

Food and ingredients

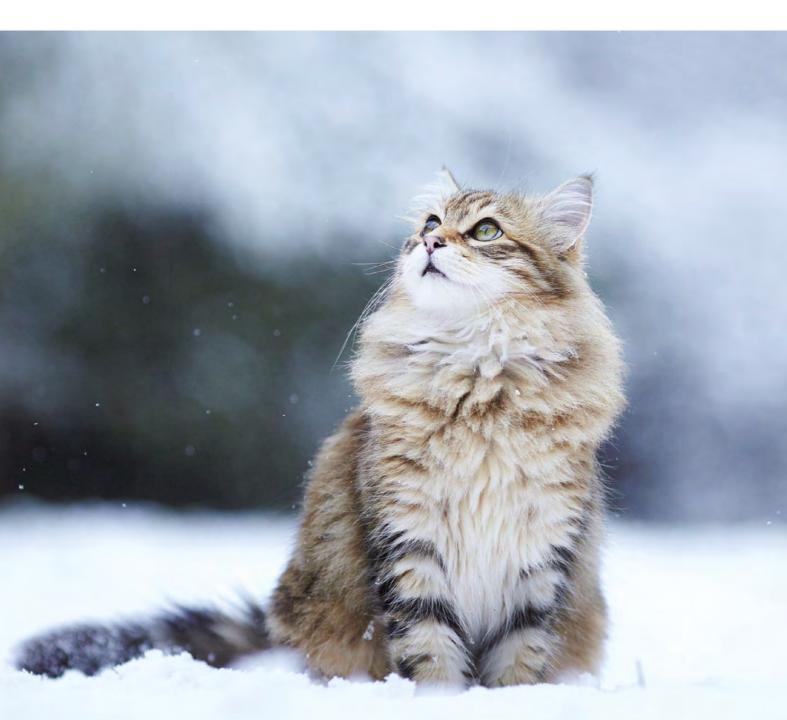
Plant-based, algae, goat milk and more.

Litter

Trends in litter and owner preferences.

Global pet industry

Cat market, packaging, the UK and Brexit.





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Highlights this issue



Food and ingredients

Trendy toppers like goat milk, multifunctional nutrients such as choline, health-promoting ingredients like krill and algae: we cover it all in this section. Plus, the plant-based diet is here to stay. For people... and pets.



As the number of cat owners grows, so do cat litter sales. An owner survey gives crucial insights into buying behaviour and product requirements. What are the latest innovations and trends in this category? Sustainable and health monitoring solutions, to mention but a few.





Global pet industry

Worldwide enthusiasm for pets and online shopping increased significantly during the pandemic. How can pet retailers get shoppers, in particular Gen Z and millennials, back into their stores? Also, we zoom in on the pet markets in Ireland and the UK, and the impact of Brexit.

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Before the year ends...

2021 is coming to an end. What an incredible year it has been again for the industry! With no signs of slowing down, let us see what 2022 has in store. We are grateful that the situation around COVID-19 has improved and that we have been able to visit trade shows again. The atmosphere and interactions at places like Zoomark can never be created in the same way online.

For some interesting 'end of year' reading material, here is what to expect from this issue.

On page 26, you will find a special on litter. Besides covering new developments and innovative products, we also dive into the results of a survey study we conducted with Yummypets. For example, the key differences between North American and European consumers: which continent cares more about smell? And who cares the most about sustainability? You will discover this and more on page 28.

Litter is not the only topic consumers gave their input on. On page 15, we examine purchasing insights and consumer acceptance of plant-based pet foods, based on another survey. With lockdowns being lifted, we also share some insights into consumer expectations around visiting retail stores. Including the two key factors that drive more people to specialty pet retail.

For our regional deep dive, we cover the UK and Ireland. With Brexit coming into effect this year, it has been an interesting time. On page 44, you will discover how businesses have been impacted because of it. And a retailer from Ireland shares his perspective of the Irish market on page 47.

While the dog market often gets the most attention, we share some opportunities in the cat market, on page 40.



Finally, on the food and ingredient front, we look at things like the microbiome, choline in pet food and an up-and-coming trend: goat milk for pet food.

PS If you have not yet claimed your ticket for the GlobalPETS Forum in Amsterdam Beach in January, hurry up. You can still join us: globalpets.community/gpf-2022

See you next year!

Philippe & Corine

Philippe Vanderhoydonck, Managing Director & Corine van Winden, Board member

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Exclusive brands

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Retail trends

Global pet industry

Sustainability Local brands t

of Traceability

lean label

Market overview Spain, Portugal

February issue | Advertising deadline: 14 January 2022 | Publication date: 11 February 2022

Pet industry highlights



GlobalPETS Forum Europe

19 to 21 January 2022 Hotel Huis ter Duin, Amsterdam Beach, Noordwijk, The Netherlands

Global Pet Expo 23 to 25 March 2022 Orange County Convention Center, Orlando, Florida, US



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Agronutris raises a hundred million euros for insect protein production

With this capital, French biotech company Agronutris will be able to set up its first industrial unit by the end of 2022 and fund a second, larger site.

The company aims to establish itself as the world leader for sustainable nutrition. By 2029, it aims to have nine production sites, with a combined annual conversion capacity of 1.5 million tons of bio-waste.

The industrial site's initial production operations will focus on rearing and transforming black soldier flies for the aquaculture and pet food markets.





Dutch pet food company to open holiday resort for dog lovers

Prins Petfoods is to start construction of a new holiday resort in the Netherlands – for dogs and their owners. The Prins Plaza resort will house 35 luxurious, sustainable and petfriendly holiday homes, fully equipped for stays with dogs.

"Our research among owners shows that almost 60% of them take their pets on holiday," says Prins experience director Mariska van Gelder. "For years now, we have been organising weekends with sports and fun at several holiday parks, together with experts. Being active with your dog in a responsible way helps to strengthen the bond with your pet. With Prins Plaza, we can offer year-round support and guidance for a wonderful tailor-made dog holiday for the whole family."

Mars Petcare invests an additional \$117 / €100 million in Arkansas facility

With sales of wet pet food up 18% compared to last year, Mars is doubling down on its investment, only months after it announced a \$145 million (€125 million) investment for the same manufacturing facility.

This latest investment will further expand the facility's manufacturing operations with the addition of two production lines. It will also support the construction of a new warehouse and allow for updates to existing equipment. Collectively, Mars Petcare has invested a total of nearly \$540 million (over €460 million) in its Fort Smith facility.



Pet industry highlights



JAB looking for several billion to invest in pet care

The Financial Times reports that the European investment group JAB wants to extend its acquisitions in the pet care sector. The new \$5 billion (€4.3 billion) fund would be used to invest in pet care services like insurance and medical equipment, alongside other consumer goods businesses.

With the previous \$6 billion (€5.2 billion) fund JAB raised, it acquired veterinary businesses. Earlier this year, the group's pet care division was considering going public.

Fressnapf will start 2022 with a change in leadership

Current managing director Dr Hans-Jörg Gidlewitz is to go into well-deserved retirement, and Christian Kümmel (*left*) will step up as the new managing director, alongside Dr Johannes Steegmann (*right*).

Torsten Toeller, who remains chairman of the board of directors, is looking forward to working with the new management team: "Christian Kümmel is perfectly suited to this responsible role, both professionally and personally. He lives our corporate values with firm conviction and, over the years, has built up one of the best-performing teams in our organisation. Now he is ready for the next step."



Woof Gang Bakery & Grooming on track to open its 150th location

14 years after opening its first store in South Florida, the specialty retailer is expanding fast across 18 US states. In the past year alone, it has opened 30 new franchises. 41 franchises have been sold in 2021, putting the company on a fast trajectory towards reaching \$100 million (€118 million) in revenue.

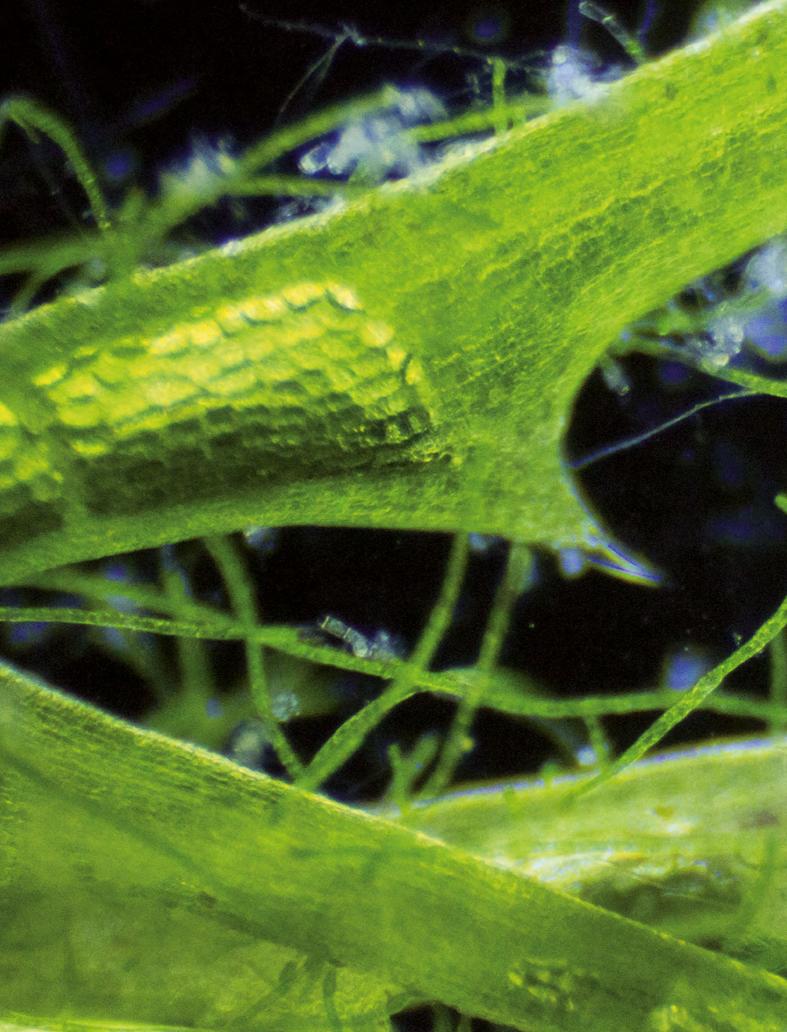


ADM to acquire four private label pet treat companies

For \$600 million (€507 million), ADM is acquiring a 75% stake in P4 Companies, a US private label pet treats and supplement maker which owns PetDine, Pedigree Ovens, The Pound Bakery and NutraDine.

