

Your Pet Will Be Thankful For High Quality Food!

Marketing Magic-Secret Tricks for Reading Pet Food Ingredients: Part IV of V

By Nancy Secrist, Easdale: The Best Pet Care

A tall, leggy, black and tan mix with the sunniest personality first came to Easdale at nine months old. Bounding and bouncing, this happy boy absolutely lost his furry little mind in our Ball Park, stocked with all manner of rolling balls and toys. After his first session, he would tow us to the entry of the Ball Park if we walked him anywhere near, even if he was supposed to be getting a bath, or on his way home! His food from home had bright colored dyes and corn syrup-the brand that comes in a full color printed bag with a cascade of meat and vegetables shown - plus being in the top ten worst dog foods as it has more salt than it has vegetables. Fast forward four years and we noticed our gleeful boy had turned slow and achy, finding little energy to enjoy the Ball Park anymore.

I talked with our aging boy's owner about nutrition and how important it becomes as our companions age. Some foods age dogs prematurely with nagging little deficiencies that detract from their best possible health and it is cumulative, getting worse with every year! Learning to decipher the ingredients label for the best value and quality takes time but do you want a quick easy way to tell instantly? Yes, here it is-a fast simple way to separate the quality foods from really cheap stuff. If you forget all the rest and remember to check

for this one sign of top-notch food, you will have eliminated all the worst foods in one stroke. Look down at the very end of the ingredients list. The cheaper lines of pet foods will list the minerals like this:



- Zinc sulfate, ferrous sulfate, manganese sulfate, copper sulfate
- Better quality pet foods will include the minerals above, PLUS chelated minerals:
- Iron proteinate, zinc proteinate, copper proteinate, manganese proteinate

What's the fuss about? Wikipedia defines bioavailability as the proportion of a substance "...capable of being absorbed and available for use or storage." So while this bucket has a lot of iron, none of it is usable to your pet, even if it was converted to a powder and added to his/her food. That is ZERO bioavailability. It's about whether the minerals are AVAILABLE to your pet's digestion and life processes. The cheap nutrients you have paid for just pass on through your dog's system untouched and end up being poo-scooped up out of the yard without doing any good at all.

Your pet could be deficient in zinc, for example, showing hair loss and scaly skin with more severe cases resulting in lesions on the face and crusty skin on the head and legs. These nasty symptoms could result from a poor quality food that does not have zinc in a bio-available form. Yes, zinc sulfate is listed but would enter their system with about 5% available to your pet at best. The food is undoubtedly labeled as "...provides complete and balanced nutrition for all life stages of dogs," meaning that it has met the minimum standards set for pet foods. In my own opinion, these standards are set too low to meet all breeds and all life stages needs.

Chelated minerals are attached to proteins, an important building block your pet needs for the growth of hair, skin, and muscle. As a carnivore, or meat eater, your pet's digestive system recognizes protein very well. When the protein is pulled into your pet's system, the mineral attached goes along too! Far more of the minerals can be utilized more efficiently for your pet's growth and health. This same pet showing hair loss and scaly skin would improve dramatically when fed zinc proteinate.

The discerning owner of our lanky, black and tan boy decided to use a better food, one made to meet his dog's nutritional needs above and beyond any minimal standards. Within a month, the skin and coat improved and he once again had energy to spare! Even a year later, our happy boy acts younger than he did before the change. He looks to be on the path to enjoy a long and healthy life!

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