



# PETS International

THE GO-TO PUBLICATION FOR PET INDUSTRY PROFESSIONALS SINCE 1988

MAY 2026

## AI FOR THE WIN

Pet industry leaders talk strategy  
in a rapidly changing world

### GLOBAL TRADE FOCUS

Regional deals and  
post-Brexit analysis

### EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEWS

Fressnapf | Maxi Zoo  
and Tom&Co

### PET FOOD WITH PURPOSE

Special diets and  
targeted nutrition



# Formulated For Longevity

DISCOVER THE UK  
AWARD-WINNING  
SUPPLEMENTS  
INSPIRED BY TCM

Find us at Booth 3A-514





**Supply chain takeover** **16**

How companies are leveraging AI in logistics to gain a competitive advantage.


### Doing the heavy lifting

As the demand for sustainability intensifies, pet food packaging is undergoing a revolution in materials and messaging.



**Windows of opportunity**

Data shows how consumers are increasingly keen to buy gifts for their pets at holidays and for special occasions.



**20**

**Keeping up with kit**

An exclusive PETS International and Yummypets survey reveals owners' current behaviors around buying pet accessories.



**46**

**The center of attention**

Delving into the changing demographics the pet industry can't afford to ignore.



**105**

**And more:**

Tackling counterfeit pet goods	27
Country report: Belgium	57
UK pet consumer profile	76
The lowdown on nail care for dogs	82
Analyzing the EU's incoming pet welfare rules	93
Pulse protein in pet food	118

Refined Cat Litter

FLUSHABLE  
BIODEGRADABLE  
SUSTAINABILITY



COMPLY WITH  
EUDR REGULATIONS

Powered By Plants

NEW MATERIAL

# Plant-Based Cat Litter

PRIVATE LABEL



## INTERZOO2026

HALL 5 BOOTH NUMBER 408

EMAIL: STANLEY@KINDPET.CN

PHONE: +86 199 9763 4111



QUALITY-DRIVEN  
PROCESSES

ADVANCED  
PRODUCTION SYSTEMS

PRECISION  
MANUFACTURING

ADVANCED R&D  
CAPABILITIES

# Meeting of minds

More than 2,000 exhibitors will gather at Interzoo in Nuremberg this May, providing a comprehensive look at what is shaping our fast-moving industry.

For many, these four intense days may be the most significant of the year. They offer a golden opportunity to connect (or reconnect) with colleagues, clients and competitors, while anticipating the trends that will influence the times ahead.

True to tradition, this issue is our most extensive of the year and we have curated a selection of articles covering a wide range of topics.

We take a closer look at how AI is reshaping pet retail, from enhancing customer experience to improving supply chain efficiency. On the data side, we reveal insights from our very own survey on pet accessories, conducted among pet owners across Europe,

the Americas and Australia. Not to be missed is an analysis of how major shopping events are impacting the category.

This issue also shines a spotlight on key markets in Europe, including the UK, Ireland, Belgium and the Netherlands.

Whether you're navigating the concourses of Interzoo or reading from elsewhere, we hope this edition inspires new ideas and fresh discoveries. And if you happen to be in Nuremberg, don't forget to visit us in Hall 2, Booth 125.



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "David PR". The signature is written over a white background with some faint lines.

David Palacios Rubio  
Editor-in-Chief

“ Opportunities don't happen. You create them. ”  
CHRIS GROSSER, AMERICAN ENTREPRENEUR

 **PETS International**  
part of  **GlobalPETS**

Intermedium Publishers BV  
Newtonstraat 3  
1098GX Amsterdam (NL)

+31-33-4225833  
content@pets.nl

#### Editorial team

Managing Director: Philippe Vanderhoydonck  
Editor-in-Chief: David Palacios Rubio  
Head of Operations: Lisa van Roon  
Senior Editor: Janetta Willis  
Editors: Lynn Radford, Mandy Wolters-Savage,  
Elizabeth Youens  
Design: Hester de Gier

© Copyright 2026, Intermedium Publishers BV.  
All rights reserved.

While we, as the publisher, aim for accuracy and completeness in the information and statistics presented, we cannot guarantee that. We cannot be held liable for any use of this information. The publisher is not responsible for the content of advertisements or sponsored editorial.

[globalpetindustry.com](https://globalpetindustry.com)

# Reflex<sup>PLUS</sup> Longevity

**Add Value to Every Circle of Life**

Balanced nutrition for every life stage.  
Energy and growth in puppyhood, vitality in youth, endurance in adulthood,  
and protection in the senior years.



