

Natural Products Insider[®]

 **DEEP
DIVE
INTO
PET
SUPPS**



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4 VIEWPOINT

Sit. Stay. Read. Good boy!

Every dog deserves its day, writes Content Director **Todd Runestad**, and we've got the scoop on the supplements that can give them a longer, happier life.

13 TREND WATCH

The humanization of pets

From pawsome probiotics to joint-supporting chews, human-grade nutrition is transforming pet care. **Kyle Mener** has the retail market receipts.

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All in the family

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Consumers are most likely to gain confidence in pet supplements backed by scientific studies or endorsed by veterinarians, contends **Jon Copeland**.

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Helping Scooby live longer

So what nutrients should likely be added to a dog's diet? Science says probably much of the same ones humans lean on, **Blake Ebersole** maintains.

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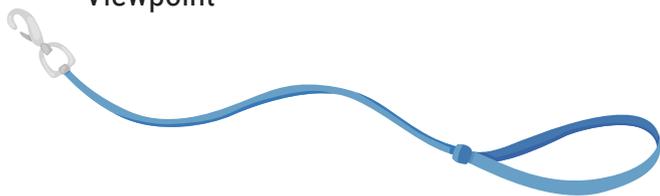
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Sit. Stay. Read. Good boy!

You're allowed only one perfect dog per lifetime, I've been told, and out of the 10 dogs I've had so far, that would clearly be Utah. Picked up on the Navajo Nation in his namesake state when he was no bigger than a prairie dog, Ute ol' boy never wore a collar nor had use for a leash. A 50-pound, medium-sized shepherd/dingo mix, the brown hound was always a half-step behind me on a trail, always rode shotgun, always was in the middle of all parties and always would jump up onto the couch the second a person got up and thanks for warming the seat for me. He lived until the ripe old age of 15.

Being a shepherd, near the end he had signs of hip dysplasia. That was when I first heard of the classic joint health ingredients glucosamine and chondroitin.

Utah had a fantastic tawny coat. Being his guardian was when I first heard of the classic skin and coat ingredients, polyunsaturated fatty acids (PUFAs). I put him on the cover of a magazine once when we ran a feature on omega-3s.

Dogs are man's best friend, it's been said, and of course that's the royal "we" — it goes for women, too. What wouldn't we do for our besties?

We name our dogs after people — I've had a Sam and a Larry. We feed them human-grade food, though dogs are said to be just fine with their nutritionally complete kibble even day after day.

Our current dog, Noodle, chows down on her high-quality kibble, but sits at attention right next to my wife when she brings home her daily breakfast enchilada.

We name them after us, we feed them after us, so it's no surprise we give them supplements to help them live their best lives for as long as possible.

This issue we dig into the animal supplement category, providing you the intel on ingredients



to build a supplement that your dog, cat or horse will appreciate.

I know Noodle could have used some chillax L-theanine for the Fourth of July's incessant, erratic fireworks — and animal nutrition sales of theanine are up 38%, according to proprietary SPINS data. Fish oil and the omega-3 DHA (docosahexaenoic acid) are up 5 and 6%, respectively, while probiotics are growing at an outsized nearly 10%, just like with people.

Also just like with human supplements, sales of CBD for pets are way down, a precipitous 14%.

Overall, pet supplements are currently a \$2.5 billion playing field, and growing, SPINS says.

From omega-3s to enzymes, probiotics to astaxanthin, we cover the range of potential pet supplement ingredients to help you innovate the world's next great pet supp.

People are waiting for you. They need them for their one perfect dog — and even those hellacious troublemakers like the movie dog, Marley.

Sit. Stay. Read. Good boy!

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Pet supplement sales have the zoomies!

THE PET SUPPLEMENT MARKET CONTINUES TO GROW LIKE AN ENGLISH MASTIFF. HERE'S A SNAPSHOT OF THE PRODUCT POSSIBILITIES.