With more than 300 employees, P4 provides a complete range of highly customised products to more than 650 customers in 15 countries.







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What do dogs and cats following the raw pet food trend eat for breakfast? A growing number of blogs and influencers recommend a novel solution: kibble 'cereal' made with a goat milk topper.

Cereal with milk for pets

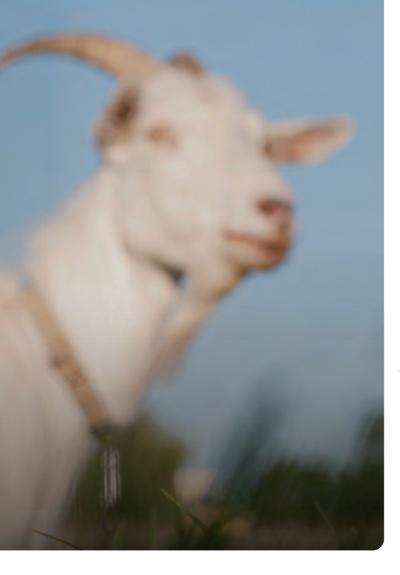
The basic trend is relatively simple. The topper, or sometimes just goat milk itself, is poured over the top of dry kibble in order to moisten it and provide additional nutritional benefits, with blogs and retailers promoting goat milk as the universal milk. Goat milk toppers are increasingly available from specialised websites and major retailers, such as Petco. But some pet nutritionists are sceptical of the myriad health benefits attributed to the feeding of goat milk.

The popularity of goat milk toppers seems to originate in the work of Ian Billinghurst, an Australia-based veterinarian and author, who is often cited by those promoting the benefits associated with feeding goat milk. Although he himself did not pioneer the trend,

Billinghurst said his 1993 book *Give Your Dog a Bone* on raw pet diets included a discussion of milk that compared goat milk to cow milk, and pasteurised milk to unpasteurised milk. However, the comparison was "a very minute part of what I spoke about, and I don't think I ever mentioned goat milk again except in the context of raising puppies".

More digestible?

Nevertheless, readers of Billinghurst's work apparently latched onto the idea that goat milk was a more digestible, 'complete' food for their dogs, and demand for goat milk products grew. Primal Pet Foods, a US-based pet food manufacturer that also cites Billinghurst's BARF (biologically appropriate raw food) diet as part of its inspiration, introduced



its own raw goat milk product in 2014. Goat milk remains one of their most popular offerings, according to Kyle Frautnick, senior director of marketing for Primal Pet Foods. The ongoing success led the company to introduce four flavoured goat milks in 2020, with options such as organic blueberry and pumpkin spice.

Hydration benefits

Goat milk, Frautnick said, offers a simple solution to pet owners looking to 'upgrade' basic kibble diets by adding hydration and nutrients missing from conventional dry kibbles, without having to switch to a fully raw diet.

"Hydration and moisture are important to a pet's diet," Frautnick said, "and we saw an opportunity to launch a product that would be beneficial not only to our raw feeder base of frozen and freeze-dried raw products, but also to expand our audience to traditional feeders of canned and kibble."

While multiple blogs promote the idea of health benefits tied to goat milk, veterinarians question that the goat milk itself is responsible. Billinghurst said the benefit derived from adding goat milk to kibble likely had less to do with what is in the milk, and more with what is not in the pet food.

"I would suspect there is some truth to it, putting real food over something dogs are not designed to eat," he said. "We can only guess at the benefits it may be supplying, but we can guess it's better quality protein and better quality fats, particularly if it's raw."

Raw risks

But Richard Hill, an associate professor in the College of Veterinary Medicine at the University of Florida, cautioned that raw goat milk can contain potentially harmful bacteria, including salmonella and listeria. Using goat milk to add hydration to dogs' diets is unnecessary, he said, because dogs naturally increase their intake of water after a dry or canned meal. Research into whether dry foods are problematic for cats is ongoing, he said, because cats do not necessarily drink as much water as would be available in a wet meal. But there is as yet no objective data to say whether cats require a supplement like a goat milk topper.

While goat milk is more digestible than cow milk, Hill said, adult dogs and cats lack the ability to digest large amounts of any kind of milk without developing diarrhoea. "Goat milk also contains lactose but about 20% less than cow milk so [they] could consume slightly more," Hill said. "But I would not advise giving lots of milk of any sort."



Emma Penrod Business and science journalist

Choline in petfood – a multifunctional and exciting nutrient Choline is one of those multipotent nutrients that allows other metabolic pathways to express their full potential. What are its benefits and limitations?

An essential nutrient

Choline is defined as an essential nutrient for dogs and cats. It is required for neurotransmission, cell signalling, lipid transport and metabolism, as well as cell membrane structure and integrity. Choline is present in meat, eggs, milk, and nuts. Additionally, there is a wide array of supplements often used in complete pet food diets as a source of choline.

Although choline chloride is a commonly used form, it affects the activity of other elements of the premix due to its hygroscopic properties and therefore requires attention. As an alternative, phosphatidylcholine originating from crustacean or herbal sources is being researched.

Optimal choline levels

There is still limited information and research on optimal choline levels. When it comes to cats and dogs, there are minimal requirements for choline defined (NRC, 2006). However, looking more deeply into choline metabolism, it is clear the requirements for choline are challenging to quantify as they are influenced by multiple factors. Also, choline is supplied by various choline-containing molecules

aside from free choline – glycerophosphocholine, phosphocholine, and phosphatidylcholine – and the different forms differ in their bioavailability and transport mechanisms.

Moreover, choline can be endogenously synthesised in cats and dogs, though the amount synthesised would be insufficient for daily requirements, which is why additional intake by food is important. Lack of other nutrients, such as methionine, vitamin B12, B6, and folate, would increase requirements for choline, while the presence of betaine may reduce the choline requirement.

Information on the maximum dose of choline is still blurry, as there have been no toxicity studies for choline in cats, while in dogs, studies showed inconsistent results

Beneficial effects

Research on the benefits of choline supplementation in humans currently focuses on claims associated with supporting brain health and cognition. In its acetylcholine form, choline acts as a neurotransmitter, expressing cholinergic effects involved in signalling muscle movement, learning, memory, and endocrine

Food and ingredients

Lack of other nutrients, such as methionine, vitamin B12, B6, and folate, would increase requirements for choline.

system regulation. When it comes to choline's role in the nervous system, limited studies in pets have been performed, but there is anecdotal evidence that choline may have beneficial effects in neurological conditions by supporting the cell structure and the production of neurotransmitters.

Additionally, choline has a significant role in lipid metabolism, and it has been researched for its effect on increasing fatty acid oxidation and efficient fat

utilisation. Choline's role in fat metabolism has been proven beneficial in the case of feline hepatic lipidosis – or fatty liver disease – which is a painful, potentially life-threatening condition, resulting in liver damage or failure. The OVC Pet Nutrition Team from the University of Guelph is currently investigating the role of choline in feline lipid metabolism.

Patience

In short, we will have to be patient as there is still a lot to learn about this multifunctional, exciting nutrient and its role in the health of our pets. •



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Krill is viewed as an ingredient that holds many benefits. Rich in phospholipid-bound omega 3, choline, astaxanthin and marine proteins, it can serve many purposes in pet food.

Powerful and health-promoting nutrients

Krill meal contains a high proportion of fat, of which 25% is made up of omega 3. Using a 5% inclusion rate on a Dry Matter (DM) basis, krill may contribute with 0.3% of EPA and DHA or 0.4% of omega 3. This makes krill ideal as a replacement for any other omega 3 source in a pet food formula. Studies show that krill-sourced phospholipid omega 3 is much more effective (42%) in increasing the omega 3 Index compared to similar marine triglyceride omega 3.

With a fat level of 30%, krill meal contains approximately 1.4% choline. Therefore, krill can partly or completely replace any choline source used in a food formula. Known as phosphatidylcholine, choline from krill is capable of increasing plasma choline 12 times better than the commonly used choline chloride salt. Importantly, this increase is also longer lasting.

Another natural component of krill is the extremely powerful antioxidant astaxanthin. It does not only serve as a biological antioxidant for pets, but also acts as a product stabiliser. Using 5% inclusion on a DM basis may provide 6.5 milligram astaxanthin per kilo.

Complete source of proteins

Krill is a complete protein source, containing all amino acids essential for dogs and cats. Approximately 8% of

krill protein is the limiting amino acid lysine, and glutamic acid makes up another considerable portion of the protein. Although glutamic acid is non-essential, it is great for palatability. These proteins are highly digestible, as a large proportion is made up of short peptides.