**See you at Interzoo 2026!**

Hall 5 Booth 5-128

[www.reflexmama.com](http://www.reflexmama.com)  
[www.liderpet.com.tr](http://www.liderpet.com.tr)



## Don't miss out on key updates in the dynamic pet industry!

Subscribe to our newsletter at [globalpetindustry.com](https://globalpetindustry.com), or just scan this QR code for an easy sign-up process.



### Historically high US trade deficit narrows slightly

In 2025, the overall US trade deficit reduced slightly to \$901.5 billion (€783.1B), but the country still recorded its highest negative goods balance on record at \$1.24 trillion (€1.07T). While the broader trade environment was weighed down by shifting international relationships and tariff policies, the pet food sector offered a bright spot.

The US pet food industry successfully posted a trade surplus of \$83.6 million (€72.6M) in 2025. The country exported \$2.44 billion (€2.11B) in dog and cat food while importing \$2.35 billion (€2.04B). Although this surplus is lower than the \$315.1 million (€273.7M) recorded in 2024, it highlights the sector's ongoing export resilience.

Globally, the US saw its largest overall trade deficits with the EU, China and Mexico, reflecting a complex supply chain environment where companies are increasingly moving their sourcing away from China toward alternative markets such as Vietnam and Mexico.

### Premium pet products propel value growth

The global pet care market is expanding in value and is projected to reach \$207 billion (€180B) by 2025.

According to Euromonitor International, premium products remain the primary driver for value growth, fueled by ongoing humanization trends, and are expected to rise 18.4% to \$70.8 billion (€61.5B) by 2030.

However, overall volume growth is slowing due to persistent economic pressures, with consumers increasingly balancing quality and cost. Consequently, the mid-priced segment is expected to see the largest increases in both volume (13.4%) and value (20.9%) over the next five years.



### AlphaPet expands European footprint with strategic acquisitions

German digital pet company AlphaPet has recently acquired the Leipzig-based pet supplement and functional snacks brand Tierliebhaber in a strategic move to expand its portfolio into the health and wellness segment.

Just days earlier, it acquired Cpro Food, a premium dog and cat food brand based in Belgium. Founded in 2014, Cpro Food offers dry food, wet food and treats distributed through 370 specialty pet retailers and over 1,150 professional breeding stations. AlphaPet plans to scale Cpro Food's growth beyond Belgium.

### Arcaplanet expands into new Italian regions

Leading Italian pet retailer Arcaplanet is advancing its nationwide expansion by targeting untapped regions. Serving over 2.6 million customers, the retailer recently surpassed the 600-store milestone and acquired 10 new locations through the buyout of HobbyZoo, Green Pet and Miele in late 2025.

CEO Guillaume Seneclauze emphasizes a flexible, plastic-free store format adaptable to different regional layouts. Beyond physical growth, Arcaplanet is heavily investing in its private labels to optimize margins and drive customer loyalty.

The company is also refining its pricing strategy by introducing dynamic, localized prices and moving away from broad promotions toward initiatives tailored to specific consumer clusters.



### PSC outlines sustainability priorities

The Pet Sustainability Coalition (PSC) has laid out three primary forces shaping the pet industry in 2026: transparency, legislative pressure and circular innovation. With 84% of pet owners believing companies must address climate change, consumer demand for accurate, third-party verified sustainability claims is rising.

This demand is amplified by stricter regulations, such as the EU Green Claims Directive and new regional climate risk reporting laws. Future innovation will focus heavily on reducing waste. PSC highlights that whole-animal utilization and novel proteins, such as insects and fermentation-derived ingredients, will be critical to lowering emissions.

Furthermore, brands are urged to invest in true circular packaging solutions, particularly for hard-to-recycle plastic films and pouches, to ensure compliance with upcoming 2030 packaging waste mandates.

### Figures reveal state of French pet e-commerce

Online sales of pet care and food products in France reached €1.87 billion (\$2.15B) in 2025, marking a modest 0.1% increase year-over-year. According to NielsenIQ, e-commerce now represents a 36.4% share of total pet retail in the country, meaning that over one in three euros spent on pets in France is now spent online. Furthermore, 40.4% of fast-moving consumer goods (FMCG) e-shoppers are now including pet products in their online baskets.

While the pet food segment saw a value growth of 1.5%, the overall pet care segment experienced a 3.1% revenue decline despite holding a 54.2% value share of the market. Additionally, the average transaction value in the category dropped 6% year-over-year to €151 (\$174).

