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Alternating Your Dogs Food Makes Sense

By Kate Dutra

For several years I bought into the idea that it was not healthy for my dogs to switch foods, and that once I found a good, high quality brand that they liked, I should just stick with it. This is what the pet food companies and some of the experts were saying and after all, I had a dog that was living proof of the disaster that can occur when foods get switched. A long haired dog with diarrhea – what a mess! So, I threw common sense out the window, and year after year my dogs were fed the same thing day in and day out.

It was probably about six ago when I first started to do things a little differently. Like many people who are conscientious about their pet's weight, I found that I had to cut back on feedings during winter months, and increase during the summer, when my dogs were more active. I decided that rather than do this, I wanted to change food types based upon the seasons, a lower fat one in the winter and one that was more caloric in the summer. At that point, I was feeding Eagle brand which was very conducive to this as they have several formulas, ranging from Reduced Fat to Power.

As time progressed, I realized that my dogs did not have any difficulties switching back and forth between the various Eagle formulas, so I started to buy a different type of Eagle each time I ran out, rotating among the various formulas and flavors. It was my belief, that because I was staying within the brand, my dogs could easily handle the change, but I was still brainwashed enough to think that I could not switch to other types of foods unless I did so very gradually, mixing a little bit each day. What I finally grasped was that my first dog's diarrhea episode was not because of the change, but rather due to his systems lack of exposure to other food sources.

It wasn't until I read *See Spot Live Longer*, by Steve Brown, that I truly was able to comprehend the gravity of feeding dogs the same diet every day. (If you have not read this book yet I would highly recommend it.) Feeding the same food at every meal not only works against optimal health, but could potentially be fatal. We so often assume that just because the

bag says 100% complete, that it is, but in fact we really do not know. If a nutrient is missing from a particular food, and a dog eats nothing else, then that nutrient will always be missing from the dog's diet. Or if there is some type of toxin that is in a grain in a particular food, and the dog is exposed to that toxin every day for the duration of its lifetime, it may result in cancer or liver disease, to only name a couple of possibilities. While many of the higher quality pet foods do screen for toxins, what if there is a toxin they are unaware of? Is it really worth the risk when part of the solution can be so simple?

**Canine Nutrition Seminars at
Green Acres
May 18th & June 16th
(see page 4 for details)**

When I allowed my common sense to re-enter my thought processes, and take the place of the brain washing done so well by the pet food industry, it was a total "light bulb moment." I know that I would not be healthy if I only consumed one type of food, or food from only one manufacturer, and I know that my dogs will not be healthy either. So I bit the bullet and altered my dogs' diets again. I must confess that it does take some time, some level of organization, and costs a little more (I only buy small bags so the food stays fresh), but my dogs now have a different high quality dry food every morning. They also receive one meal a day of fresh, raw food. I did do a little mixing during the initial switch over, but nothing too excessive. I started with alternating between Wysong and Eagle. After a few days of this I threw Innova into the mix. Today, I rotate between Wysong, Innova, and Eagle's Duck, Fish, and Chicken formulas, and I am currently looking to add two more brands into the mixture. My dogs enjoy it because it is never the same thing every day, and I am happier because I feel that they are getting a broader amino acid base and their nutritional needs are met to the best of my abilities.

(Continued on page 2)

Staff Anniversaries

Rachel McLeod—February—2 years
Kathy Kingman—March—8 years
Joel Mahaffey—March—2 years
Christie Mahaffey—April—3 years
Jessie Bidol—May—3 years
Thank You!

Alternating Your Dogs Diet—continued

(Continued from page 1)

I am only saddened that it took me so long to allow my good sense to take hold. Recently, my twelve year old dog was diagnosed with chronic active hepatitis. While she is doing fine today, she requires a daily dietary supplement to aid in protecting her liver from further deterioration. It was reported to me that hepatitis was not necessarily uncommon in older dogs. After a little research, I learned that one of the possible causes of chronic active hepatitis is long term exposure to toxins found in the grains in pet foods.



A Note from Don & Paula

Due to health issues with our dogs we made the decision to switch to feeding them a 100% raw diet a year ago. Up until that time we did as Kate is doing; we fed dry food in the morning and raw food in the evening. We rotated our dry diet every few weeks, every time we purchased a new bag of food. Even feeding a raw diet, we regularly switch between meat sources and manufacturers. No matter how or what you feed your dog we believe that they will receive optimal nutrition when you alternate their diet. The only reason not to consider alternating your dogs diet is if they have intestinal issues which prohibit such a change.