Easy to formulate

Even though it contains a high amount of fat, krill is an easy ingredient to work with. Since a large part of the fat is present as polar phospholipids, krill is not greasy, but quite dry, light and free-flowing. Despite the high level of vulnerable fatty acids in krill, it can easily cope with the normal heat treatment used in most extruders. Possibly, this is due to the astaxanthin, that is naturally integrated into the fat present in krill.

Krill ingredient brands, such as QRILL Pet, are known and appreciated for having sustainable and traceable sourcing for pet food. In fact, QRILL Pet products are the first Marine Stewardship Council certified krill ingredients for pet food and supplements.



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Like owner, like pet? The trend in plant-based pet food

Even omnivore pet owners are choosing plant-based diets for their pets, though in some countries more than others, a new survey shows.

New study insights

Pet owners increasingly embrace plant-based diets, but which pet owners, where? To gain insights into the market and trends, a study was conducted as part of the Smart Protein Project to gauge consumer sentiment towards plant-based foods.

Diet types

The study surveyed pet owners on their own and their pets' diets, to see if their own diet preferences correlate with what they choose to feed their pets. Altogether, 63% of respondents indicated that they follow a conventional, meat-based diet. Raw meat diets and plant-based diets are equally popular at 12% of respondents each.

Not just vegans

Do these human diet preferences translate into pet diet choices? It turns out that, although vegans are indeed the most likely to be feeding their pets a plant-based diet (34%), they are not alone.

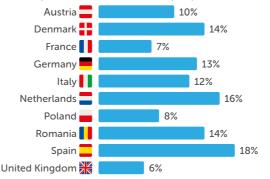
Of the respondents who identify as flexitarian, pescatarian, or vegetarian, almost one in five feed their pets a plant-based diet. Even 9% of omnivores choose plant-based pet food – showing that the adoption of plant-based diets is becoming common in all consumer segments.

Variations by country

However, not every country is as enthusiastic about going plant-based for their pet. While Spanish and Dutch pet owners are the most likely to feed their pets a plant-based diet (18% and 16% respectively), British and French consumers are least likely (6% and 7% respectively).

These numbers provide an exciting glimpse into the sizeable future of plant-based pet food. As more and more new brands launch into the space each year, increasing the availability of plant-based pet foods, and as consumers become more aware of the nutritional benefits for their pet, we expect to see this sector's growth explode.

% of respondents that feed their pet plant-based diets



Survey background

The survey (bit.ly/3vPBUfP) was conducted by Innova Market Insights in partnership with food awareness organisation ProVeg, the University of Copenhagen, and Ghent University as part of the Smart Protein Project. Ten European countries were surveyed in June 2021, with a total of 7,578 participants over the age of 18 participating, around 750 respondents per country.



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The innovation area most likely to affect pet nutrition health involves advances in understanding the microbiome.

Understanding gut microbiome

Microbiome tools include dietary fibres, probiotics, prebiotics and postbiotics. Each of these tools can be used to favourably modify the gut microbiome of pets.

For example, brewer's yeast has been used in pet foods for decades. Providing a good quality protein source and savoury taste to a pet's meal, brewer's yeast has been a two-part success story, improving pet health and being a sustainable ingredient. Moreover, postbiotics, such as antioxidants found in brewer's yeast, are becoming appreciated for their potential to influence health. Industries such as ethanol and sugar cane processing have provided more specialised yeast sources, further building on early learnings from brewer's yeast.

Gathering insights

Technology breakthroughs continue to happen, leading to an improved understanding of the beneficial aspects of microbiome tools for pet health.

For the past several years, fresh pet food maker NomNom has also been selling sample collection kits that enable pet owners to obtain knowledge of the composition of their pet's gut microbiome. This has enabled NomNom to develop a large database of information regarding pets' gut microbiome. It will be interesting to see if significant insights can be obtained that enable the development of next-generation microbiome-based products that improve pet health.

Postbiotics

Meantime, ingredient suppliers have been developing new sources of postbiotics to improve the health of pets. The grandfather of this science is Adare Pharmaceuticals, which has a postbiotic source that dates back over a century to its original use in humans. A relative newcomer, Diamond V (Cargill), has committed significant research funding that has shown direct immune enhancement benefits to otherwise healthy dogs when consuming a postbiotic source.

Segmentation is key

Segmentation is key to gaining the most value from microbiome tools. Segmentation can involve life stages and/or conditions such as immune issues, weight management, and gut stress. Segmentation can also involve identifying pets with abnormal gut microbiota populations, making the individual

Meantime, ingredient suppliers have been developing new sources of postbiotics to improve the health of pets.

susceptible to poor glycemic control, overeating, yeast infections, and so forth. Since consumers often respond best to products that contain a specific technology that can give real-life observable

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Precision nutrition

Precision nutrition relates to feeding the individual according to what it specifically needs. Several scientific areas are maturing which will enable precision nutrition for an individual pet's microbiome: firstly, low-cost microbiome diagnostic techniques; second, a wide variety of product-friendly microbiome tools such as various postbiotics; and third, increasing consumer knowledge of the importance of the microbiome.

differences, improved segmentation based on gut microbiome differences holds a lot of promise.

This confluence of factors is creating commercial opportunities for innovative pet food brands to capitalise on designing precision products for specific health-enhancing purposes in pets.

Have you devoted enough focus on your present business to leverage discoveries from the microbiome field into your pet products? This is a rapidly advancing and expanding scientific field that will differentiate products and brands. •



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In support of this trend, AFB International is now offering a probiotic-containing palatant to European pet food companies. After several years of research and development work with our probiotic partner, AFB has launched our first portfolio of powder palatants with Calsporin®, a probiotic Bacillus subtilis C-3102 for dogs. Calsporin is the only sporeforming probiotic authorized by the European Commission for the use in dog food in Europe.

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AFB's partner Orffa has a scientific dossier available with peer-reviewed studies showing the beneficial effect of Calsporin on dog health. Part of these studies were required to obtain the European authorization as a feed additive in food for dogs. They are available for review and use in marketing your dog food products.

AFB has conducted stability tests of Calsporin contained in our palatants coated on kibble. All stability tests have delivered great results - viable spore count is stable for up to 24 months.

Just as with all development projects, AFB, along with our partner Orffa, is here to support pet food companies every step of the way. We can support you with formulation advice and kibble analysis during the start-up phase of your project. Further, we can provide necessary probiotic-related information to support your pet food commercialization.

Working together, you can be a front-runner European pet food company, offering dogs and dog parents a solution that meets a health and wellness mega trend that is here to stay.

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MSM Pet Food ITALY

Innovation in the pet food world

MSM Pet Food is a 'Made in Italy' company founded in 2008 based on an idea of Luca Mognetti, who identified a business opportunity in the dynamic pet food market.

Production

Since the start of the company, it has grown steadily, thanks to the commitment of all company departments. Today, MSM offers a wide range of products for dogs and cats.

The company has innovated the philosophy of selective extrusion: using innovative technologies only the starches in pet food undergo the extrusion process, while all other ingredients are added in further steps by cold processes. The quality of the food is guaranteed by this production process, in which the transformation of the ingredients is done without altering their nutritional characteristics. In this way, all organoleptic and nutritional properties are preserved.

The company's production facility includes a double extrusion line, a high-

performance Clextral extruder, a double mixing line, and a filling and palletising line (600 bags per hour). This adds up to a production capacity of 30,000 tons per year.

Products

The company produces three different pet food lines under its own brands. MSM is also an ideal partner for the production of private labels for those companies who want to distinguish their product from the traditional brands in the market.

The revolutionary concept of its '3+ Kibble' is at the heart of all company recipes. First comes a light core of starches, extruded to be digestible. The second layer is a layer containing animal proteins, mineral substances and vitamins. This layer is coldly mixed to preserve all the energy. And finally, the third layer of animal fat coating adds taste to the mix.

The result: truly healthy foods, tailor-made to fit the size, age and specific needs of pets.

The company's tasty and highly palatable pet foods have been designed for the wellbeing of animals with different nutritional needs and for all those dogs and cats that need a fresh energy boost. All pet foods are of the highest quality at the right price.

And, as they say: The proof of the pudding is in the eating. And eating is what pets have been doing all those years that MSM has been providing them with pet feed that is a cut above the rest.

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De Haan Petfood THE NETHERLANDS New Rokus petfood range

Rokus is now offering a full line of adult and life stage products with specific nutritional characteristics for junior and senior dogs and cats. The functional range includes an anti-struvite product to help dissolve and prevent struvite stones, as well as a gut health formula that contains natural prebiotics and anti-microbial agents helping to improve general health. Moreover, Rokus has been expanded with dental sticks and training treats.

De Haan Petfood

info@dehaanpetfood.com dehaanpetfood.com





Golden Eagle FINLAND Ocean Formula

Golden Eagle Ocean Formula is made of fresh salmon, trout and herring. Designed for dogs needing an extra boost from high protein contents of fresh fish for their coat and dogs suffering from allergies.

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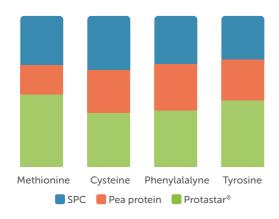


Once considered odd, nowadays, cutting out all animal products from your diet is mainstream. Whether out of concern for the environment or for the sake of animal welfare, the plant-based diet is here to stay. And now people want to extend that diet to family members, including furry ones.