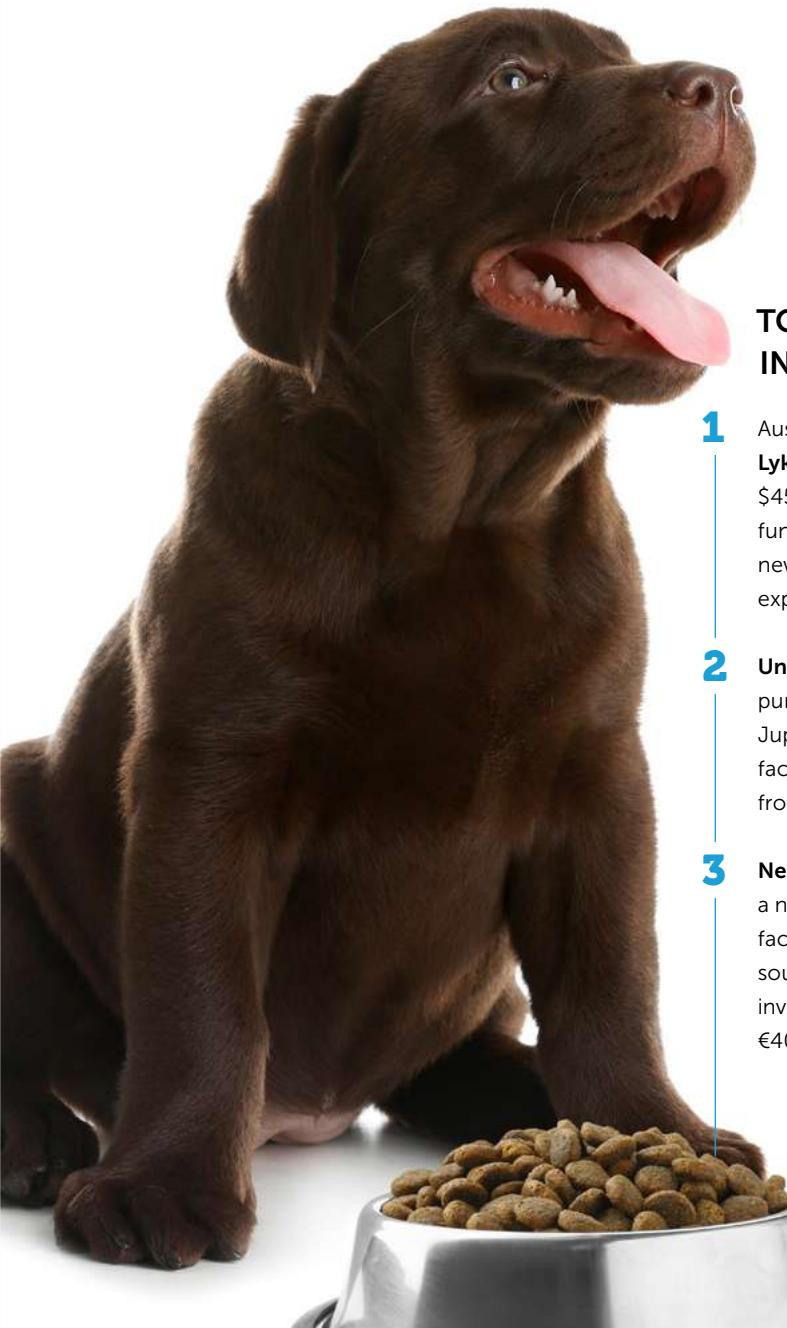
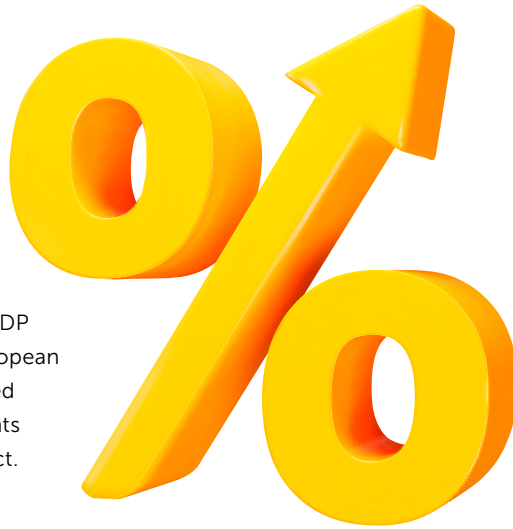
The data also highlights evolving shopping habits: one-third of French online shoppers now utilize AI to compare products and save time. This trend is heavily led by younger consumers, with nearly half of shoppers aged 15 to 34 incorporating AI into their purchasing journeys.



