

# AAFCO GUIDELINES: DEVELOPMENT OF THE GUIDELINES AND USE

Gail Czarniecki-Maulden, Ph.D

Friskies Research and Development

The Association of American Feed Control Officials (AAFCO) sets the nutritional adequacy guidelines for pet foods. These guidelines are developed by AAFCO subcommittees and then presented to the pet food industry and AAFCO membership for comment. Final regulations are published yearly in the "Official Publication. Association of American Feed Control Officials".

Copies of this publication can be obtained from: Charles Frank, AAFCO Treasurer Georgia Department of Agriculture Plant Food, Feed and Grain Division Capitol Square Atlanta, Georgia 30334

## Nutritional Adequacy: Statement

A statement of nutritional adequacy must be on the pet food label. If the product is nutritionally complete, the statement will be worded as follows:

1) (Name of product) is formulated to meet the nutritional levels established by the AAFCO Dog (or Cat) Food Nutrient Profiles for \_\_\_\_\_. (Blank is to be completed by using the stage or stages of the pet's life, such as, gestation, lactation, growth, maintenance or the words " All Life Stages").

or

2) Animal feeding tests using AAFCO procedures substantiate that (Name of Product) provides complete and balanced nutrition for \_\_\_\_\_. (Blank is to be completed by using the stage or stages of the pet's life, such as, gestation, lactation, growth, maintenance or the words " All Life Stages").

## *Nutritional Adequacy Based on Nutrient Profiles .*

If a nutritional adequacy statement is based on nutrient profiles, the pet food has to meet the AAFCO nutrient profiles but does not have to be fed to animals. The AAFCO Dog and Cat Food Nutrient Profiles were developed by the AAFCO Canine and Feline Nutrition Experts subcommittees. These committees consist of nutritionists from universities as well as industry. The profiles set minimum levels for each essential nutrient as well as maximum levels of selected nutrients. Nutrient levels are based on the latest NRC publications in addition to more recent published and unpublished data. Nutrient requirements have been adjusted for average bioavailability of nutrients in feed ingredients.

*Nutritional Adequacy Based on Animal Feeding Tests.*

If a nutritional adequacy statement is based on animal feeding tests, dogs or cats must be fed the product according to the official AAFCO feeding protocol for the intended life stage of the pet. The product provides the sole source of nutrients (with the exception of water) throughout the trial. The diet fails the protocol if any animal shows signs of nutritional deficiency or excess during the trial.

<b><u>Type of Trial</u></b>	<b><u>Number of animals</u></b>	<b><u>Duration of Test</u></b>	<b><u>Parameters</u></b>
Maintenance	8	26 weeks	Body weight Hemoglobin Packed cell volume Serum alkaline phosphatase Serum albumin Whole blood taurine(cat only)
Growth	8	10 weeks	Rate of weight gain Hemoglobin Packed cell volume Serum albumin Whole blood taurine (cat only)
Gestation/Lactation	8	Starts at or before estrus and ends when puppies or kittens or 4 weeks of age	Puppy or kitten survivability Maternal body weight change Weight gain of offspring Litter size Maternal hemoglobin Packed cell volume Serum albumin Whole blood taurine (cat only)