners for feeding an older dog. It explains how changes in the digestive tract can affect food intake, or how food texture may become a crucial factor. Furthermore, aging can lead to changes in energy metabolism and alter the nutrient requirements of senior dogs – e.g. ensuring they receive an adequate supply of proteins, fibre, minerals, fat, energy, trace elements and vitamins.

Recommendations supported by leading veterinary experts

The development of the expert paper has been led by FEDIAF’s Scientific Advisory Board, consisting of independent academics from leading European universities. Since 2010, advisory board members have assisted FEDIAF in updating the FEDIAF Nutritional Guidelines

Free download

The expert paper “Nutrition of senior dogs” can be downloaded in the new section on science on FEDIAF’s website:

<https://tinyurl.com/fediaf-senior-dogs>

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FEDIAF represents the European pet food industry with around 200 production sites. It is an umbrella organization of national pet food industry associations. FEDIAF’s mission is to be the credible and responsible voice of the European pet food industry collaborating with authorities, regulators and academics for achieving favorable conditions for the supply of safe, nutritious and palatable products to pets and their owners. Based in Brussels, FEDIAF is fully committed to promoting responsible pet ownership, to the wellbeing of pet animals, to their important social role and to the respect of sustainable development.

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