

BVA Working Group: scoping document

Terms of reference/scope

Working Group	Companion Animal Feeding Working Group (CAFWG)
Chair (member of PC)	Sally Everitt
Secretary (BVA policy team)	Vera Cottrell
BVA Officer	Justine Shotton
Members (divisions, individuals, Branches, EWAP)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Calum McIntyre (Policy Committee) • Megan Cooper (EWAP) • Marge Chandler (BSAVA) • Alex Taylor (BVNA) • Mike Jessop (VPHA) • Dan Makin (Veterinary Surgeon and Practice Owner, Vets4Pets) • Georgia Woods (Weight Management Clinic Nurse at the University of Liverpool) • Taranjit Dhansay (FSA) • Andrew Prentis (Vet Sustain)

Aims/objectives	<p>To develop BVA's position on diet choices for cats and dogs, addressing nutrition, animal welfare (including production animal), sustainability and public health. The group will aim to assess whether feeding pets non-traditional diets is a sound nutritional choice but does not aim to compare different diets.</p> <p>The group will look at anything that contributes to an animal's diet, including supplements, treats and liquids. The group will aim to take a principles-based approach to allow for the use for other companion animal species.</p>
Intended audience	Vets and veterinary nurses in first in opinion practice, all staff in veterinary practices involved in providing information and advice on dietary choices, pet owners/the wider public, pet food manufacturers, academics.
Remit/scope and desired outputs (to be completed by PC)	<p>There is currently conflicting advice from food manufacturers, and a variable approach to teaching nutrition in vet school. The desired outcome of the group is to develop a position as well as identifying and sign-posting to materials that were scientifically sound to support conversations around companion animal nutrition. The group will look to identify any gaps where new material should be developed. The group will also aim to produce a myth-buster document be aimed at pet owners but also other audiences where it is appropriate, to draw out misconceptions around pet food.</p> <p>The work of the group will focus on cats and dogs, but the group will aim to take a principles-based approach to allow application to other species. In developing evidence and advice for the profession, the working group should consider:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The impact of novel and alternative diets in relation to pet health, obesity, dental health and hygiene

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • nutritional requirements for dogs and cats - in health (including life-stage) and disease • nutrient deficiencies linked to certain types of diets • pet food safety concerns across different types of food: bacterial contamination of raw food (and issues relating to AMR); dry food / magnesium levels on urinary obstruction in cats; grain free diets and cardiomyopathy; potential for allergic reactions (may be an issue with insect-based diets); possible thiamine deficiency caused by raw fish-based diets • infection control in relation to these diets as there is a potential public health risk related to some forms of feeding • structure and regulation of the pet food market • collation of scientific evidence and how it is assessed • relationship between the pet food industry and vets • the origin and composition of animal derivatives forming the basis of feed stuffs such as kibble • protein sources used in vegan and vegetarian diets and potential allergens • costs to the individual owner • potential sustainability issues e.g. carbon footprint of pet food, competition between pets and humans for the same food source; pets as users of waste from human food chain • how public health and sustainability intersect. • drivers determining why pet owners' chose certain diets. (A large body of work has been published on this issue and should be used to inform the WG's work) • similarity between pet owners' responsibility for pet's health and parents' responsibility for children's health • human behaviour change with involvement from experts in motivational interviewing • human diet trends and how they impact companion animal feeding.
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Once the remit section above is completed it should be circulated to the divisions (via the BVA liaison email loop) and Branches to advertise membership and request input/expressions of interest, and to the WG retained list.

Existing policies/positions (BVA and/or divisions)	https://www.bva.co.uk/media/4273/full-bva-position-on-animal-welfare.pdf https://www.bva.co.uk/media/3270/bva-bvna-bvzs-and-beva-policy-position-on-obesity-in-dogs-cats-horses-donkeys-and-rabbits-full.pdf https://www.bva.co.uk/media/3090/bva-sustainability-and-the-veterinary-profession-action-plan-2.pdf
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	Completed by PC and EWAP
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<p>Potential consultees/other sources of information/evidence</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BVDA • Vet schools • Joanna Dukes McEwan (cardiologist) • other specialist vets regarding potential health risks of alternative diets • Internal medicine expert (suggested Silke Salavati, Edinburgh) • Genever Morgan, PhD student Liverpool working on raw diets for dogs • Mike Davies LVS • Raw Feeding Vet Society (Nick Thompson) • Andrew Knight • Pet owners (Zoe Belshaw)/ vegan/vegetarian, raw feeding groups • Pet Food UK (Michael Bellingham) • Pet Food manufacturers Hilary Noyes, Hills/ John Rawlings or Jo Gale, Mars • Alternative diets manufacturers (Butternut Box, Catkin, Yora) • Nextmune • Pet food sellers • UK Health Security Agency • Zoo vet to share experience of creating and feeding alternative diets/species specific diets • Fox Hounds (David Williams) • Animal Welfare Charities, Emma Tipton PDSA, ISFM, Kennel Club • SAVSNET/Vet Compass • Vet Poison Service (Nicola Robinson) • Generation Pup/Bristol Cats Study • Beverley Cuddy, Dogs Today magazine • Kristen Reyher/Alison Blaxter (Bristol), motivational interviewing, (possibly have student working specifically on diets) • Human Behaviourist • Alison Skipper • Tamzin Furtado, Liverpool • Pru Hobson-West, Nottingham (input as a sociologist) • Rowena Packer • Vanessa Schmidt (Senior Lecturer in Veterinary Dermatology, Liverpool University) • Pets at Home • Behaviourists (both cat and dog) • Human pediatric nutritionist • Wylie vets (for information on their health club) • Jen Gale (Sustainablush)
<p>Legislative/policy differences in devolved regions of UK?</p>	

Local/regional nuances to be considered?	Popularity of novel diets amongst specific demographics e.g. urban vs rural, North/South	
Sustainability considerations?	Carbon footprint of pet food, competition between pets and humans for the same food source, pets as users of waste from human food chain, intersection of public health and sustainability, packaging, over-feeding.	
Diversity and inclusion considerations?	Different cultural and religious attitudes to certain foods eg insects.	
One Health considerations?	Perceived public health risks from different types of feeding, communication of risks to pet owners, pathogenic and cross-contamination risks of certain diets in veterinary care settings, potential public health risk posed by faecal outputs.	

EWAP initial comments on remit/scope/desired outputs/process	
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<p>Timeframe</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - approx. how often will WG meet? - update to PC by X? - draft policy position to PC by X? 	<p>Meetings:</p> <p>28 February</p> <p>24 April</p> <p>3rd meeting TBC</p> <p>4th meeting TBC</p> <p>5th meeting TBC</p>
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