by Lisa Schofield

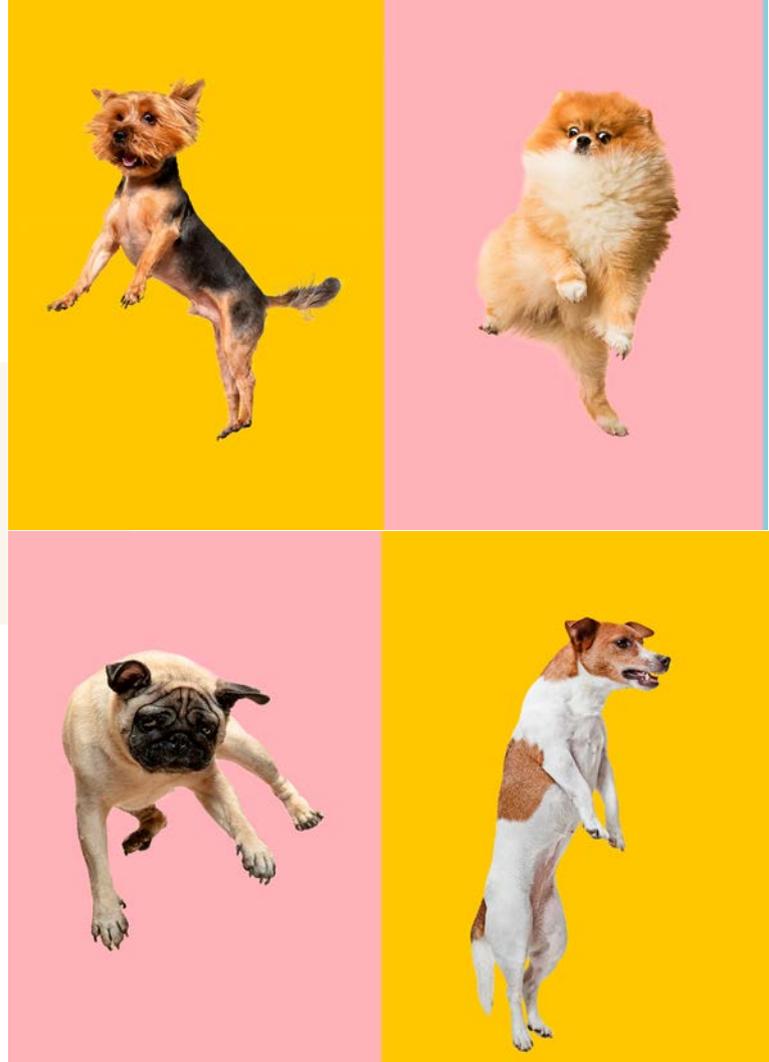
Owning a pet is commonly thought to be [good for health](#). Some people are die-hard cat lovers while others prefer dogs, and many consumers appreciate or own both. For a lot of the population, having a dog or cat snuggle up close is immensely satisfying for the soul.

As such, watching a beloved canine or feline pet suffer from any ailment can be devastating to family members. And vet bills can seriously dent a pet owner's bank account.

The North American Pet Health Insurance Association's ["State of the Industry Report 2024"](#) estimated the 2023 total premium volume for Fido's and Fluffy's health insurance was \$3.9 billion, with nearly 5.7 million pets insured — a 17% increase compared to 2022. In 2023, approximately 87 million Americans (that's 66% of U.S. households) owned a pet, representing a leap of 56% since 1988.

Caring for four-legged companions is no longer solely about a perfunctory annual pet visit. "Pet owners want to optimize all areas of health — from dental hygiene and good digestion to muscle, joint, immune and gut health," Reshma Rathi, VP of operations for Specialty Enzymes & Probiotics, suggested. "An increased focus on preventive care can deflect expensive bills and heartbreak in the future."

Many consumers who enjoy living with a pet are willing to spend extra on what they perceive as



top-line foods and supplements for their animals. This includes seeking "human level" quality and the same characteristics they deem acceptable in products for themselves (such as sustainable, clean label and scientifically supported).

A [report](#) from Grand View Research pegged the pet supplement market size at approximately \$2.49 billion in 2023, with an anticipated compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of 4.9% from this year through 2030.

Overall, according to the American Pet Products Association (APPA), in 2024, a total of \$150.6 billion in sales is [projected](#) for the pet market, with \$66.9 billion to be spent on pet foods and treats.

Hiba Zahid, category marketing manager at Vitalus Nutrition, noted, "Humanization of pets has led to the development of pet health foods and supplements that mimic human food trends and focus on functional ingredients that provide specific health benefits." ↓

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State of the market

A Pew Research Center report revealed 97% of companion animal owners consider their pets to be part of the family, and 51% admitted to treating the pet as a human family member. Although dogs are cherished for their loyalty, they aren't the only ones making themselves at home – 53% of dog owners and 48% of cat owners said they relate to their pets as much as they do to other human family members.

According to Caitlin Donohue, marketing director of microbiome solutions in pet and animal well-being at ADM, “The pet health market, which is growing rapidly, is strongly influenced by human wellness trends as pet owners focus on proactive care for their pets.”

She cited a proprietary 2023 ADM Outside Voice global survey that found 85% of consumers believe proper nutrition and supplements are as important for their pets as they are for themselves. In the United States, 56% of pet owners have purchased pet health supplements in the past two months. “Pet parents tend to focus on issues they can plainly see (or smell) their pets experiencing, like dental and oral health, skin and coat health, and mobility and joint health,” she commented.

Collette Kakuk, chief commercial and strategic officer at Cyanotech, considers the humanization of pets an industry megatrend, noting it has “expanded the market for pet dietary



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supplements targeting various humanlike health concerns, including healthy aging, joint health, skin care, eye health, allergy support and more.”