Kennel & Staff News

Patty McNamara – Certified Pet Care Technician

Patty McNamara, a pet care technician at Green Acres for almost 6 years, has passed the American Boarding Kennel Associations (ABKA) level 1 certification exam covering the basics of Breed Recognition, Small Animal Anatomy and Physiology, Boarding Care, Emergency Care and First Aid, Geriatric and Degenerative Disease Care, Contagious Disease, Parasite, Zoonotic Disease, Pesticides and Customer Relations. Patty, Congratulations on your commitment to personal growth!

Welcome – Justin and Erin!

Justin Fowler and Erin Colpitt are the newest additions to the Green Acres team. Justin assists us with kennel maintenance and Erin is training as a pet care technician and assistant dog training instructor.

Continuing Education

In March Don made his annual trip to Wales and the Natural Animal Centre for a 2-day Continuing Professional Development seminar on the use of the Bach Flower Essences with animals. This year's session focused on feline behavior and the review of feline case studies. The use of the essences with wildlife and farm animals was also discussed.

Becky Robinson, one of Green Acres Certified Pet Dog Trainers, recently attended an advanced clicker training workshop with noted dog and marine mammal trainer Kathy Sdao. The two day workshop, at All Dogs Gym in Manchester, NH, covered the chaining of behaviors, stimulus control and how to get behaviors so that they are reliable. Becky will be sharing what she learned with the rest of our training staff.

Always looking to expand their knowledge of complementary healing methods for pets, Don and Paula Hanson attended a 1 day workshop on the use of herbs with pets. The seminar was

at Tails-U-Win! Canine Center in Manchester, CT. The seminar was taught by Greg Tilford, co-author of *Herbs for Pets*, and a frequent contributor to *The Whole Dog Journal*. Tilford is the leading authority on the use of herbs with pets.

Upcoming Anniversary

In October, less than 6 months away, Green Acres Kennel Shop will be celebrating its 40th year in business. October will also mark the 10th year anniversary of Don and Paula Hanson's ownership of Green Acres. Please reserve October 8th through October 15th for some very special activities and celebrations at Green Acres.

BNI Friends

Green Acres is a member of the Paul Bunyan Chapter of Business Networks International, a group of local Business people who meet once a week to work together to help each other build their businesses. While we cannot list every BNI friend in our newsletter, we want to try to recognize a few of them in each issue. We recommend these individuals knowing they will provide quality customer service.

Bangor Insurance Group

Bob Guerette
947-1800

Town & Country Realtors

Louise Rolnick
942-6711

Cleaner Homes (residential cleaning)

Tom & Deb Bowcock
862-4673

Rideout Enterprises (lawn & garden service)

Eddie Rideout
992-2526

Wild Treasures (cell phone service)

Tim Griffin

Warrens Office Supplies

Rhonda Arsenault
800-339-7103

Book Review: Outwitting Dogs

***Outwitting Dogs: Revolutionary Techniques for Dog Training that Really Work!* By Terry Ryan and Kirsten Mortensen. Guilford, CT: Lyons Press, 2004.**

By Becky Robinson, CPDT

Some folks reading the title of Terry Ryan's new book might think, "Aha! I knew it all along; my dog IS smarter—or at least as smart—as I am, and it's my job to out-manipulate, out-manuever, and out-guess him, so he won't take over the house." Thankfully, anyone who reads past the title of *Outwitting Dogs* will soon be dissuaded of any such foolish and outdated notions. Rather than presenting dogs as equal and/or identical to humans in areas of intelligence, motivation, and methods of learning, Terry and her co-author Kirsten Mortensen instead correctly portray canines as a separate species markedly distinct from humans in terms of their cognitive ability. As they explain in their introduction, "Just by virtue of your having begun to read this book, you're proving that you're pretty high up on the intelligence scale. (Ever catch your dog reading a book?) Your brain is many times larger than a dog's. You're capable of certain kinds of thinking, like abstraction and rational analysis, that dogs are not" (xii).

So, what exactly *do* the authors mean by "outwitting" dogs? Basically, the key to successfully outwitting a dog lies in recognizing the fact that we as dog owners *do* have bigger brains (proven once again by the fact that *you* reading this book review and your dog is not), and then choosing to *use* our brains to manage, train, and shape our dogs to fit appropriately into our worlds. In a battle of wits, you have the ability to win over your dog every time. Therefore, engaging your mind is the best way to address your dog's unwelcome behaviors and to help you build a happy, satisfying relationship with your four-legged companion(s).

