

How Pet Food is Made

PFI members provide more choices than ever to feed America's 160 million dogs and cats, including dry, wet, semi moist, fresh, dehydrated, freeze-dried and raw-infused pet food, as well as treats and chews. Our member companies drive continuous improvement in the safety of ingredients and finished products. Their safety programs are forward-looking and employ practices such as applying advances in technology and continual monitoring throughout the manufacturing process to ensure the safest possible food products for our pets. Follow the journey from ingredients to your pet's bowl.



Reliable and Trusted Ingredient Suppliers

Pet food safety starts with reliable suppliers. The companies that supply pet food ingredients are regularly inspected by PFI members. This can include a review of the supplier's quality control procedures and reviewing for processes consistent with hazard analyses. Even after suppliers are approved, incoming ingredients are scrutinized according to company specifications.



Hygienic and Secure Design of Pet Food and Treat Manufacturing Facilities

Pet food and treat manufacturing facilities are designed with safety in mind, to prevent product contamination and maximize security. Facility design may include use of stainless steel manufacturing equipment, installation of handwashing stations, established walking patterns to minimize contamination, protective coatings on floors and walls, and security of facility perimeter, internal area, equipment and ingredients.



Inspecting and Testing Ingredients during Arrival and Unloading

Pet food and treat ingredients are assessed and tested for a series of requirements, as appropriate. For example, manufacturers may review for safe handling during transportation, verify that the tanker truck was washed prior to loading and proper temperature control was maintained, and ensure compliance with specific nutrient and grading specifications.



Continuous Monitoring during Manufacturing

Steps are taken to ensure safety throughout the cooking, shaping and drying process. From pH testing and verification of proper ingredients used, to maintenance of proper temperatures and screening for metals, pet food and treat makers are committed to providing the highest quality food for your pet.



Safety and Traceability Assurances during Packaging

Regular testing and inspection continues before the food arrives on the store shelf. Examples of these measures include verification of the correct barcodes and date codes for product traceability, review of integrity of containers, equipment and packaging, environmental bacteria testing, testing to confirm the guaranteed analysis, and confirmation that the proper shipping conditions will be maintained.



Regulatory Oversight

In the United States, pet food is among the most highly regulated of all food products, and is regulated at both the federal and state levels. While pet food makers and their suppliers have always been required to market safe products under the Federal Food, Drug and Cosmetic Act (FFDCA), the Food Safety Modernization Act (FSMA) now places an emphasis on preventing foodborne illness. In addition, states require pet food makers to register each of their products before they may be sold within state borders.



Still Curious? Visit www.petfoodinstitute.org to watch a short video and learn more about pet food's journey from supplier to your cat or dog's bowl.