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THE “PET FOOD INGREDIENTS MUST BE APPROVED” MYTH

To assure safety and wholesomeness of pet foods, state and federal regulatory agencies proscribe or permit ingredients. Additionally, ingredients must be described on labels by precise nomenclature dictated by these alphabet (AAFCO, FDA, etc.) agencies.*

The problem is, those who sit on the committees deciding what can or cannot be approved may have commercial links (see Proofs, pages 74-85). They can push through ingredients that should not be in foods, and prevent the approval of those which either rub prejudices the wrong way or which may create unwelcome competition to their own interests. On the other hand, state regulators (a manufacturer must get approval from each individual state) may have little nutritional knowledge or academic credentials, but a lot of power.

Nutritionists who are consulted by regulators to help make decisions about ingredient approval are steeped in the reductionistic point of view. Since they believe nutrition boils down to percentages – % protein, % fat, % fiber, etc. – almost anything can be an approved ingredient provided these numbers are known. Where there are deficiencies, a few synthetic vitamins here, a few additives there (all properly “approved” of course), and all is well. The end result of this unholy marriage between commercial interests, prejudice, scientific naiveté, and regulatory dictatorship is the official AAFCO listing of approved pet food ingredients. Here are examples of what has been officially approved... and I’m not kidding:

* Association of American Feed Control Officials, 1998 Official Publication.

- dehydrated garbage¹
- polyethylene roughage
- hydrolyzed poultry feathers
- hydrolyzed hair
- hydrolyzed leather meal
- some 36 chemical preservatives
- peanut skins and hulls
- corn cob fractions
- ground corn cob
- ground clam shells
- poultry, cow and pig feces and litter
- hundreds of chemicals
- a host of antibiotic and chemotherapeutic pharmaceuticals
- a variety of synthetic flavorings
- adjuvants
- sequestrates
- stabilizers
- anticaking agents

On the other hand, if a manufacturer wants to be innovative and pack as much natural nutrition into products as possible, important ingredients are not approved. For example, even though it has been proven that the amino acid, L-carnitine, may be deficient in processed pet foods, it is not approved and cannot be used (see Proofs, pages 74-85). Proteoglycans such as glucosamine and chondroitin and other ingredients such as collagen, all of which have been proven to help prevent and alleviate arthritic conditions, are not approved.¹⁻² Special natural foods that are particularly nutrient dense, such as pollen, composted sea vegetation, omega 3

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1. Association of American Feed Control Officials, 1998 Official Publication.
 2. Wysong RL, "Rationale for Contifin™, Glucosamine Complex™ & Arthegic™," 2002. *Wysong Health Letter*, "Chicken Cartilage for Rheumatoid Arthritis," 1994; 8(1). Clouatre D, Glucosamine Sulfate and Chondroitin Sulfate, 1999. Varma R, Glycosaminoglycans and Proteoglycans in Physiological and Pathological Processes of Body Systems, 1982. *Physiol Rev*, 1988; 68:858-910. *Ann Rev Biochem*, 1986; 55:539. *J Am Med Assoc*, 2000; 283(11):1469-75. *Br J Community Nurs*, 2002; 7(3):148-52. *Curr Opin Rheumatol*, 2000; 12(5):450-5. *Med Hypotheses*, 1997; 48(5):437-41. *Science*, 1993; 261:1727. *Chin Med J (Engl)*, 2000; 113(8):706-11. *Curr Opin Rheumatol*, 2002; 14(1):58-62. *Am J Clin Nutr*, 1998; 67(6):1286. *Am J Clin Nutr*, 1998; 67(2):317-21. *Arch Intern Med*, 1991; 151(8):1597-602.