Plant-based protein

Royal Avebe from the Netherlands has developed a plant-based protein for pet food, called Protastar®. What makes this particular protein interesting, is that it is a low glycoalkaloid potato protein. This means that it is fully plant based, healthy, and can pave the way towards a plant-based diet.

Potato proteins are rich, well rounded, and contain a high level of crude protein content. The lowglycoalkaloids potato protein is rich in sulphurcontaining amino acids and aromatic amino acids, enriching the coat colour of pets.



Tasty, healthy replacement

But what about flavour? Fortunately, this particular potato protein has a neutral, balanced flavour. In multiple two-bowl studies, low-glycoalkaloids potato proteins successfully replaced beef, poultry, or soybean meal, without an adverse effect on food intake. Can this be the leap for plant-based diets for pets? A plant-based diet might also end up being healthier for our feline friends, than meat alone. Potato proteins allow for a low ash formulation and better pH balance than from meals made solely from animal-derived products.

The numbers

Protastar is a low-glycoalkaloid potato protein that is good for pets and meets owner preferences for plant-based diets. It features a low solanine content (40 ppm), low ash content (0.7%), ideal pH balance (3), and a low buffering capacity. For manufacturers interested in producing a new generation of pet food, this is a plant protein worth checking out.



Janny Chen
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avebe.com



Italfeed stands out for its continuous research and development of innovative products for animal nutrition, made of natural ingredients of the highest quality.

Professional and innovative

"We are an all-women, dynamic company that, thanks to our team's competence and extensive experience in the food supplements market, offers a highly professional and innovative approach. Our goal is to provide natural ingredients of the highest quality for our pets' well-being," says Giulia Candotti, founder and owner at Italfeed.

The BLOOMYTM line is the flagship product, born from the company's constant innovation. The line comprises blends specifically researched and formulated, combining different natural origin ingredients with specific functionalities.

Customer-centred

Since its foundation, the company has stood out for its close partnership approach with customers. Thanks to its solid know-how, it can develop customised products based on the most up-to-date scientific data on animal nutrition. Deep

and up-to-date knowledge of European and Italian directives on labelling also enables it to provide an outstanding service in the labelling of complementary feeds.

Each specific raw material is supported by constantly updated technical-scientific documentation through research work in collaboration with universities and research institutions, as well as through direct contact with suppliers.

Clients benefit from a seamless, widespread, safe and effective distribution, guaranteed by the company's state-of-the-art integrated logistic system, outsourced to Magazzini Generali della Brianza (MGB). MGB are partners of excellence, with customs warehouses and a service centre with an internal customs section.

The best natural ingredients

Italfeed offers a wide selection of natural ingredients for animal nutrition, including traditional and organic raw materials

of natural origin, powdered herbs, standardised botanical extracts, and pure carotenoids. Proud of its Italian heritage, the company also offers the best active substances from the Mediterranean area and a wide array of propolis and beekeeping derivatives with purified polyphenols, all produced in Italy. All raw materials are accurately selected to comply with the highest quality standards.

Certified quality

Italfeed is committed to guaranteeing ever-higher quality and safety standards. Therefore, the company boasts essential certifications, including the renewal of ISO 9001: 2015, the organic certification according to Reg CE nr. 834/2007, and the recent voluntary FAMI QS certification for marketing speciality feed ingredients and their blends. •

Italfeed Srl info@italfeed.com italfeed.com



Kemin Nutrisurance

Pet food assurance

Kemin Nutrisurance provides industry-leading solutions for the pet food and rendering markets.

Expert support

With specialised expertise in oxidation control, food safety, palatability, and nutrition, Kemin's team of technical experts, application engineers and scientists is dedicated to providing support through every step of the pet food value chain.

Dedicated customer services

What sets the company apart is its dedicated customer services. Leveraging extensive pet food and rendering industry experience, the company's technical services managers partner with customers to troubleshoot and find solutions for product-related issues in every step of the pet food manufacturing process.

Experienced scientists support customers in developing new products, troubleshooting stability and palatability challenges, and effectively utilising Kemin products to ensure shelf-stable, fresh, delicious, and nutritious final products.

Because every pet food and rendering facility is unique, the company provides custom equipment solutions and training through a dedicated Kemin Application Solutions team. Whether it is an antioxidant or palatant, the effective use of an ingredient depends on the proper application and distribution. The KAS team is made up of experienced engineers and technicians that help design, install, maintain, and optimise customer application equipment to ensure their ingredients meet customers' performance goals.

Sustainably transforming the quality of life

Kemin Nutrisurance is the pet food and rendering technologies business unit of Kemin Industries, a global ingredient manufacturer that strives to sustainably transform the quality of life with its products and services.

The company supplies over 500 speciality ingredients for human and animal health and nutrition, pet food, aquaculture,

nutraceutical, food technologies, crop technologies, textile, biofuel, and animal vaccine industries.

For over half a century, the company has been dedicated to using applied science to address industry challenges and offer product solutions to customers in more than 120 countries. It provides ingredients to feed a growing population with its commitment to the quality, safety and efficacy of food, feed and health-related products.

Established in 1961, Kemin is a privately held, family-owned and -operated company with more than 2,800 employees worldwide and operations in 90 countries, including manufacturing facilities in Belgium, Brazil, China, India, Italy, Russia, San Marino, Singapore, South Africa, and the United States.

 Kemin Nutrisurance Europe Srl info@kemin.com kemin.com





Leiber GERMANY Natural yeast extracts

The NuTaste® range of natural & sustainable yeast extracts offers natural taste effects and functions thanks to its multifunctional components e.g. nucleotides and amino acids. It shows a broad spectrum of applications to product developers/ration optimisers based on enhanced tastiness, attractiveness and taste improvement. In-house production methods ensure valuable, standardised food-quality products with unique taste profiles, additional colouring or nutritional effects.

Leiber GmbH

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- Gluten Free
- ✓ Grain Free
- Potato-free
- Good functionality
- ✓ Large stocks in Europe
- Also available in a meal

Aminola is a Dutch company which supplies high-value plant-based ingredients (proteins, starches, fibers) to the pet food industry, including ingredients based on Tapioca, Potato, Rice, Pea and Corn. For our full product portfolio, visit our website.



Request a quote! Scan the QR-code.







Potential benefits of using algae in pet food

To gain more knowledge about using algae in pet food, Feed Design Lab set out to run two experiments. Here is what happened.

The experiments

The first experiment was to gain knowledge about all possible ways of using dry and wet microalgae in the production of feeds. Dry algae can be mixed in the ground meal before extrusion or pelleting. A very sustainable option is to use algae paste and pump this in the steam-heated meal just before expanding. It is also possible to use dry or wet algae in the vacuum coater, to skip the heating process and keep all of the bioactive substances from the microalgae available for pets.

The second experiment was to test if extruded food for dogs containing only 0.5% of dry algae could influence the immune system, measured by analysis of Immunoglobulin A (IgA) in the manure.

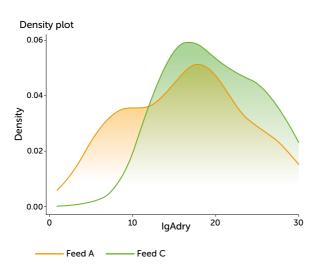


Figure showing the density plot for IgA on DM basis in manure of dogs fed the control feed (feed A) and feed C with 0.5% Chloromonas included.

A dog experiment was conducted in a kennel and the results show that the intake was fine, as well as the colour of the manure. In the extruded feed 0.5% of Chloromonas was added during mixing and produced with the same process conditions as the control (hypo-allergic) feed without added microalgae.

Results

The IgA, calculated in dry manure, showed the highest level in the dogs with the Chloromonas feed, showing a trend (P=0.07) compared to the control feed. In this experiment, dogs with low levels of IgA in the control feed showed an improvement of 85% in IgA when fed the Chloromonas feed. Dogs with intermediate levels improved 53%, while dogs with good levels of IgA did not show improvement.

Immune function benefits?

Improving IgA levels with small amounts of microalgae could be interesting for dogs to have a better immune status. This finding opens up the way for testing with other types of feeds and other species of microalgae. Sampling manure is easy to perform and does not interfere with the dogs' welfare when compared to blood sampling. An ELISA test kit is available to analyse the IgA in the manure. This method was recently validated for dogs. •



Ageeth van der Lee Project Coordinator ageethvanderlee@feeddesignlab.nl feeddesignlab.nl







A survey of cat owners carried out by Yummypets provides crucial insights into consumer behaviours and attitudes towards cat litter.

Cat well-being, not odour, motivates scooping

A recent study by Yummypets asked cat parents in five countries – Belgium, France, the UK, Canada and the US – about their cat litter behaviours and priorities: what kind of litter they buy, why they buy it, and more.

When quizzed about their primary reason for scooping litter, most respondents (75%) said it was to promote their cat's 'health and well-being'. 'Household cleanliness' and 'odour' each represented 13% of respondents. Canadians (17%) and Americans (16%) care the most about 'odour' as their primary reason for scooping.

Americans (23%) and Canadians (20%) were also more likely to scoop to support household cleanliness,

whereas Belgian (88%) and French (85%) consumers, mentioned their cat's health and well-being as the primary reason.

Clumping more important than environment

More than half (57%) of consumers purchase mineral litter. And a majority has a preference for clumping cat litter (64%). Overall, 26% of respondents buy organic litter, but in the UK this figure is 40%.

