

Where's the Beef?

Ingredient definitions tell the dog food tale.

Susan Bertram, DVM

Posted: Fri Jun 13 00:00:00 PDT 2003

Fat and Oil Ingredients Flaxseed or linseed meal and fish oil are sources of omega fatty acids. Vegetable oils, such as corn, canola, and sunflower, contain more fatty acids than animal fats and tallow.

Fiber Sources Beet pulp is the dried residue from sugar beets, with or without the sugar removed. Pomace is the pulp of fruits and vegetables. Peanut and soybean hulls (pure cellulose that's indigestible fiber) increase the bulk of the finished product or dilute the calories in a reduced-calorie food. Bran of any grain is the outer coating of the kernel.

Mill- runs (middlings) of any grain are a by-product of milling, mostly hulls.

Additives Digest is hydrolyzed (broken-down) animal tissue sprayed onto the outside of dry dog food for added flavor. Corn syrup also increases palatability with a sweet taste and acts as a preservative, inhibiting bacteria. Gums, including guar, xanthan, carageenan, and pectin are plant extracts, used as stabilizers or thickeners. BHA, BHT, and ethoxyquin are synthetic preservatives. Tocopherols and ascorbate are vitamin E and vitamin C, used as natural preservatives. Other possible additives include coloring agents, glucosamine and chondroitin (joint health supplements), probiotics (bacteria or yeast to aid digestion) and L-carnitine, which may help with fat metabolism.