DATA INSIGHT

0.9%

is the expected annual real GDP growth, according to the European Central Bank – a figure revised down by 0.3 percentage points due to the Middle East conflict.



NEW APPOINTMENTS

 **Zoom Room**

The US dog training franchise has appointed Soumik Chatterjee, former SVP at Petco, as its Chief Financial Officer. The company also named former Petco CEO Ron Coughlin as Chairman of the Board.

 **Dehner Group**

Sven Girmendonk joined the German garden and pet retailer as Chief Sales Officer.

 **Maxi Zoo France**

The Fressnapf | Maxi Zoo subsidiary hired Vincent Doumerc as its new CEO, who brings over 25 years of experience in the sector.

TOP 3 INVESTMENTS

- 1** Australian company **Lyka Pet Food** secured \$45M in a Series C funding to launch new product lines and expand its offerings.
- 2** **United Petfood** purchased the Jupiter production facility in Quebec from Legault Group.
- 3** **Nestlé Purina** opened a new wet pet food factory in Vargeão, southern Brazil, after investing more than €400 million (\$461M).

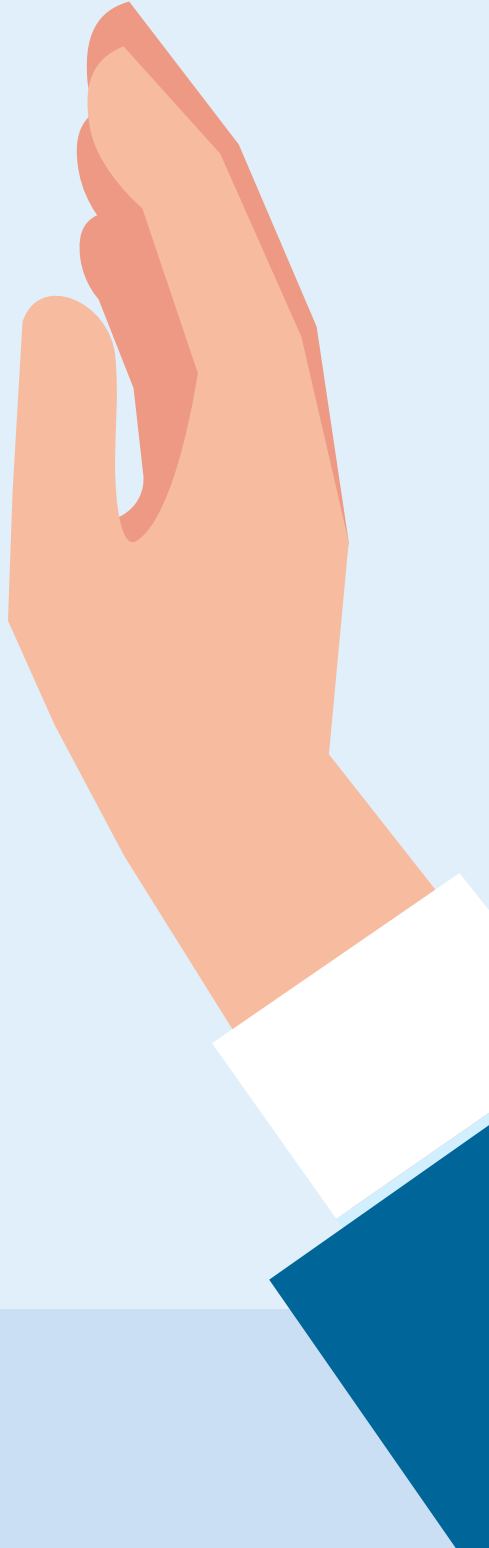
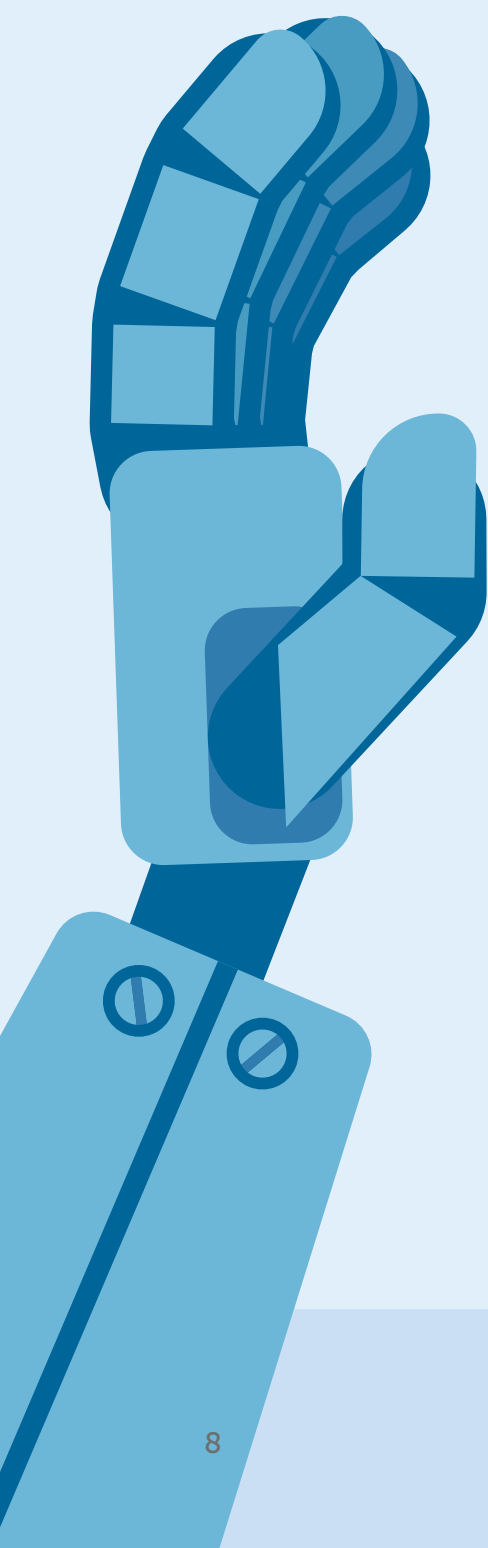
TOP WEB NEWS