Max Maxwell, manager of market intelligence at Glanbia Nutritionals, noted shifts in product claims are mirroring human food trends such as complete nutrition and healthier treats (or in human terms, snacks). He added, “45% of dogs receive a treat at least once a day given by their owners to ensure their pet’s happiness – the top reason why dog parents give treats,” [according to Innova Market Insights](#).

That said, sales of treats are subsiding a bit as dog owners try to navigate several health concerns for their pets – weight management chief among them. Picking up a bag of kibble at the store remains the top choice for pet parents, but Maxwell pointed out, “We have seen a shift ↓



INTRODUCING:



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- + NASC certification under evaluation



Pet owners want to optimize **all areas of health** – from dental hygiene and good digestion to muscle, joint, immune and gut health.

– Reshma Rathi, Specialty Enzymes & Probiotics



from store-bought dry pet food to home-prepped pet food, indicating an opportunity for more convenient human-grade food options.”

MIRROR SUPPLEMENTS

One powerful parallel at play in the market is consumers who use supplements giving animal supplements to their pets. It’s no wonder that products geared toward anxiety, immune resilience and digestion are trending in both the human and pet spaces.

Rathi added, “Supplements and foods containing probiotics, as well as systemic and digestive enzymes, are widely accepted for human gut, digestive, joint and immune health.” She continued, “The popularity of pet products containing these ingredients shows this trend has expanded to the pet space.”

According to the previously mentioned Grand View market research report, animal nutrition supplements dominated the pet product market in 2023, holding the largest revenue share of 86.6% – and this segment is expected to remain dominant throughout the forecast period. Some of the most popular supplements consumers buy for their pets include joint health, omega-3 EFAs (essential fatty acids), multivitamins and probiotics.

But OTC (over-the-counter) pet supplements are only part of the whole picture, according to

Grand View – prescription pet supplements, intended for targeted health concerns, are expected to experience the fastest CAGR through 2030. Prescription supplements are typically used to support the resolution of complex medical conditions in pets, which may contribute to increased adoption rates and market growth. Zoetis and Elanco are the two largest supplement companies providing prescription pet supplements, per the report.

According to Statista Insights & Facts, sales of pet supplements aimed at supporting gut health rose an astounding 213% in the 52 weeks ending Aug. 13, 2022, with sales of probiotics during this period also seeing robust growth at 78%. Relatedly, sales of supplements to support behavior inclined a steep 132%.

Zahid suggested, “As more research points to the importance of the microbiome to overall health, one health trend that’s been on the rise is digestion and gut health.” She explained, “We’re hearing a lot about the gut-brain axis and the gut-skin axis, among other areas of health correlated to the gut. When looking at global product launches in the pet food space, we see that 1 in 4 products had a claim related to gut health,” per proprietary Innova Market Insights data.

Many consumers believe their pets are anxious and are seeking solutions to help calm



WE ATE

DOG SUPPLEMENTS SO YOU DON'T HAVE TO.

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97% of companion animal owners consider their pets to be part of the family, and 51% admitted to treating the pet as a human family member.

them. According to the Grand View report, pet owners are increasingly purchasing calming supplements, which primarily contain ingredients such as hemp oil and cannabis, supporting the market growth. In its 2021-2022 National Pet Owners Survey, APPA found 14% of pet owners brought a new animal into their households during the pandemic, and as the owners went back outside the home to work, anxiety set in. The nonprofit trade association recommended a list of innovative toys, treats and other pet anxiety products, courtesy of its members. The suggestions included supplements featuring CBD or probiotics.



PAW POWER: INGREDIENT SOLUTIONS FOR PETS

Ingredients researched for companion animals are diverse and address common concerns such as immunity and digestion.

To identify the potential effects on canine health of its *Bifidobacterium animalis* subsp. *lactis* CECT8145 (aka BPL1, a trademark

registered for Biopolis S.L. in the EU and other countries), ADM recently completed an exploratory, first-in-species study with adult dogs, Donohue reported. The goal was to evaluate the effects of BPL1 daily supplementation as a live probiotic and as a heat-treated postbiotic.

“Data indicate that both versions of BPL1 can safely be supplemented in healthy adult dogs, with changes observed in fecal short-chain fatty acids, bacterial composition and fecal metagenome, when compared to control,” she shared. The study is currently undergoing peer review, and a further clinical study is ongoing to assess additional physiological outcomes.

In the pet probiotic park, ADM’s new oral health solution (*Lactiplantibacillus plantarum* CECT9161) for dogs is a heat-inactivated preparation of nonviable microorganisms and their metabolic components. Donohue pointed out this postbiotic can withstand aggressive formulation environments, such as pressure and heat commonly used in pet food processing

PETS ARE PEOPLE, TOO.



