

Petfood trends and health claims

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Functional ingredients in petfoods

- Provide (health) benefits beyond basic nutrition
- Satisfy pet humanization
- Enable petfoods to stand out

“Unique blend of nutrients and natural supplements” used in a line of extruded dog foods

- Cranberry extract
- Nucleotides
- Prebiotics FOS and MOS
- Yucca extract
- Natural dietary antioxidants
- Calcium, phosphorus and vitamin D
- Glucosamine, chondroitin and MSM
- Omega-3 and omega-6 fatty acids
- Natural preservatives
- L-carnitine

Health and therapeutic claims on functional petfoods according to European regulation

- Health claims
 - “Supports/maintains/protects/contributes to
- Therapeutic claims
 - Wording of medical indication and dietetic food composition are regulated by law (“foods with particular nutritional purpose”)

Legal principles of health claims

- Not misleading
- No use of medical wording
- Substantiated by accepted scientific facts or data

Article 13 of Regulation (EC) No 767/2009

- “the claim is objective, verifiable by the competent authorities and understandable by the user”
- “scientific substantiation shall be available at the time the feed is placed on the market”

Article 13 of Regulation (EC) No 767/2009

- “purchasers shall have the right to bring to the attention of the competent authority their doubts in respect of the truthfulness of the claim”

Ideal proof for efficacy of functional ingredients

- The substance in question provokes a better effect than placebo and has a likely mechanism of action
- Trials with target species
- Comparable control and test group
- Placebo controlled, double blinded
- Statistically significant effect
- Meaningful effect
- Reproducible effect

Is efficacy in experiments similar to that in practice?

- Are preparations of functional ingredient identical?
- Is dosing similar?
- Does functionality survive petfood processing?

How to know whether functional foods work

- Scrutinize the claim
- Question suppliers and sales representatives:

Who did the research, what were design and outcome, what about reproducibility, mechanism of action, preparation, dose and stability of functional ingredient?