

IFEEDER NEWSLETTER

Vol. 4; No. 4

July 18, 2019

How Much Are American Pets Eating?

Can From traditional kibbles to raw food to treats, there's a lot of variety in what Americans feed their pets. There's no doubt that they love to spoil their four-legged family members with delicious meals and snacks. But exactly how much of each type of pet food do our nation's cats and dogs consume each year, which ingredients are used and how much value is this providing back up the supply chain?

These are questions that the Institute for Feed Education and Research is seeking to answer. In partnership with the Pet Food Institute (PFI) and National Renderers Association (NRA), IFEEDER recently embarked on a study to uncover the unique composition, production and volumes of different pet food ingredients.

This new study will build on the outcomes of IFEEDER's 2017 [animal feed consumption study](#), which quantified the total amount of feed consumed by the top nine livestock, poultry and aquaculture species throughout the various stages of their lives. The study found that approximately 236.3 million tons of animal feed was fed to the nine species in 2016.

Understanding the ingredients used in pet food can be complicated by several factors, including, but not limited to:

- Pets are often considered members of the "family," and therefore, pet food is often marketed and produced similarly to human food. Human health trends and fads regularly find their way into pet food.
- Pet food can use edible (e.g., human-grade protein products) and inedible (e.g., forages) ingredients, meaning sourcing points are more diversified than livestock and poultry feed.
- The consumption of pet food is not necessarily close to the points of production. Pet food can be produced in one location and then bought by consumers across the country. For example, it's not a stretch to say that pet food produced in St. Louis, Mo., can be purchased in states from Washington to Florida.

- There are many breeds and sizes of cats and dogs, each with their own unique nutritional requirements.

Working in partnership with PFI and the NRA, IFEEDER looks forward to: gaining a better understanding of the ingredients used in pet food across the country, estimating how much is consumed by Fluffy and Fido and determining what upstream value is being provided.

The research is ongoing with the initial results expected later this year. The research will be used to further educate members of all three associations and the AFIA legislative and regulatory team will use this data to support a variety of issues and needs both on and off Capitol Hill.

GM-Free Feed Research Moving Forward

The genetically modified organism-free feed research project continues to move forward. As a reminder, IFEEDER is conducting an analysis of the sustainability and economic impacts that using only GM-free ingredients in livestock and poultry feed would have on the U.S. feed industry and American agriculture.

IFEEDER awarded Iowa State University and Decision Innovation Solutions the contract in May 2019 and the research is now taking place. To date, the literature review has been completed; interviews with authors of the most current crop production budgets and agronomists are taking place and models are being developed to assist in compiling and conducting the research. All the while, researchers are assessing the assumptions from the various sources of data they have compiled so far.

The outcome of this research, expected in 2020, will better inform industry management and staff on how to articulate the value and importance of the use of GM feed ingredients in discussions with policymakers and the public.

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