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7-MINUTE READ



State of the market

methods. A study under peer review showed the postbiotic inhibited canine oral biofilms and reduced dental plaque.

Rathi agreed the oral health space is a breakout area for pets. Specialty Enzymes & Probiotics' Bactase Pet is a potent proteolytic and antioxidant blend formulated to support the tooth, gum and overall dental health by promoting the breakdown of plaque, the reduction of biofilm formation and a decrease in bacterial growth.

Oral health and digestive function go hand in hand for animals, as they do in humans. Zahid explained, "A diverse, well-balanced gut microbiome is crucial for almost every aspect of pets' overall health, from nutrient absorption to cognitive functions." Vitalus' Vitagos is a syrup containing a high amount of galactooligosaccharides (GOS), suitable for use in pet foods, treats and supplements.

Rathi noted DigeSEB Super Pet from Specialty Enzymes & Probiotics "goes beyond optimizing digestion to support two areas of great importance to pet owners – energy and appearance – which are excellent reflectors of overall health and well-being." In a 2023 [in vitro study](#), the ingredient supported digestion and



PRODUCT PICKS

BUNDLE + JOY

GLOWING

The first of the all-organic ingredients is kelp, which gives it a seaweedy taste. High-quality skin-health ingredients include turmeric and omega-3s.



promoted nutrient absorption, as well as aided skin coat health and energy levels.

The research used a semi-dynamic model of the canine digestive system and found adding DigeSEB Super Pet to dog food promoted improved dry matter digestibility by nearly 57%, as well as gains in amino acid release by 55%, digestible energy by nearly 53% and antioxidant release by 171%.

Rathi added that the study results correlate to the findings in a 30-day case study (in process of publication) with 10 dogs. The case study found taking the ingredient with food enhanced skin coat quality in 90% of dogs and physical activity in 70% of dogs. The case study also found an increase in red blood cell, hemoglobin and platelet counts by 2%, 8% and 20%, respectively, indicating greater immune support.

A recent animal clinical [study](#) demonstrated that *Arthrospira platensis* (as Hawaiian Spirulina, from Cyanotech) enhanced immune response and gut health in dogs, and supported canine hematological and immunological function, according to Kakuk. ↓



The randomized trial was conducted in 30 adult dogs who were fed 1.5 to 2 g of the supplement for every 50 pounds of the dog's weight. Their immune response was assessed by vaccine response, and gut health was evaluated by fecal immunoglobulin A and gut microbiota. Dogs that were fed spirulina showed a statistically significant higher vaccine response and higher levels of IgA and gut microbiota stability compared to the control group.

Astaxanthin is a versatile antioxidant that has shown to support pet health in several ways. In animal clinical studies, the colorful carotenoid [reduced](#) age-related oxidation and inflammatory damage in dogs, as well as enhanced immune response; [improved](#) age-associated mitochondrial dysfunction in healthy dogs; and [stimulated](#) immune response in cats.

These clinically studied ingredients are but a handful of the growing number of options aimed at promoting and helping sustain pet health. Donohue is optimistic about the market, noting 2023 ADM Outside Voice research that indicated almost three-quarters (72%) of U.S. pet owners showed interest in buying pet health supplements in the future. ✨



Lisa Schofield is a veteran writer and editor who got her start interviewing rock stars for national music magazines. She now writes and edits content for B2B media and suppliers in the natural health product industry. She has served as editor for Vitamin Retailer and Nutrition Industry Executive, and prior to that as associate editor for Whole Foods.

PRODUCT PICKS

FURBABY

MULTIVITAMIN

This multivitamin powder contains 100% of the letter vitamins and minerals, plus biotin for hair, skin and nails, as well as glucosamine and chondroitin – but at smaller doses so maybe best for smaller dogs.



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The humanization of pets

by Kyle Mener

Relationships between humans and pets are continually evolving. In recent years, consumers are increasingly conscientious about what they put into their bodies to ensure the highest quality of life — and now they're taking this same care with animal nutrition. The humanization of pets has become very prevalent in the rise of vitamins and supplements for companion animals.

Pets have become an integral member of the family, and so of course, pet owners are on a mission to make their lives as vibrant as possible. Just as humans have embraced the benefits of probiotics to improve digestive health, consumers are now turning to these supplements to support gut health for the animals in their families.

Another example is joint health supplements. Increasingly popular among pet owners, these products have particular application for

aging and highly active pets to help prevent joint pain and stiffness. Featuring ingredients such as glucosamine, chondroitin and MSM (methylsulfonylmethane), these products are geared to aid in alleviating discomfort and improving mobility.

Heart health is another prime example where humans have prioritized their own health and are now looking to ensure their pets get some of the same benefits. By adding ingredients like omega-3s through fish oil supplements, humans and their pets may experience cardiovascular benefits.