Organic litter is least popular in the US and Canada, where there is a greater preference for mineral litter. Silicium or silica litter is most popular in America, and much appreciated for its ability to neutralise odours. This reflects the finding that Americans primarily scoop to reduce odour.

North American loves scented litter?

Before you think odour reduction is a priority for most cat owners, think again! Only 22% of respondents buy scented litter, with the majority (78%) opting for unscented. Respondents in France (89%), the UK (86%) and Belgium (82%) use unscented litter the most, which makes sense when you consider they also primarily scoop for cat health, rather than odour.

Across the Atlantic, respondents in Canada (38%) and America (36%) use scented litter more often than their European counterparts. This points to differing attitudes towards cat smells between Europe and North America.

Larger litter bags most popular

Most respondents (60%) answered that a bag of cat litter would typically last a month or more. In Belgium and France respondents appear to buy small bags of litter, answering that a single bag was likely to last a week or less, compared to 23% of all respondents. In contrast, Americans and Canadians buy larger bags, saying a bag will usually last a month.

Self-cleaning litter trays not a priority

Despite a range of innovative self-cleaning litter boxes on the market, these solutions remain unpopular, with 47% saying they 'do not need one', and 50% saying they are 'too expensive'. Only 3% of respondents own a self-cleaning box, saying that they are 'very convenient': most of these owners are men under 34, and most live in Canada or the US.

What about sustainability?

Most respondents care about sustainability, but only 19% put it 'at the top of my list' when choosing a cat litter product. Over a third (35%) said sustainability 'doesn't influence my decision'. That being said, 46% of respondents think that 'sustainability is a plus, but I value other factors more'. Whilst cat owners in all

countries care about sustainability, Canada leads the way: 26% of respondents put it at the top of their list.

Store purchases more popular than online

Despite the rise of online shopping, the majority (57%) of cat parents responded that they buy cat litter in grocery stores or supermarkets, 23% in pet stores, and only 13% buys litter online. Respondents in the UK and the US are more likely to buy cat litter online than other countries, at 23% each. Belgium (30%) and the UK (27%) are most likely to buy cat litter in pet stores. Interestingly, factors like age and location do not seem to influence where consumers buy their litter.



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COMFORTABLE SUPER SOFT ROUNDED GRANULES



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A litter subscription?

Whilst most respondents (57%) were not interested in an automatic cat litter delivery service, nearly a third answered 'why not?', with 12% expressing willingness to subscribe to such a service. However, Britain has the strongest opposition to automatic delivery: most other countries show a general openness to subscription, with the US (24%) and Canada (18%) being the most willing.

Purchasing decision drivers

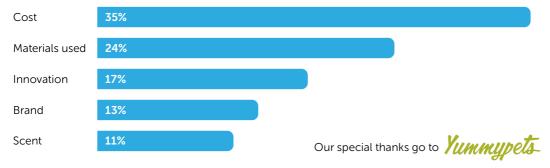
When it comes to buying behaviour, price dominates: 35% of cat owners said cost is the most important factor, followed by materials used (24%). Scent, brand and innovation are less often put forward as the most important factor, at 11%, 13% and 17% of consumers respectively.

When comparing between countries, some interesting differences emerge. Canadians are especially price-focused, with 45% of owners indicating they value price the most. Americans, on the other hand, value brand a lot more than their counterparts in the other countries, with 20% indicating brand as the most important factor.

'Materials used in the litter' tops the list of most important factors for all three European countries, while for North American consumers, this factor is actually most often at the bottom of their list.

Consumers indicate that the least important considerations for their choice of litter are brand (31%) and innovation (26%).

The most important purchasing criteria





Philippe Vanderhoydonck Managing Director Pets International philippe@pets.nl globalpets.community



As the number of cats taken on by pet parents continues to rise, so do cat litter sales. Time to consider trends in litter and owner requirements for the litter product of their choice.

Sustainable litter

A recent report by Accenture (April 2020), mentions that 45% of international consumers said they seriously consider the health and environmental impacts of their shopping choices.

At the same time, the 2021 American Pet Products Association Report, mentions that spend by cat owners on litter products is \$3.9 billion (€3.35 billion) yearly. While less than 3% of these owners say they purchase litter made from sustainable products! A reason for this discrepancy in actual shopping behaviour (versus intention) could be due to the higher price of sustainable litter.

Clumping for easy disposal

The 2021 APPA report indicates that 63% of cat owners prefer clumping litters. Ideal for this purpose are wheat starches that clump when moisture is added, as is tofubased litter.

Lightweight, low bulk

Disposable litter is needed in large quantities, meaning costly transport. Shredded paper, compressed into soft pellets, reduces weight, if not volume, and is sourced as post-consumer material. Therefore, it is a sustainable choice.

Odour protection

This requirement is a key expectation of cat owners. For paper litter, baking soda is added to reduce odours. Reclaimed and recycled wood in the form of sawdust and shavings have their own natural deodorisers with scents of pine and cedar.

Packaged to perfection

Amcor research indicates that 90% of European pet owners would pay more for sustainable pet product packaging. The ease with which packages can be properly closed after use, is also much appreciated by customers.

NATURAL MINERAL BASED SOLUTIONS FOR CAT LITTER

Imerys offers an extensive portfolio of cat litter products based on bentonite, moler, vegetable fiber, wood pellets and flakes.

As consumers look for more convenience, the demand for cat litter delivered to the door is growing. It is why premium litter suppliers now offer a subscription

With pet parents being increasingly concerned about pet health, litter brands have launched litter that changes colour based on the cat's urine pH levels. This would help owners detect illnesses, such as worms or urinary tract infections.

Flushable litter

Subscription litter

service.

Health litter

Another convenience-based litter innovation is litter that can be flushed down conventional toilets. Increasingly popular, such litters are made from wheat, newspaper and corn. However, whilst such litter is made from biodegradable materials, it can still clog pipes and contaminate water supplies.

Washable litter

Plastic litter granules - or litter made from recycled tyres - can be washed and sanitised. They are often sold with a mechanised litter tray that washes and dries the bowl and granules each time.

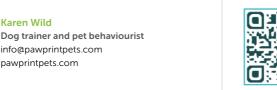
More than just litter

However, it is not only the litter category that is evolving. Pet wipes is a new category on Amazon, with a staggering choice of over 300 products! •

Karen Wild

info@pawprintpets.com pawprintpets.com



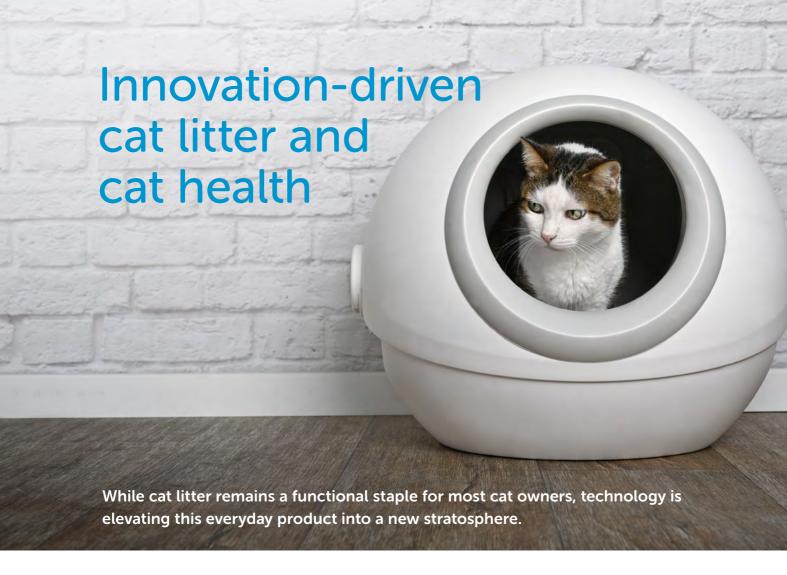






www.imerys-performance-minerals.com www.imerys.com





Boosting health

Pet hygiene and safety issues are core concerns of pet owners. Now, innovative, smart solutions are helping pet owners to boost both their pet's health and their own.

Not only is technology playing a crucial role in providing resource-saving solutions, but it is also helping fulfil pet owners' pursuit of ease and convenience. And now such technology is also changing the way we care for our pets... and manage cat litter.

Smart appliances

Smart home appliances are not only popular among human users; they also offer pets some exciting convenience. Take Catlink: this brand offers smart products designed for cats.

Its flagship product Scooper is a self-cleaning automatic litter box for cats, equipped with healthcare

functions such as AI voice/app control, self-cleaning, cat weight tracker, and data analysis for cats' health management. Moreover, the product can quantify the volume of litter present, which is helpful in letting pet owners know when they need to buy more products.

Similarly, PETKIT's smart litter box for cats uses a rotating drum to separate cat poop, while the built-in air cleaning device automatically sprays a cleansing vapour. Using a mobile phone app, cat owners can choose smart settings to clean the litter box. The app also enables owners to check the cat's toilet status at any time, including the number of toilet trips, stay time, weight and other data.

Colourful litter box

The Japanese company Threes has developed a colour-changing litter box called Signyal, which can detect a cat's health abnormalities by analysing its urine. Abnormalities present in the urine will cause the cat litter to change colour. For instance, light blue

indicates a high concentration of alkaline, while green suggests potential feline diabetes. This can be caused by too high protein levels. After first use, cat owners can mix the litter back together and reuse it for a month, before replacing it with a new batch.

Innovations such as the colourful litter box can help diminish pet owner anxieties, while also helping them save money by way of preventative pet care.

