pet food institute®
Promoting long and healthy lives since 1958.

ADVANCING THE TRANSPARENCY OF PET FOOD LABELS:

Understanding the Importance of Total Dietary Fiber
Pet Food Industry White Paper



The Pet Food Institute (PFI) serves as a united voice of the pet food industry, coming together as one advocate for its members' interests, and sharing best practices and collaboration to ensure that the quality, safety and nutritional adequacy of the pet foods manufactured & sold across the United States are of the highest standards.

Pet Food Institute Nutrition Subcommittee (PFI-NSC) Working Group Contributing Authors: Renan Donadelli (Freshpet), Brenda Knapp (Simmons Pet Food), Leah Lambrakis (Simmons Pet Food), Matthew Panasevich (Mars Pet Care), Christine Pendlebury (Champion Pet Foods), James Templeman (Primal Pet Foods).

INTRODUCTION

What is Changing on Pet Food Labels

Over the next few years, the North American pet food industry is rolling out a modernized nutrition facts label across all pet food products to drive consumer transparency and understanding. Complete, industry wide implementation of the modernized nutrition facts label is expected by 2030, but consumers should expect to see early examples of these updated labels on pet food products as early as spring 2025. The goal of this label modernization is standardization across all North American pet food products and to more closely align with human food labeling. The updated nutrition label is designed for clarity and to be more informative, making it easier for pet owners and veterinary professionals to review and understand the most relevant nutritional content of pet foods. One of the most impactful updates to the nutrition facts label is the shift from crude fiber to total dietary fiber (TDF) maximum percentage within the product guaranteed analysis, thereby providing a more accurate and meaningful measure of a pets' dietary fiber intake. A dietary fiber (max) will now appear below the newly defined total carbohydrate (max) as a hanging indent on a pet food nutrition facts label.

It is important to understand that while the total dietary fiber content is now declared, the actual amount of fiber in pet food has not changed. Previously, fiber was declared as a fraction of the total fiber content (as 'crude fiber'); now, it is presented in its entirety (as 'total dietary fiber').

GUARANTEED ANALYSIS

Crude Protein (min.) 26.0%
Crude Fat (min.) 18.0%
Crude Fiber (max.) 3.0%
Moisture (max.) 8.0%

Current

Pet Nutrition Facts

1 Cup (8 oz standard measuring cup) = 80 g

Calories Per Cup (fed) † :309
From : Protein 73, Fat 123, Carbohydrates 113

Nutrients	Guaranteed	Per Cup
Protein (min)	26.0%	21 g
Fat (min)	18.0%	14 g
Total Carbohydrate † (max)	42.0%	34 g
Dietary Fiber (max)	9.0%	7 g
Moisture (Max)	8.0%	6 g

† Calculated value

Real Yummy Lamb and Rice Recipe Compete Adult Dog Food is formulated to meet the nutritional levels established by the AAFCO Dog Food Nutrient profiles for maintenance

Proposed

Figure 1. A comparison of the current Guaranteed Analysis panel with the proposed Pet Nutrition Facts label, highlighting the transition to total dietary fiber and the inclusion of calorie content and carbohydrate values.

WHAT IS FIBER?

Fiber is a class of carbohydrates that cannot be digested by pets. It is commonly classified into two main categories (1) soluble fiber and (2) insoluble fiber. Soluble fibers dissolve in water and are often fermented by bacteria in the large intestine. Insoluble fibers, on the other hand, do not dissolve in water and generally pass through the digestive system with minimal fermentation.

WHAT IS CRUDE FIBER VS. TOTAL DIETARY FIBER?

To summarize, while crude fiber has traditionally been used to declare the fiber content in pet food, it primarily accounts for only insoluble fibers, omitting important soluble fibers. Total dietary fiber includes both soluble and insoluble fibers, providing a more comprehensive and accurate representation of the fiber sources included in pet food. Therefore, consumers may see a higher value for fiber on their pet food label. This update to pet food labels enhances the nutritional information available to consumers.