Humanization in pets reflects a broader shift in the way society perceives and interacts with animals. As dogs, cats and other critters continue to play a more prominent role in our lives, their health and well-being are increasingly prioritized, and we are finding ways to continue to bridge the gap between human and animal care. ↓

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Focusing on wellness with *holistic* ingredients

Pet parents are looking for functional ingredients that cover total body health, including joint, energy, urinary, anxiety, digestion, and skin and coat health.



Ingredients on the rise

ANTIOXIDANT, IMMUNITY, TOTAL HEALTH



+37.7%
THEANINE



+32.8%
TURMERIC



+11.6%
VITAMIN B1 (THIAMIN)



+2.5%
CRANBERRY SUPPLEMENTS

GUT HEALTH



+19%
PUMPKIN



+19%
PROBIOTIC SUPPLEMENTS



+6.1%
DHA PRODUCTS



+6.1%
FISH OIL CONCENTRATE



Ingredients on the decline

Functional ingredient	Dol. % chg	\$ impact
Cannabidiol (CBD)	-14%	(\$3.7M)
Flax seed and/or oil	-12.9%	(\$0.7M)
Chlorophyll/Chlorella	-22.9%	(\$0.6M)
Digestive enzymes	-8.6%	(\$0.1M)
Homeopathic remedy	-10.8%	(\$0.1M)

Source: SPINS Pet Channel; 52 weeks ending 12/31/23

* % represents percent change YoY (vs. same time LY)



Kyle Mener is a senior retail account manager at SPINS, directly managing the relationship with a variety of both pet and natural retail partners. He has been with SPINS for five years and currently resides in Chicago.

Treat time takes a functional twist

5 CONSUMER TRENDS CAN BE GLEANED FROM A NEW PET SUPPLEMENT SHOPPER SURVEY.

by Jon Copeland

Demographically, pet supplement shoppers are like pet guardians in general, but with distinct attitudes and behaviors regarding their pets' health. Studying the values and motivators of consumers in this segment can help a brand to better serve the needs and begin to recognize trends among early adopters.

To this end, a May 2024 pet consumer survey by MarketPlace offers insights into the people who buy supplements for their pets. The following are five trends from the latest data regarding this subgroup of pet supplement shoppers.

SPECIES-SPECIFIC NEED STATES

Pet supplement purchases differed somewhat by species in terms of need states. Among dog owners who bought pet supplements in the prior year, 40% reported purchasing products for joint health and 37% for skin and coat. In contrast, among cat owners who bought supplements, only 24% reported purchasing them for joint health and 31% for skin and coat.

About 22% of cat supplement shoppers reported purchasing urinary and kidney supplements for their cat, whereas only 10% of dog supplement shoppers reported buying these products for their dog.

Cat owners were also more likely than dog owners to report purchasing immunity and senior wellness supplements. On the other hand, dog parents were more likely than cat parents to report purchasing gut health, allergy relief and pain relief supplements for their dog.



SCIENCE IS A MOTIVATOR

Science is important to many pet supplement shoppers. The data indicated consumers are most likely to gain confidence in pet supplements backed by scientific studies or endorsed by veterinarians. More than one-fourth of pet supplement shoppers said "vet recommended" on packaging" would be among the claims most likely to give them confidence in a pet supplement they were considering. Similarly, 22% said the same for "clinically proven" and 20% for "science backed."

Claims about purity also rated highly among pet supplement shoppers. Almost 27% said "all natural" would be among the claims most likely to give them confidence. About 20% said the same for "organic." Relatively speaking, claims about point of origin (e.g., "Made in America") were a lower priority compared to those related to science and purity.

THE BENEFITS OF BIOTICS

More than 86% of pet supplement shoppers said they are at least generally familiar with probiotics. Additionally, 42% of these consumers associate probiotics with positive health benefits. About 27% said the same for prebiotics and 9% for postbiotics. ↓

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Consumers are most likely to gain confidence in pet supplements backed by scientific studies or endorsed by veterinarians.



Furthermore, 41% of pet supplement shoppers said they spent at least one hour researching probiotics in the prior 12 months; 24% said the same for prebiotics. Pet parents identified veterinarians, friends and family, and online resources like search, video and reviews as key sources of information and inspiration about wellness for their pets.

MULTICHANNEL SHOPPERS

Pet supplement shoppers are using both online and in-store channels to purchase products for their companion animals. Chewy.com was the top retail channel for these consumers, followed by Amazon.com, mass retail stores and pet specialty stores.

Some slight differences in preference emerged between dog and cat owners. Dog parents were slightly more likely to choose online channels,

whereas cat parents were more likely to report shopping in brick-and-mortar stores. Regardless, the data showed both types of owners are shopping online and in-store at high rates.