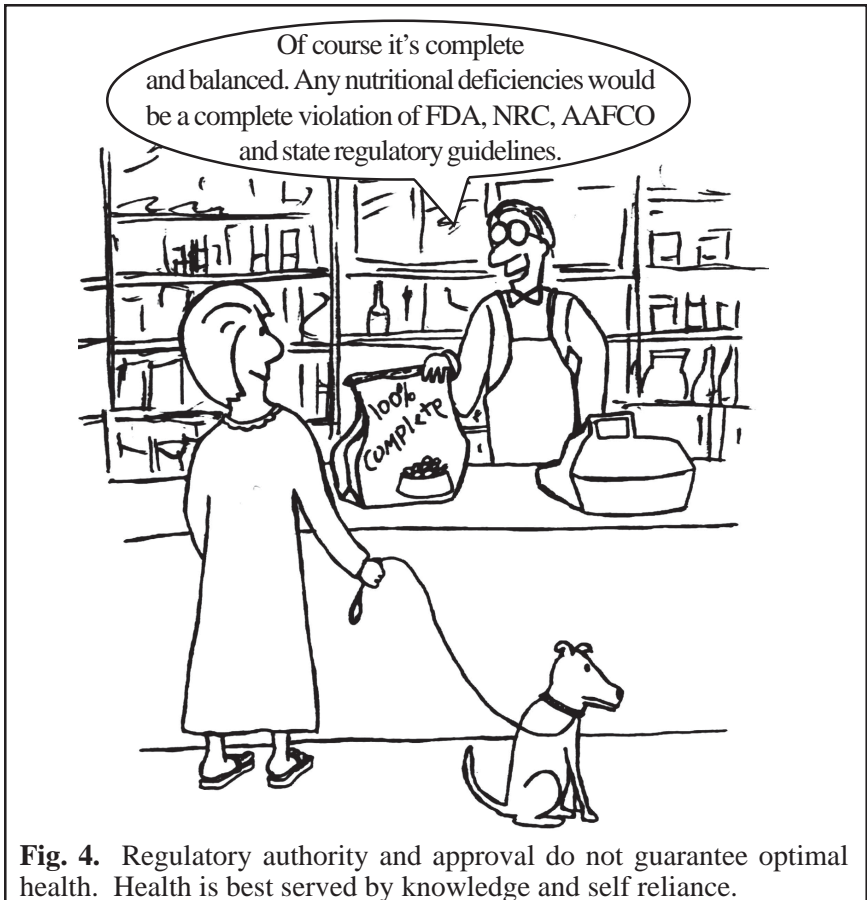


Fig. 4. Regulatory authority and approval do not guarantee optimal health. Health is best served by knowledge and self reliance.

fatty acids, various biologically active phytonutrients (dozens of these have been discovered and their proven effectiveness has created a class of beneficial ingredients known as nutraceuticals) and even some organic ingredients cannot be used because they are not “approved.”¹⁻² There is

1. Association of American Feed Control Officials, 1998 Official Publication.
2. Wysong RL, Lipid Nutrition – Understanding Fats and Oils in Health and Disease, 1990. Wysong RL, “Rationale for Nutritious Oils,” 2002. *Wysong Health Letter*, “Natural Foods Can Heal,” 1992; 6(5). *Wysong Companion Animal Health Letter*, “Herbs that Heal,” 1996(12). *Wysong Health Letter*, “An Herbal Medicine Chest,” 1995; 9(9). *J Altern Complement Med*, 2000; 6(5):383-9. *Br J Sports Med*, 1982; 16(3):142-5. *Br J Urol*, 1989; 64:496-499. *Hua Xi Yi Ke Da Xue Xue Bao*, 1994; 25(4):434-7. *Nutr Rev*, 1999; 57(9 Pt 2):S3-6. *Mayo Clin Health Lett*. 1998; 16(8):7. *Rheumatology (Oxford)*, 2001; 40(12):1388-93. *Can J Cardiol*, 2001; 17(6):715-21.

no question of safety here – as regulators pretend – for these foods have been consumed for eons by animals and humans without ill effect.

Animal food regulatory absurdity becomes apparent when the very ingredients banned are sitting on shelves in grocery and health food stores fully approved for human consumption.

“Approved” ingredient regulations cannot be trusted. Banning nutritious natural ingredients and approving dehydrated garbage and feces makes it clear that the agenda of regulation is something different than encouraging optimal nutrition.