CBD as innovative stress solution

CBD pet products are one of the newest additions to the cannabis market. Such products are similar to CBD for people. Brands are currently marketing their CBD as a solution for unwanted, stress-related cat behaviours, such as scratching furniture or urinating outside the litter box.

The claim that CBD is the answer to stress-related behaviour, will help cat owners identify treatable conditions of their pets, and consider CBD as a possible valuable treatment for their pets.

Having said that, cat owners with pickier feline friends might well be worried about administering CBD to their cats. CBD formats that can be added to products that have already proven themselves as readily edible for cats, will ensure that even the pickiest cat can be fed CBD.



Amanda Lintott
PR Manager at Mintel
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mintel.com



Franzi srl ITALY Welcome to the greenest team!

Veggy is a revolutionary cat litter: it combines the advantages of efficacy and respect for the environment. Exclusively made of 100% Italian vegetal fibres combined with natural, plant-based active ingredients that contribute to a speedy clumping process and neutralisation of bad odours. Chemical- and dust-free. Completely biodegradable (organic or WC flushable). Especially suitable for kittens and cats with asthma problems.

Looking for distributors!

Franzi srl

info@franzisrl.com franzisrl.com



Cat&Rina ITALY WeVegetal: the corn cat litter

Eco-friendly cat litter of 100% plant origin. It is compostable and biodegradable, does not pollute the environment nor releases substances harmful to health. A natural binder absorbs the cat's urine into solid clumps that are easy to remove and promote the economical use of the product.

• Made in Italy • Easy to flush in the toilet • Absorbs and neutralises smells • Dust-free • A 5.5-litre bag lasts up to 30 days

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Advertorials



Croci ITALY TOFU Clean

Entirely of vegetal origin based on soy – completely natural and biodegradable – TOFU Clean combines hygiene for your pet and attention to the environment. The vegetable fibres retain liquids, creating a compact and easily removable ball. Thanks to the innovative micro granules (1-2mm), it guarantees maximum absorbency and odour control while remaining delicate on the paws. • Extra clumping • Toilet disposable • Super absorbent • Odour stop • Eco-friendly

Croci Spa

info@croci.net croci-group.com

Kiiwi ITALY Prolena presents Kiiwi

Prolena presents the new brand Kiiwi – dedicated to vegetable litters. The pay-off 'The quality choice' shortly and clearly explains customers' attitudes and the particularities of the new products: a qualitative choice.

The new line of natural vegetable litters Kiiwi, will be presented with an innovative packaging in 5 different variants, in addition to the 'classic' one: the Vegetal White litter.

Prolena S.R.L. info@prolena.it prolena.it







Farm Company ITALY La ToiLET Cat Litter

100% Natural, biodegradable and 'Made in Italy' from highly sustainable vegetable fibres that make the litter flushable and compostable.

Very high clumping power. Contains a special natural ingredient with anti-odour and hygienic properties.

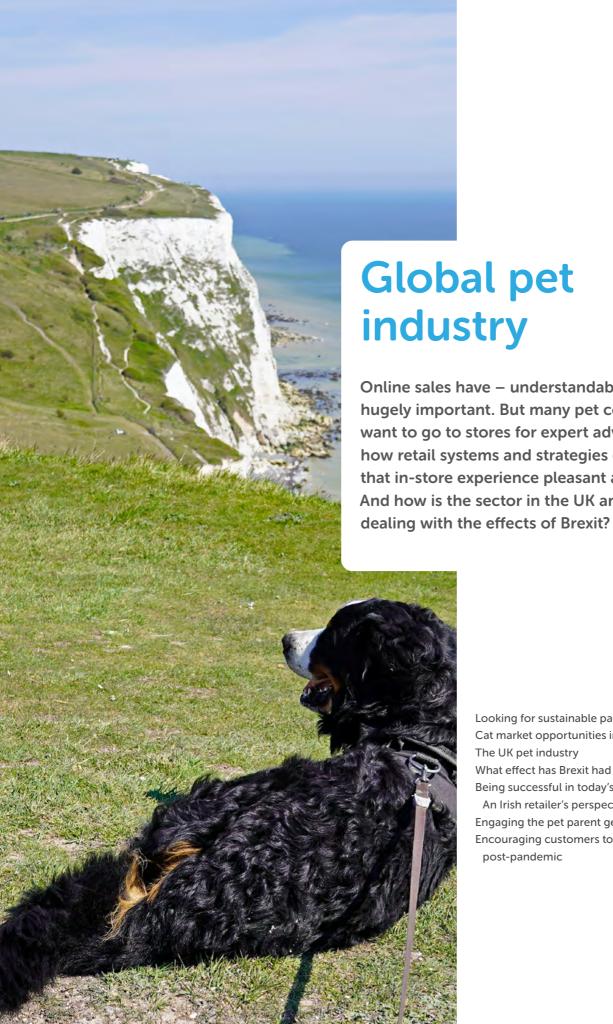
Extremely long-lasting cat litter: A 10-litre bag can last up to 3 months.

Available in 10 and 20 litres.

Farm Company Srl

f.gabasio@farmcompany.it farmcompany.it





Online sales have - understandably - become hugely important. But many pet consumers still want to go to stores for expert advice. Read how retail systems and strategies can make that in-store experience pleasant and profitable. And how is the sector in the UK and Ireland

> Looking for sustainable packaging solutions 38 Cat market opportunities in the US 40 The UK pet industry 43 What effect has Brexit had on UK pet suppliers? 44 Being successful in today's pet market -An Irish retailer's perspective 47 Engaging the pet parent generation 50 Encouraging customers to return to pet stores 53 post-pandemic



Size of the plastic problem

According to research conducted on behalf of the Pet Sustainability Coalition (PSC), it is estimated that 300 million pounds (135 million kilos) of plastic pet food and treat bags are generated in the US each year. It is also estimated that 99% of this packaging does not currently have an end-of-life solution other than landfill.

Evaluating sustainable options

In 2018, PetSmart and PSC commissioned a feasibility report and impact matrix to evaluate dozens of potential packaging efforts, ranked by their potential impact to combat this problem. One of the solutions to come out of the study was a return-to-retail pilot. This aimed to research the feasibility of collecting pet food and treat packaging and to find a sustainable end-of-life solution for these materials.

Collection pilot surpasses goal

Through the financial generosity of Earth Animal, PSC was able to launch Flex Forward in early 2019. Based

on the data needs identified in the initial feasibility study, the programme's collection goals were established at collecting 5,000 pounds (2,250 kilos) of pet food and treat packaging. It was estimated that this would take at least six months, and the team set a goal for starting collections in early 2020. But due to COVID-19, collections were not able to start until August 2020.

Pet industry distributor Pet Food Experts provided logistical and staff support, as well as access to their retailer network in the Pacific Northwest region of the US. Early data of the demographics of this population showed high interest in participation and high engagement in other waste reduction programmes. In the five months of active collections in the Flex Forward pilot, 127 participating retailers collected 8,356 pounds (3,790 kilos) of pet food and treat packaging, greatly surpassing the initial goal of 5,000 pounds (2,250 kilos). Meeting the target, this phase was completed in February 2021.

PSC is collaborating with the pet industry as a whole, to move it towards recyclable, compostable and refillable packaging solutions.

Lessons learned

Through the collections phase of the Flex Forward pilot, many valuable lessons were learned, which are available in a full report. Moving forward, PSC is now working with several recycling and end-of-life partners to determine the most sustainable solution for the collected materials. At the same time, PSC is collaborating with the pet industry as a whole, to move it towards recyclable, compostable and refillable packaging solutions which already have established collection or processing systems in place.

95.6% of participating retailers felt confident that the Flex Forward programme provided value for their business.

The collaborators

Earth Animal: Sole financial sponsor of the pilot.

Petfood Experts: Distribution partner for the pilot.

Best Friend Nutrition: Collected the most used packaging of any individual store.

Pet Pros: Collected the most used bags of any multi-store group.



Expanding the programme

Flex Forward was one of several efforts by PSC to advance sustainable packaging solutions within the pet industry. Based on the collection results, and initial inspection of the collected materials, PSC will take a dual approach to developing long-term and short-term solutions that can address the industry's waste footprint. That approach will include the provision of tools and resources to move the industry as a whole towards sustainable packaging solutions, while working to collect and recycle the packaging on the market today.

To determine the feasibility of expanding an in-store recycling programme to additional regions, nationally or outside the US, PSC will:

- complete testing
- undergo financial modelling
- ensure environmental impact modelling
- leverage knowledge from the pilot towards improvement

Report and webinar

Download the full Flex Forward Report here: petsustainability.org/portfolio/flexing-forward/ View PSC's Webinar on Flex Forward here: youtube.com/watch?v=7hg_soiBJtg&t=480s



Caitlyn Bolton Dudas
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petsustainability.org



Historically speaking, the US pet industry has been overtly canine-centric, and not without commercial justification.

Why the focus on dogs?

In contrast to continental European countries, dogs still significantly outnumber cats in the US. Dog ownership rates – but not necessarily other pet ownership rates – have been increasing since the Great Recession of 2007-2009.

Dogs also tend to be more lucrative in terms of products and services: veterinary as well as non-medical services such as grooming, boarding and training. As a result, pet product manufacturers, retailers and marketers have tended to give less attention to cats – and their owners have noticed!

When asked whether cats, compared with dogs, are 'sometimes treated as second-class,' cat owners said 'yes'. They felt this was especially true for general retailers that sell pet products, with 51% strongly or somewhat agreeing.

