

Opinion on Delta Society's Raw Protein Diet Policy

We have received several emails from our customers concerning the decision by the Delta Society to expel raw-fed animals from their Pet Partners program. <https://www.deltasociety.org/Page.aspx?pid=638&srctid=1&erid=190966>

When you go to Delta's website, the first question asks what the scientific facts are for this decision but the response does not contain any scientific facts. There are no citations of scientific research on this subject, which leads one to suspect **there is no scientific evidence backing this claim.**

It is worth noting that while many major brands of pet food, including some raw foods, have been recalled over the years, the only documented cases of actual harm to pets or people from *Salmonella* have been linked to dry kibble foods and pig-ear treats. Raw food diets are under such a microscope of public scrutiny that their proponents are forced to maintain extremely vigilant hygienic procedures. This results in making raw food diets actually much safer than their dry or canned counterparts. **There has never been a documented case of pets or people becoming infected with pathogens from a raw diet.**

The Delta Society admits that there have never been any cases where a raw-fed pet infected a patient, so imposing this ban makes no sense. What exactly is the reason for the ban? Is it the possibility of a therapy dog licking a patient? Many dogs eat feces--their own or that of other dogs/animals. Despite our best efforts to prevent it, many dogs eat garbage and long-dead animals, too. Furthermore, every dog at one time or another sniffs the back end of another dog, and also licks its own "private parts." Consider the germs involved in these activities and ask yourself which animal you would like to lick your face: the poop-eating, trash-gulping, butt-licking but kibble-fed pet? Or the one that is lucky enough to consume fresh, healthy, real foods that happen to be raw?

The Delta Society receives a lot of money from Purina, who does not make a raw food diet. A raw diet, whether homemade or commercially prepared, is based on the same caliber of real food ingredients that the average household purchases, prepares and consumes for its human members. Properly handled, there is no more reason to fear these ingredients in the family dog's dish than there is on the family's own dinner table.

Our great country is a free one. The choices of which products and services pet owners use for their pets, whether it be what type of shampoo, which veterinarian, what color collar, which dog walking service, or what brand of food, rest solely with the individual pet owner and should be of no concern or consequence to anyone else. Banning dogs that happen to be fed a natural, wholesome diet from participating in the wonderfully beneficial program of

therapy pets is tantamount to barring the toddler of vegan parents from attending a certain daycare. It's unfounded, fear-based discrimination that infringes on the basic rights of US citizens to select and care for their pets in the manner they feel is most appropriate.

What's next—banning certain breeds from participating?

How unfortunate that the decision to ban raw-fed pets from Delta's Pet Partners Program will likely lead to a lot of sad and lonely hospital/nursing home patients who look forward to seeing and interacting with their furry friends. The patients are the real victims of Delta's ridiculous policy. Smart owners will take their raw-fed therapy pets elsewhere.

Article written by J. Boniface, E. Thibodeau, K. Gawthrop, (c) Copyright 2010, all rights reserved.

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