FORMAT PREFERENCES

Among shoppers for dog supplements, 43% said they are most likely to prefer a treat made with ingredients that provide health benefits, and 41% indicated preference for supplements in soft chews for their dogs. In contrast, among cat supplement shoppers, 35% showed preference for a treat made with ingredients that provide health benefits, while 38% indicated they prefer cat supplements as soft chews.

Interestingly, 34% of cat supplement shoppers said a wet, gravy-like topper would be in their top formats to consider for supplements for their cat. However, only 20% of dog supplement shoppers

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*may vary by botanical ingredient

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Demographics



said the same. Furthermore, about 22% of dog supplement shoppers said they prefer pills for their dog, whereas only 13% of cat supplement shoppers said the same for their cats.

ABOUT THE SURVEY

The latest survey, conducted in May 2024 by MarketPlace, reached 754 U.S. pet parents, among whom 241 reported having purchased a pet supplement in the prior 12 months. U.S. pet guardians are adults who report owning at least one dog, cat or horse, and make or share in making purchase decisions regarding their household pets. Detailed findings will be released in a report later this year. ♦



Jon Copeland is a research strategist at [MarketPlace](#), a strategic partner to food and beverage, pet and animal, and health and wellness brands and businesses.

PRODUCT PICKS

READY PET GO

JOINT AND HIP MOBILITY

Glucosamine and chondroitin at higher doses for bigger dawgs, and also MSM (methylsulfonylmethane) — the traditional big three.



PROBIOTICS FOR PETS — JUST DON'T USE THE HUMAN KIND.



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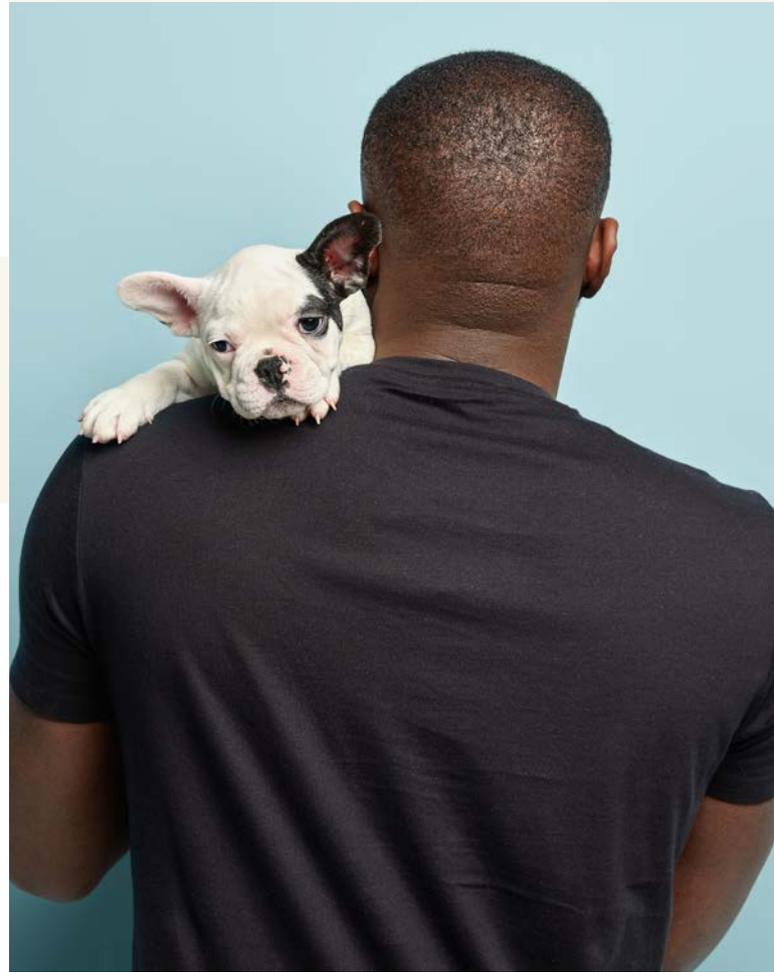
PET HEALTH AND WELLNESS IS A FAMILY MATTER. SUPPLEMENTS CAN HELP THESE FURRY ONES LIVE THEIR BEST LIVES.

by EJ Hullverson

Nine out of 10 pet owners agree that dogs and cats are important members of the family, according to a proprietary ADM Outside Voice global survey. Modern pet parents believe their pets deserve top-tier nutritional support, which means more people are enriching pet well-being through functional nutrition. In fact, 85% of global consumers said proper nutrition and supplements are as important for their pets as they are for themselves, and 56% of U.S. pet owners have purchased pet supplements in the past two months.

While many options are available to support pet wellness, U.S. consumers most frequently seek out products that support dental and oral health, skin and coat health, joint health and mobility, and healthy aging. Knowing that product claims are backed by science reassures pet parents and reinforces their purchasing decisions. Consumers often perceive claims, such as “clinically tested,” “scientifically studied” and “vet recommended,” as evidence of a product’s effectiveness, per Mintel data. Additionally, 60% of global pet owners indicated branded health ingredients in pet products are important, as many believe them to be more trustworthy.