Wrong ideas about cats

Common misconceptions in the US about cats are that they are less affectionate than dogs, or 'for women'. Cat owners clearly do not see cats as second-best. In a Packaged Facts survey last February, cat owners equalled dog owners as 'pet parents', with 95-96% of cat or dog owners strongly or somewhat agreeing that their pets are 'part of the family'.

Impact on human health

As with dog owners, a large majority of US cat owners believe that their feline friends have a beneficial impact on their own physical and emotional health: 87% of cat owners, in line with the 88% rate among dog owners. Reflecting the impacts of COVID-19, strong agreement that cats and dogs are important to mental health rose from 52% to 59% for cats, and from 54% to 60% for dogs, between the Packaged Facts surveys of February/March 2020 and February 2021.

Change is coming

To the credit of many pet industry participants, treatment of cats as an afterthought is beginning to change. Retailers, marketers, product developers and investors are paying noticeably more attention to cats now.

Even so, opportunities abound for market development, some of which reflect the industry's ingrained tendency to focus on dogs. An example of this is the lag on the cat side during the grain-free pet food boom a few years back. A current parallel is the lag in fresh pet food offerings.

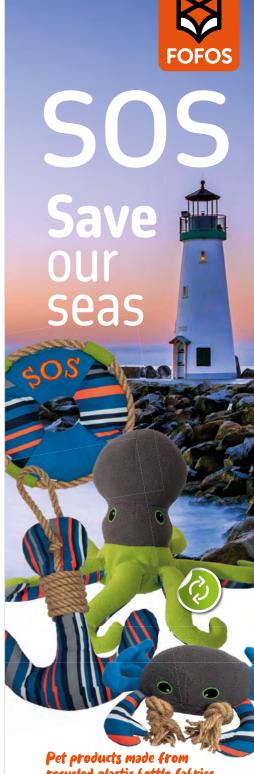
Post-pandemic pets

There are significant opportunities presented by COVID-19. This includes the 'pandemic pet' population boom, and people spending more time at home, whether they are working, learning, socialising or relaxing. There is also the heightened COVID-19 era focus on health and wellness, including immunity, which is being transferred onto family pets too.

While not restricted to cats, these trends can represent specific and, sometimes, greater opportunities for market advancement, given the relative underdevelopment of the feline segment. More and better products and services for cats, together with additional marketing and media attention, will encourage cat owners to invest more heavily in the health and well-being of their pets, and attract a growing share of pet owners into the feline fold. •



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Ownership and trends

Recent figures from the Pet Food Manufacturers Association show that 3.2 million new pets were bought during the pandemic, leading to a subsequent increase in the pet food and accessories market. The UK pet industry is worth around £7 billion (approximately \leq 8 billion / \leq 10 billion).

Despite pet shops being considered essential and allowed to remain open during the pandemic, there has been a noticeable shift towards online and delivery-based subscription services. But there is still a place for traditional retail, as two of the larger UK retail chains recently announced plans to grow further.

Innovation is a big driver, mostly from US-based companies that influence the European and UK markets. Pet tech – such as dog collar GPS trackers – has been selling fast, perhaps a reaction to increased pet thefts. Niche pet foods have also seen an increase in sales, motivated by pet owners going from traditional supermarket-bought products towards bespoke, raw, halal and even insect-based food.

Brexit

Businesses that rely on import and export have seen how Brexit has made moving goods out of the UK much more difficult. Pet Industry Federation's recent member survey revealed that pet food and pet product exports to the EU had halved since the beginning of 2021. PIF is now seeking a collaborative solution for developing a streamlined, cost-effective approach to open this up again.

Dogs at work

Workers are beginning to return to normal working patterns, and there is likely to be a surge in demand for dogs allowed in the workplace. A recent study by dog training consultant Julie Naismith showed that 54% of the 900 interviewed would consider quitting their job if their employer did not allow them to take their dog to work.

Events and tradeshows

When meeting in person became impossible during COVID, PIF shifted to online events. With three Virtual PetIndex events under its belt, PIF can confidently state that these have been a success. The expectation is that online trade shows are here to stay.

There is much to be positive about in the pet industry. The surge in pet ownership can only be good for pet businesses of all sizes, from micro through to large, multinational retail.



Nigel Baker CEO Pet Industry Federation nigel.baker@petfederation.co.uk petfederation.co.uk



Truck driver shortages. Extra paperwork. Delays in imported products and raw materials. Can the problems encountered during 2021 all be blamed on the UK's exit from the EU? And has the COVID-19 pandemic made the situation worse?

Challenging period

As an international trade association for manufacturers and suppliers of pet care goods and services, PetQuip has seen at close hand the effects that both Brexit and COVID-19 have had on their members' ability to trade with overseas buyers. It has been a very difficult period, especially with the absence of major trade exhibitions over the past eighteen months.

To gauge the true extent of the challenges and opportunities that have arisen since Britain's departure from the EU, PetQuip asked some of their members for their views.

Takes more time

Martin Breen is director of pet care at Group55 (with popular brand Animology): "Since Brexit, we have

continued to export successfully to EU customers, although the process has been less straightforward than previously. In some cases, it has led to increases in transportation time."

"Generally, it has been 'business as usual', although I would say that is despite Brexit. There has been no obvious benefit. We are continuing to work with our EU customers, but the process is less simple than it was before we left the EU."

More information needed

Eden Holistic Pet Foods discovered its main post-Brexit challenge was finding the information required to complete complex Export Health certificates for its pet products, and sourcing a vet capable and willing to complete the forms.

Megan Watson, trade and export manager of Eden Holistic, said: "We have also had to educate our export customers on the changes and their responsibility with regards to imports, and advise on extended delays due to the paperwork and additional costs of Brexit. Despite the challenges of the current climate, we are still expanding our portfolio of new suppliers as we continue to export our products after Brexit."

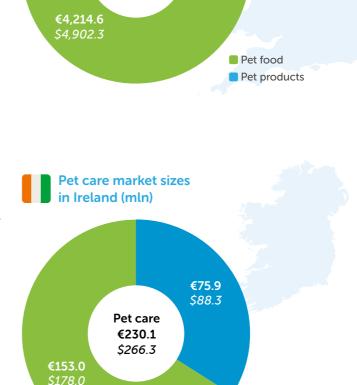
More forms to complete

The Canagan Group reported earlier this year that post-Brexit red tape was causing massive problems. The company's managing director James Milbourne posted an image on social media, showing 72 pages of documents that need to be completed to send an order to one EU customer. "This is the paperwork required to send one order to the EU now. Previously zero," he tweeted.

... and extra costs

James Milbourne also said his company was having to pay an additional £100,000 a year (€118,000 / \$138,000) in veterinary inspection fees. "This is very annoying and costly for an established business like us. And crippling for a small company," he added.

The EU remains the most important export market for the majority of PetQuip's members. Although it has been a challenging trading period, British pet product suppliers are ready to show the EU and the rest of the world their latest innovations. •



€1,262.3

\$1,468.3

Pet care market sizes in the United Kingdom (mln)

Pet care €5,505.1

\$6,370.6



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Source: Euromonitor International

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Being successful in today's pet market An Irish retailer's perspective

The global pet supplies market was already growing significantly year-on-year when the COVID-19 pandemic hit, sparking an increased enthusiasm for pets. Ireland was no different and Petstop has thrived.

Pandemic sales growth

Petstop has 200 employees, 8 stores and an online retail site, Petstop.ie, serving more than 20,000 customers a week. Those customers are each spending, on average, 20% more than they were prepandemic. The company has seen its annual revenue go from €10 million (\$11.5 million) pre-pandemic to €30+ million (\$35 million) today.

Director Anthony Gallagher wants to continue to grow the business – and increase its resilience – so that it can double that figure in the next two years.

Anticipating supply problems

Competition in the industry is fierce, and both Brexit and the pandemic have caused some supply problems. Before Brexit, a third of Petstop's products came from the UK. Now, with importing proving harder, it is less than 10%.

Foreseeing import issues, Petstop wisely stockpiled many UK products before Brexit, giving the company a competitive advantage. Its ability to supply customers for longer contributed to its growth boom.

Carefully chosen product selection

Another factor in the company's growth is its own brands: pet foods, including raw food, kibble and treats, alongside a few other items such as cat litter and dog beds. Over the last eighteen months, sales of those own brands have risen from 10% to 33%.

Petstop's philosophy around the other brands it stocks and sells is simple: those products need to have specific benefits or USPs, such as a specific health claim, that it could not easily make with its own brands. That way, Petstop can offer a unique selection of products to its clients.

Excellent in-store service

The next factor in the company's success is its stores. Petstop recognises that its Irish customers value good service and specialist advice, often more highly than cheap prices. That is why information and education are key in-store, ensuring customers feel well informed and confident about their purchasing decisions.

Point of sale displays explain product benefits, and how and why products differ in features and price.

Further support comes from Petstop's

SEE NEXT PAGE

highly experienced and knowledgeable staff, many of whom have been with the company since it launched 25 years ago.

Planned for 2021-2023

• Opening four more stores, as well as in-store kitchens to produce fresh treats and dinners for dogs.

Responding to market trends

A final factor in the company's success is responding to market trends:

Premium products

Numerous reports have shown that increased numbers of new pets have been acquired since the start of the pandemic. Pet owners are not only spending more on their pets, but are giving more priority and thought to that spend too. Three years ago, many of Petstop's top sellers were budget products. Now, those products are very difficult to sell, and demand is higher for premium goods. Petstop's current top-selling food is their own brand, 50% more expensive per kilo than their previous top-selling food.

