

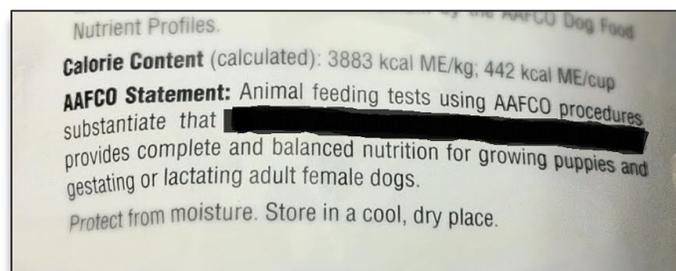
 **LEVITTOWN**  
**ANIMAL HOSPITAL**

2703 Hempstead Turnpike  
Levittown, NY 11756  
(516) 796-2266  
[www.levittownvet.com](http://www.levittownvet.com)

### “What’s the best food for my pet?”

In light of the many food recalls that seem to happen frequently, this is one of the most asked questions among dog and cat owners. While there isn’t necessarily a quick and easy answer, there are definitely some guidelines you can follow to ensure you’re providing good nutrition for your furry friends!

1. Your pet has to eat the food. If they refuse to eat it, even after letting them get really hungry, then the food is no good.
2. You should be able to afford the food. This may not be an issue with a small-breed dog but certainly comes into play if you have very large pets or multiple pets. Establishing a budget for pet food is always a good idea.
3. The food should be widely available. If you need to travel three towns over to the one little store that carried your special food, it’s not the right choice for you.
4. The food should be from a respectable, established, nationally recognized manufacturer. Only these companies have enough funds to conduct proper nutritional research and maintain quality control measures now and also in the future.
5. The food label should always have an AAFCO (Association of American Feed Control Officials) statement. This ensures that the food meets the nutritional requirements for your pet. The statement may be tiny and it is likely in a different place on every brand of food, but it is there!



6. The food should be matched to your pet’s life stage (age) and (oftentimes) the breed. Don’t feed a large breed puppy food to a 13-year-old Chihuahua. Similarly, cats are not small dogs, so stick with cat food for cats and dog food for dogs.

7. I never ever recommend raw diets, and it is rare that I will support the feeding of a home-cooked diet.
8. There is a wide range of quality when it comes to pet foods. In general, you get what you pay for. However, don't be fooled by clever marketing, fancy packaging or buzzwords such as "natural" or "organic!" When in doubt, ask your veterinarian, not a breed or the salesperson at the pet store.

Here is a short list of the most popular" Mainstream" premium food manufacturers. I have had personal experience feeding many of these foods to my own pets: **Eukanuba, IAMS, Royal Canin, Blue Buffalo, and Science Diet.** With the exception of IAMS, you will not find these brands at your supermarket. If you prefer to feed a food made with ingredients fit for human consumption or organic meats, you may want to try: Innova, EVO, Canine Caviar, Wellness, Solid Gold, or Eagle Pack. I may have very specific brand/variety recommendations if we need to utilize food to address a medical concern.