When researching new products for companion animals, 44% of U.S. pet parents reportedly visit pet-focused websites and 34% refer to YouTube. However, these consumers and others around the world overwhelmingly trust veterinarians and pet store employees over



social media sites. Consumers typically look to the internet as a source of inspiration – and industry professionals as a source of authority.

As people continue to connect a healthy gut to wider aspects of their own well-being, they are also applying that logic to their pets. This perpetuates the trend of biotics and the microbiome as emerging areas of interest. ADM internal research indicates a correlation between knowledge and purchase: The more consumers know about biotics, the more likely they are to use them. That’s why veterinary recommendations are particularly important when it comes to microbiome-supporting supplements. Notably, 71% of U.S. pet parents have purchased biotics for their animals at least once; of those, 31% did so because of a professional recommendation. This reason was a close second to the top response of wanting to help their pet avoid digestive or other gastrointestinal (GI) issues.

Given that more than 80% of global consumers put the same care into selecting products for

↓ click to go!



Consumers typically look to the internet as a source of inspiration – and industry professionals as a source of authority.

pets as they do for themselves, the latest pet health solutions are being designed to align more closely with premium human foods and supplements. With 72% of U.S. pet owners showing interest in buying supplements in the future, the business potential of functional pet products looks promising.

PRODUCT FORMATS

Two product format solutions in particular can help pet brands accelerate market readiness: soft chews and powders.

Soft chews, uniquely produced by cold extrusion, often maintain the texture, flavor and benefits of functional ingredients during transit and storage. The demand for improved nutrition, better taste and safer pet food has made cold extrusion an ideal solution and a key element in meeting the complexities of today's growing pet food and supplement market.

Powder supplement sachets are another appealing option due to their convenient, pre-portioned format, providing wellness perks without extra calories. Individual sachet packaging can also help support the active ingredients in remaining effective throughout the product's shelf life.

Seven health conditions in particular are seeing success among consumers looking to improve their pets' health and wellness through supplementation.



- 1. CALMING**
Supports balanced behavior
- 2. DENTAL**
Supports oral health
- 3. MOBILITY**
Supports joint health
- 4. DIGESTION**
Supports gut health
- 5. LONGEVITY**
Supports well-being of aging dogs
- 6. SKIN**
Supports healthy skin and coat
- 7. WELLNESS**
Supports everyday well-being



This range of daily supplements can be powered by the science of biotics, botanical extracts and essential nutrients.

Pet owners who incorporate supplements alongside a complete and balanced diet can be confident they are supporting their companion animals from the inside out. Moreover, brands that adapt and deliver on evolving consumer demands will be able to take advantage of an emerging category and fetch some significant return on investment (ROI) in the process. ✨



EJ Hullverson is the senior director of global category marketing at [ADM Pet Nutrition](#).

Helping Scooby live longer

13 INGREDIENTS (NOT COUNTING PEANUT BUTTER) THAT, COME TO THINK OF IT, ARE PRETTY GOOD IDEAS FOR HUMANS, TOO.

by Blake Ebersole

I tell Scooby, my adorable, thoughtful golden Irish (golden retriever/Irish setter mix), that if he were born in another place and time, things would be different. He wouldn't be getting new toys in the mail every month. And we wouldn't be talking about his nutrition. But here we are.

Like all animal lovers, I want Scooby to live a long, happy life. And because I share 84% of my DNA with him, I can share some nutrition expertise beyond the standard, nutrient-rich kibble and some bones in between.

Therein lies the opportunity for the current state of formula innovation in pet nutrition. Which, when compared to innovation on the human side, has become a bit stale, like an old dog biscuit.

Everyone knows pet owners spend a lot on their furry friends. Take me, the target consumer. Scooby's got special food for his sensitive skin and stomach. Minty bones for his teeth and tummy. Clinically studied supplement powders for flare-ups. Food toppers with every meal, and Scooby snacks, too.

And he's only 4 years old. So just wait until he most likely develops osteoarthritis (OA), which is evident in up to [60% of dogs](#). Hips are the worst, especially for big working dogs like retrievers and shepherds. The problem (and the opportunity) is that the standbys, glucosamine and NSAIDs (nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs), [don't work all that well](#). Yet the same handful of ingredients is used over and over. We can do better for Scooby.



The problem with OA in dogs is that it starts to develop silently, early on. And even after it's destroyed their joints, they don't complain about their pain or pop pills. As we know from the canine research, years of inflammatory damage and degradation of cartilage in hips and knees starts early in life.

That means that balancing inflammation in dogs (and humans) isn't just an old-age thing. It's lifelong.