Planned for 2021-2023

 Increasing own brand product lines and sales, so that 50% of stocked products and 70% of treats are own brand, ensuring consistent supply and higher profitability.

Sustainability and wellness

The ethical, environmental and health trends in human foods and purchasing are impacting demand and spend in the pet market.

There is a growing preference for natural, organic, free-from and locally sourced foods, sustainably produced and presented in eco-friendly packaging. These factors make Petstop's locally produced food and raw foods even more desirable.

Planned for 2021-2023

- Increasing sustainable and natural product lines.
- No longer importing rawhide treats from China, and focusing on locally produced treats.
- Reducing packaging and using more biodegradable packaging.





Looking to sell to the Irish market?

It is estimated that five years ago, 75% of goods in the Irish pet market sold through supermarkets, and 25% through specialised pet stores. Today, the market split is around 50/50, indicating that people are seeking more advice, choice and premium options.

Gallagher says that it is also wise to consider the growing shift to online purchasing, accelerated by the pandemic. Pre-pandemic, 9% of Petstop's sales were online and 91% via stores. That split is now around 70/30, and he predicts it will be 50/50 in the future. His online customers are spending 50% more than those in-store.

Two top tips

- In this super-competitive market, USPs have become more important than ever. The services and products offered need to be strongly differentiated.
- It is vital to develop relationships with staff and customers to better understand what they need.

By foreseeing and preparing for issues, and responding to customer needs and market trends, Petstop has stayed ahead of the game. Despite some challenges, it has remained resilient, and provides a great blueprint for success in the Irish market.



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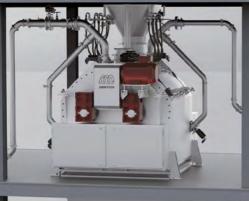






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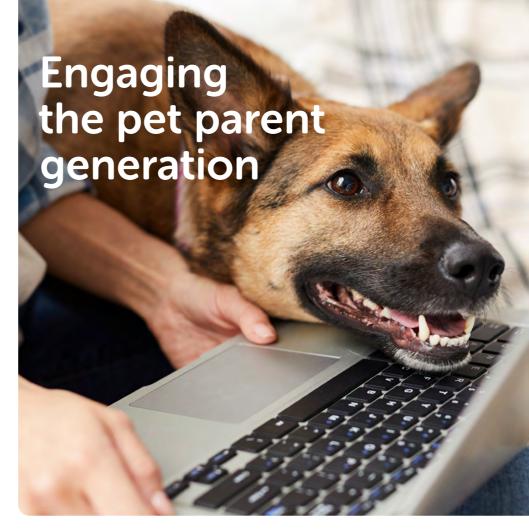




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With disposable income that older generations may have used to support a family, 20 to 30 somethings in the US are instead investing in the care of their pets.

Market expands

In the second quarter of 2021, pet product sales in the US increased to nearly \$40 billion (\leqslant 34 billion) and pet food alone was the fifth largest Consumer Packaged Goods (CPG) category, with sales of \$22.2 billion (\leqslant 19 billion) according to IRI data. Pet aisle sales in total are up a dramatic 15% over 2019 levels.

The average consumer basket has grown 6.4% to nearly \$80 (\leq 69) over the last year, but the number of trips to retailers has remained flat. In that timeframe, the jump in sales at warehouse club stores is more pronounced than any other type of retailer, with dollar and unit sales growing 8% and 9.7% respectively.

Channel differences

COVID-19 generated an unprecedented worldwide increase in online shopping, and omnichannel pet



purchases jumped 22% in 2020. 31% of online shoppers say they visit fewer brick-and-mortar stores than they used to, and this limited in-store sales growth.

When consumers opt to shop online instead of in-store, the dynamics of the shopping experience change. Online shoppers tend to repurchase products they already know.

Shopping in stores presents greater opportunities for browsing and engaging with brands and products that consumers might not have used before, enabling more growth for individual brands and retailers. Specialty pet retailers have demonstrated the power of offering pet services, including grooming and training – even socialising – as a way to build basket sales and loyalty.

Post-COVID?

With COVID-19 potentially receding, two critical questions emerge. Which shoppers can brands and retailers get back into stores? And what promotion, pricing and other marketing strategies will get them there?

In order to harness the continuing growth opportunities for pet products in the coming months, retailers and brands should pay attention to two key trends: the pet parent generation and worldwide interest in health and wellness.

Gen Z and millennials

Interacting with Generation Z and millennials is key to achieving sustained growth. The opportunity CPG companies have to engage successfully with this market is fourteen times larger in sales value growth than with other generations. Younger millennials and Gen Z also overindex for specialty retail like pet stores.

Compared to other generations, more Gen Z-ers buy specialty pet items, including outfits and therapeutic beds (38% and 31% respectively). And millennials are more likely to buy treats and specialty foods to accommodate their pets' life stages (38% and 22% respectively).

What retailers can do

How should pet retailers attract shoppers that usually buy pet products on their weekly grocery run? To harness the opportunities offered by self-care trends, these retailers should offer unique, wellness-focused products that complement in-store wellness and grooming services. Their strategy should also aim to effectively integrate online and in-store experiences – to capture shoppers driven by the convenience of buying online and those who prefer interacting with products. •



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From movement restrictions to safety fears – the pandemic has reduced visitor numbers to physical pet stores. Recent research suggests appointment scheduling could get customers back.

E-commerce explosion

We have all witnessed Amazon's growth during the pandemic, but e-commerce sales have boomed across the board. In the May 2021 edition of *Pets International*, Jodi Watson's article stated that total internet penetration for the US pet sector is currently 22-25%, while Nandini Roy Choudhury noted that e-commerce accounted for 17% of revenue in the global pet care market in 2020.

Despite evident growth, the vast majority of sales remain offline. With an increase in pet purchases last year likely to further drive demand for the wider pet retail markets like grooming products, pet care and supplements, retailers should be looking at ways to encourage customers to return in-store as part of an omnichannel sales strategy.

End of the line for queuing

In a Qudini survey, a quarter of US consumers (24%) stated that having to queue inside and outside

stores was a key reason for avoiding them during the pandemic, but this issue was prevalent pre-2020. Three-quarters (74%) of shoppers in the survey said they had walked out of pet stores due to waiting prior to Covid-19: 20% did so often, 31% sometimes and 23% rarely.

Wait times

On wait times: 59% of pet store customers are prepared to wait for ten minutes, 16% between eight and ten minutes, 20% between three and seven minutes and 23% up to three minutes. So even short wait times can potentially lead to lost revenues.

Appeal of appointments to customers

In Qudini's May 2021 survey, 77% of pet retail customers said they would like to be able to make appointments, with reserving a slot for in-store services (40%), booking appointments to visit stores (29%) and scheduling virtual appointments (29%) the most popular.

In the Covid era, it is no surprise to see a third (32%) of consumers wanting appointments for safety reasons, but they are almost equally as interested in saving time (29%) and being able to plan their day better (24%). This suggests the appeal of appointments will outlast the pandemic.

Appeal of queuing systems to customers

A quarter (27%) of pet retail customers want to be able to collect online orders from storefronts, using a virtual queuing system that allows them to check in from their phone so that their order is brought out to them. Another 20% want to use virtual queuing systems to receive service within pet retail stores. That means checking in via a QR code, a kiosk or a host with a tablet, and receiving verbal and phone updates while they wait.

Appeal of retail choreography to pet stores

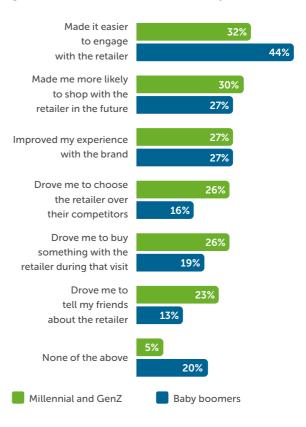
While customers reap the safety and efficiency benefits of personalisation, pet retailers can improve brand loyalty, advocacy and profitability. Across all retail, Qudini found that 93% of customers that have used an appointment service in the last year said it had at least one positive impact on them:

- A third (33%) said the appointment service made them more likely to engage with the retailer in the first place.
- A quarter (24%) said it drove them to buy something from the retailer.
- Almost a third (29%) said it made them more likely to return to the retailer in the future.
- One in five (21%) said it drove them to tell their friends about the retailer.
- A quarter (25%) said it drove them to choose the brand over its competitors.

Similar results were found for customers using virtual queuing systems within stores. These insights show that pet store retailers have much to gain by using

retail choreography solutions to manage lines, offering in-store and virtual appointments, and providing contactless pick-up services. •

Impact of appointment scheduling services by generation who have used it in the last year





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Calendar of events



Pet South America

30 November to 2 December 2021

São Paulo Expo São Paulo, Brazil

♂ petsa.com.br/en



PET WORLD ARABIA

5 to 7 December 2021

DWTC, Dubai **United Arab Emirates**

♂ petworldarabia.com



PLMA's 'World of Private Label'

14 and 15 December 2021

RAI Exhibition Centre Amsterdam, The Netherlands

d plmainternational.com



GlobalPETS Forum

19 to 21 January 2022

Hotel Huis ter Duin

Amsterdam beach - Noordwijk, The Netherlands

♂ globalpets.community/gpf-2022



Global Pet Expo

23 to 25 March 2022

Orange County Convention Center

Orlando, Florida, US

₫ globalpetexpo.org



Interzoo 2022

24 to 27 May 2022

Exhibition Center Nurembeg

Nuremberg, Germany

d interzoo.com/en



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