Figure 2. Crude fiber captures only a limited subset of insoluble fiber, whereas total dietary fiber encompasses the full range of both soluble and insoluble fiber components.

WHY THIS MATTERS TO PET OWNERS

Although fiber is not defined as an essential nutrient for dogs and cats, it supports a multitude of associated benefits for pets including hairball control, improved stool quality and bowel movement regularity, enhanced gut health, and the promotion of satiety and weight maintenance. Given the wide breadth of roles that fiber plays and the varying needs of different dogs and cats, it is important to understand that the fiber content (e.g., low, modest, high) and composition (e.g., soluble vs insoluble) in different diets may vary greatly. A diet formulated for weight maintenance, for instance, may have much more fiber than a gastrointestinal therapeutic diet. As such, this label update is a meaningful step forward in helping pet owners make informed decisions regarding whether a diet may be appropriate for their pet.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

The shift from crude fiber to total dietary fiber on pet food labels marks an important evolution in how nutritional information is communicated to pet owners. By adopting more comprehensive, scientifically aligned methods of fiber analysis and presenting this information in a clearer, more recognizable format on pet food labels, the pet food industry is taking a proactive step toward greater transparency, improved consumer understanding, and enhanced nutritional support for pets. As this transition unfolds, pet owners, veterinarians, and industry stakeholders alike can feel confident that the updated labels provide a more accurate and complete picture of fiber content—reinforcing the industry's ongoing commitment to pet health and wellness.

4 WAYS U.S. PET FOOD LABELS ARE *CHANGING*



Pet Food Label Modernization created new regulations for pet food labels. The goals are greater consistency and understanding when shopping for foods, treats, mixers and food supplements.



1 THE PURPOSE OF THE PRODUCT WILL BE SHOWN ON THE FRONT OF THE PACKAGE.

It helps pet owners quickly choose the right product for their pet by species, life stage, size and weight.

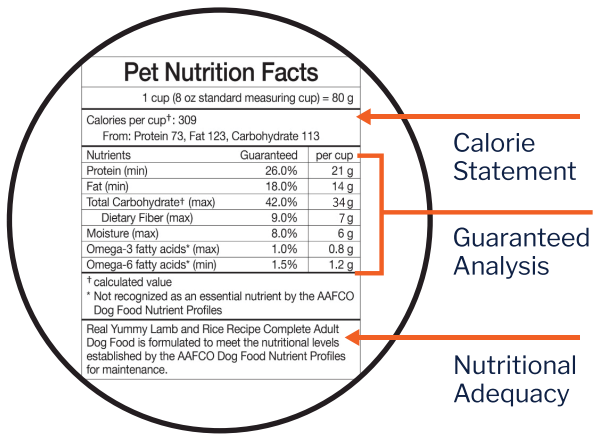
2 A NUTRITION FACTS BOX WILL BE INCLUDED.

Similar to human food nutrition labels, nutrient amounts will now be shown in common household measurements (like cups or grams) or containers (like a can or pouch) along with its weight in grams.

Current Pet Food Nutrition Information Example



New Pet Food Nutrition Facts Example



3 THE FIBER NUMBERS WILL SIGNIFICANTLY INCREASE BUT THE RECIPES HAVEN'T CHANGED.

The current value is for crude fiber, while the new one is for dietary fiber. Crude fiber values are lower than dietary fiber. This change to dietary fiber makes this more similar to what is shown on human food labels. Two new guarantees will be included, Total Carbohydrates and Dietary Fiber.

4 STANDARDIZED GRAPHICS MAY BE USED TO COMMUNICATE HANDLING AND STORAGE INSTRUCTIONS.

Use of these graphics is optional. When they are used on labels, they will be consistent as shown below.



SCAN FOR MORE INFORMATION

Changes on pet food labels will take place gradually through 2030. The changes will help consumers by clearly communicating important facts about their pet's foods.

PetFoodInstitute.org

pet food institute®
Promoting long and healthy lives since 1958.