For example, Ryan and Mortensen address inappropriate chewing behaviors in Chapter Five, which is aptly titled "My Shoe! My Shoe! Outwitting the Dog Who Loves to Chew." After beginning the chapter with the pointed sentence "Dogs love to chew," the authors devote the next thirteen pages to conveying sound management and training strategies based upon equally sound research and behavioral information—that is, based upon using your wits. Features of this (and every) chapter in *Outwitting Dogs* include personal anecdotes—such as Mortensen's account of her encounter with a Boston Terrier she claims should have been named "Jaws"—practical tips—such as the educational sidebars regarding taste deterrents and chew toys—and immediately applicable training guidelines—such as the explanation of how to encourage positive chewing (yes, there is such a thing!). Ryan and Mortensen educate and entertain their readers while reinforcing their central message: outwitting your dog is an achievable, educational, and immensely rewarding endeavor.

Outwitting Dogs covers seventeen chapters and 275 pages, and includes such diverse topics as housetraining, walking politely, barking, and managing interactions between kids and dogs. In this aspect, *Outwitting Dogs* functions as an excellent introductory text on dog behavior, management, and training. Readers interested in pursuing select topics in greater detail can utilize the "Further Reading" section the authors include on page 268, and/or enroll in a training course with their dog to practice and expand on the basic training instructions included in each chapter. Deliberately written in accessible, non-technical language, this book would also be an excellent choice for young dog handlers. *Outwitting Dogs* is available at Green Acres for \$12.95.

COUPONS

\$1 OFF 6.6# or \$3 OFF 16.5# or \$5 OFF 33# any Eagle Holistic Select Dry Dog Food, expires 6/30/05, one coupon per customer, not valid with other coupons or discounts, C500-\$1, C501-\$3, C502-\$5

\$3 OFF 16.5# or \$5 OFF 33# any Innova dry dog or cat food, expires 6/30/05, one coupon per customer, not valid with other coupons or discounts, C503-\$3, C504-\$5

\$1 OFF 4# or \$3 OFF 16# or \$5 OFF 32# any Wysong dry cat or dog food, expires 6/30/05, one coupon per customer, not valid with other coupons or discounts, C505-\$1, C506-\$3, C507-\$5

\$3 OFF 10# bag of Steve's frozen dog food, expires 6/30/05, one coupon per customer, not valid with other coupons or discounts, C508-\$3

\$3 OFF 12# box of Farmore frozen dog food, expires 6/30/05, one coupon per customer, not valid with other coupons or discounts, C508-\$3

\$2 OFF See Spot Live Longer, expires 6/30/05, one coupon per customer, not valid with other coupons or discounts, C509

\$2 OFF Outwitting Dogs, expires 6/30/05, one coupon per customer, not valid with other coupons or discounts, C510

\$2 OFF any Sensation, K9 Freedom or Easy-Walk Harness, expires 6/30/05, one coupon per customer, not valid with other coupons or discounts, C511



Green Acres Kennel Shop
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Bangor, ME 04401

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*Your pet's home
away from home.*



*Helping you and your pet
become best friends for life.*

The “Woof, Woof, Meow, Meow” Show on WVOM

We know you care about your pets and want to learn more. We encourage you to check out the “Woof, Woof, Meow, Meow” show on **WVOM 103.9**, the Voice of Maine, every **Sunday evening at 8:30**. Hosted by Green Acres own Don Hanson and radio personality, Mike Dow, the show focuses on dogs and cats. We have had a wide variety of guests on the shows. Topics for discussion have included behavior, training, healthcare, nutrition, and how to select the best pet. The show accepts **q u e s t i o n s a t : donh@greenacreskennel.com**. Tune in, learn and let us know what you think!

Canine Nutrition Seminars

Understanding Canine Nutrition

This 2-hour seminar will focus on nutrition as the foundation of good health. Unfortunately, one can be overwhelmed by the often contradictory information on what type of diet is the best for the average dog. In this presentation we will examine the very fundamentals of our dogs nutritional needs and how those needs are met by the various types of diets that are fed today (homemade, home prepared raw, commercial raw, commercial dry, and commercial canned). We will then use the Green Acres Kennel Shop food comparison database to look at several types of foods including their advantages, disadvantages, risks and their real costs. At the conclusion of this presentation you will be better equipped to select a food for your own dog.

This seminar will be offered on the evening of **Wednesday, May 18th** and again on the evening of **Thursday June 16th**. The seminar will begin promptly at 6:30PM. Space is limited, so we do ask that you sign-up in advance. There is no charge for the seminars, but we do ask that you reserve your spot with a minimum \$5 donation to the Bangor Humane Society Shed and Emily Fund. Checks may be sent to Green Acres, where we will forward them to BHS after the seminar. You will receive coupons at the seminar worth more than this \$5 investment/donation.