TALK ABOUT A MARKET OPPORTUNITY

Lack of ingredient innovation in pet supplements is for good reason: The burden of safety for animal ingredients is more restrictive than for humans. There's a high cost to prove – and approve – new ingredients for our wet-nosed friends.

Only 30 years ago, Alpo and Gravy Train were standard fare. We were just trying to fork a brown glob of mystery out of the can while suppressing our gag reflex. But status quo isn't how better health is achieved, how innovation happens or how products are sold. And naturally, humans anthropomorphize. So our trends and fads extend to our dogs, whether science-based or not.

Grumpy Cooper feels magnificent on raw. Moxie [click to go!](#)

So what nutrients should probably be added to the dog's diet? Science says probably much of the same ones as for us.

the chihuahua goes paleo. Scooby feels better with fish, grains and turmeric (plus an occasional shredded cheese topper).

But it's not always as silly or pretentious as it sounds. If human experience is any indicator, then just as some of us benefit from eliminating certain foods from our diets and adding in others, that's likely to be the case for many dogs, as well. Maybe Moxie is onto something.

For sure, there's a place for every informed pet — er, human — demand. For example, the emerging market of "grain free" for dogs. While veterinarians and science still support the addition of grains to a dog's diet, the questions are good, even if the [extremes are not](#). In the absence of clear answers (or acceptable alternatives), space exists for alternative dietary paradigms that are nutritionally sufficient and scientifically proven. Nutrition science continues to evolve for Scooby and me, in ways that are both different and similar, not unlike our shared DNA.

INGREDIENTS FOR PETS

So what nutrients should probably be added to the dog's diet? Science says probably much of the same ones as for us. [Fish-based diets](#). [Probiotics](#). [Omega-3s](#) (fatty acids are also a plus for cats and horses).

Turmeric is another example. Like omega-3s, curcumin has gradually garnered a special place in pockets of the integrative veterinary world



PRODUCT PICKS

YELLOW YAK

YUM WITH BACON

Prebiotics and probiotics are finding their way into pet supplements, in this case with these hard chews.



over the past 20 years. Science is there, and so is widespread use. While not all products have the right dosage, when it works it just works: Moxie stopped limping and is more active now. Buster's bowels have become regular. Scooby's skin isn't red and itchy anymore. We don't need clinical trials to confirm that the sun's yellow and the sky's blue.

Curcumin, specifically, is one of those ingredients that does good things for many species, from fruit flies to cyborgs (probably). In healthy dogs, the addition of 100 mg/kg body weight curcumin to chow for a month [improved](#) several measures of health, suggesting it can improve overall health measures for even younger dogs.

That's important when we consider that inflammation for most animals is a lifelong process, not just an old-age one.

A number of [recent studies](#) are tallied on palmitoylethanolamide, or PEA, for dogs and cats, as well as humans. PEA is in foods like eggs ↓



If you spent the day licking and sniffing the same things they do, you would need some digestive support, too.

and meat, and created in all mammalian cells on demand after injury. It exerts activity on a number of downstream pain- and inflammation-related targets such as PPAR-alpha and mast cells, GPR55, cannabinoid receptors CB1 and CB2, and the pain receptor TRPV1. In another study, PEA was shown safe and [effective for skin](#) conditions that affect many dogs. Supplementing with PEA appears to fill the immune and inflammatory signaling gaps that are lifelong, and which cause arthritis and accelerate aging in dogs and their best friends.

Certain turmeric supplement blends have been studied in canines. A combination of

curcuminoids, collagen and green tea [modestly improved](#) some OA endpoints. In another recent university study, a specific ratio of curcumin with PEA and quercetin [slowed OA progression](#), while increasing physical activity and gait force in older companion dogs.

Studies on a number of food-based antioxidant and flavonoid supplements are interesting as well. A 2023 [publication](#) found that a quercetin combination decreased cortisol and histamine, and increased short-chain fatty acids (SCFAs) versus control in healthy terriers after a month. [Vitamins C and E](#) are also no-brainers for antioxidant support, as well as other antioxidant-rich foods, like [shiitake mushrooms](#) (*Lentinus edodes*).

[Resistant starch](#) and fiber, along with probiotics, represent ways to improve animal health through the microbiome. (If you spent the day licking and sniffing the same things they do, you would need some digestive support, too.)

In the Ebersole home, Scooby gets several things on a daily basis to help keep him from scratching, licking and hopefully someday, limping. In addition to his fish and healthy grains, there's plain yogurt, peanut butter, carrots and apples – along with a combination of PEA, curcumin and quercetin.

Sounds like good diet advice for his big buddy, too. ♦



Blake Ebersole has led several botanical quality initiatives and formed collaborations with dozens of universities and research centers. As president of [NaturPro Scientific](#), Ebersole established quality compliance and product development services for supplements and ingredients such as ID Verified. Follow him on X (Twitter) at [@NaturalBlake](#).

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