

- Ready Nutrition - <http://readynutrition.com> -

## Pet Food Alternatives for Long-Term Emergencies

Posted By [Tess Pennington](#)

On April 9, 2012 @ 12:43 pm

Category: Homesteading, Preparedness

[ReadyNutrition.com](#)



In a long-term emergency we want our entire family to thrive, and that includes our beloved pets. Dogs and cats will have vital roles to play during a long-term emergency and we want them on their A-game!

Cats are very skilled at trapping and will keep the rodents away from your retreat and [your food supply](#) <sup>[1]</sup>, thus keeping diseases at bay. Dogs on the other hand, are ideal to have on a retreat because they will be a good alert system, make excellent hunting companions, protect the family and help to herd livestock. Larger breeds could even help [pull small wagons](#) <sup>[2]</sup> to help even more around the homestead.

To keep these animals healthy, keep their needs in mind when making your emergency preparations. Due to the cost of pet food, storing dry food is preferred over storing the wet food. When storing dry goods for dogs and cats, look for dry food that does not have a lot of oils in them; as the oils can make the food go rancid more quickly.

Stockpiled pet food will only last for so long. What's a pet owner to do when the kibble supply runs dry?

Making your own pet food is a more financially reasonable option for some. The cost is actually comparable to the price of kibble, and the nutrition content of homemade pet food is far higher.

Creating pet food is not so much about having the recipe to do so – it's about knowing the proper ratios for optimum nutrition for your pet. The following information is geared towards healthy adult pets without special dietary needs.

### A Feast for Felines

Cats have different nutritional requirements than dogs. When a cat in the wild catches a mouse or a bird, they generally eat it, bones, organs and all. They receive a small amount of vegetables and grains, based on the stomach contents of their prey.

Cats require more protein than dogs, and do not digest corn or grains well. Meat is the number one element of homemade cat food. Bones are also a very important addition to the feline diet – this is how your cat gets enough calcium. Liver is an excellent addition to your homemade cat food but should not make up more than 10% of their intake. Much of the waste that you would throw out when preparing a whole chicken for your family would be a welcome addition to the cat food dish.

Use this ratio to create your own cat food, based on the items you have on hand.

Meat: 3 parts

Organs: 1 part

Grain: 1 part

Veggies: ½ part

Some cat approved vegetables include: lightly steamed broccoli, carrots, zucchini, cauliflower, or any other vegetables that your cat happens to enjoy. Some cats even like the taste of fruit such as melon, mango or apple, and if your cat enjoys these healthy treats it is fine to supplement their diet this way.

The meat in this mixture can either be lightly cooked or raw. I include the skin in the cat food, as it gives them some much needed fat. The grain and veggies should be cooked. If you have a meat grinder, you can put the entire concoction through the grinder before feeding it to your cat.

To supplement the diet, you will need to add some olive or flax oil and some bone meal (either commercial or grind your own in the meat grinder).

I use broth to cook the grains that I include in my homemade cat food.

The meat can be any kind of meat. Canned fish, like sardines, are especially good for cats because of the high calcium levels. However, the cat should not subsist only on fish.

You can find some homemade cat food recipes [HERE](#) <sup>[3]</sup>.

### **Doggie Dinner Delights**

The canine digestive system is a little less delicate than the system of cats. The ratio is much simpler:

1 part meat

1 part grain

1 part veggies

Broccoli, spinach, celery, carrots, peas, and green beans are favorite veggies among canines. Keep in mind that some vegetables are more difficult to digest than others. Dogs may have a harder time digesting broccoli, cabbage, cauliflower, and Brussels sprouts. Avocados, tomatoes, and wild mushrooms should be avoided as they are potentially harmful.

I cook my dog food all together on the stove top (we refer to it as "dog stew". I make a broth from leftover chicken carcasses, etc, and use it for the base. I use grains from my stockpile, like rice and oats, and generally use canned vegetables. Peas and carrots are a special favorite of the pooches in our house.

I include the skin when cooking the meat for the dogs as well. As with cats, the addition of some bone meal is very important. Since bones are something that would generally be thrown out, I appreciate finding a use for them in the name of less waste. Don't forget the addition of a healthy fat, like whole eggs or olive oil!

### **It's All About the Ratios**

Now that you know the basic ratios for good nutrition for your pets, you can use foods that you have in your stockpile/freezer to feed your pets. You may find that your grocery bills drop as you find ways to use less expensive cuts of meat and last day of sale items to feed your pets!

When making your homemade pet food, it's an excellent time to add supplements like vitamin drops, brewer's yeast and garlic to keep your pets healthy and parasite-free.

Once you've started feeding your pets these homemade nutritious foods, you will notice a lovely glowing coat and far more energy. The nutrition level and lack of preservatives will benefit their health while benefitting your wallet!

Article printed from Ready Nutrition: <http://readynutrition.com>

URL to article: [http://readynutrition.com/resources/pet-food-alternatives-for-long-term-emergencies\\_09042012/](http://readynutrition.com/resources/pet-food-alternatives-for-long-term-emergencies_09042012/)

URLs in this post:

[1] your food supply: [http://readynutrition.com/resources/rat-proofing-your-food-storage-pantry-in-5-easy-steps\\_26102011/](http://readynutrition.com/resources/rat-proofing-your-food-storage-pantry-in-5-easy-steps_26102011/)

[2] pull small wagons: <http://dogstarkennel.com/?id=23>

[3] HERE: [http://www.healthyrecipesforpets.com/cat\\_food\\_recipes.html](http://www.healthyrecipesforpets.com/cat_food_recipes.html)

Copyright © 2010 Ready Nutrition. All rights reserved.