**Fressnapf | Maxi Zoo appoints Chief Product Officer**

Former Lidl Finland CCO Mikko Forsström joins the European pet retail giant.

  
**LATEST NEWS**





Retail under pressure

# Turning disruption into opportunity

Leaders in the pet sector share how they are embracing AI, automation and omnichannel strategies to drive growth while safeguarding margins.



**David Palacios Rubio**  
*Editor-in-Chief*  
GlobalPETS



**Thaís Matos**  
*Senior Business Reporter*  
GlobalPETS

As the global pet retail sector navigates an increasingly complex market, companies are grappling with issues that span technology, data, AI and profitability. For many players, these pressures do open new doors to digital transformation, smarter data use and innovative ways to enhance customer experiences.

### Five key challenges

A survey among 200 business executives in the UK and the US, conducted by e-commerce platform Rithum, outlines five key findings on challenges that brand and retail players are currently facing. These cover external and internal pressures, current manual processes, rapid AI developments, squeezed margins and the cost of customer journeys.

External forces and internal misalignments appear to limit growth at similar rates. For instance, 48% of the retailers surveyed admit difficulties with economic instability and inflation when expanding into new markets, and 47% attribute this to technology and data challenges.

### Resolving data issues

Reliance on manual processes and workflows leaves companies vulnerable to inefficiency, errors, lost revenue and outdated or incomplete data. In fact, 24% of the retailers admit to often facing data quality issues, with another 12% saying they are dealing with this all the time.

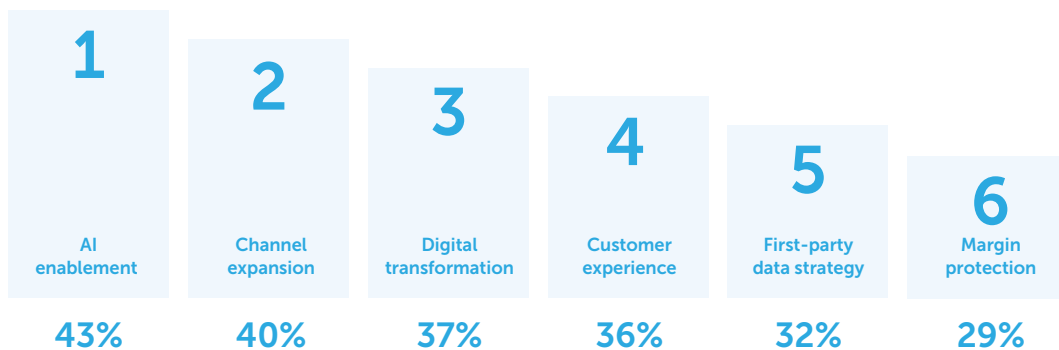
In the pet sector, companies are currently working to overcome these hurdles and integrate better practices into their operations. "Today's competitive value comes from the ability to turn data into insight and insight into action," says Guillaume Seneclauze, CEO of pet retailer Arcaplanet.

For the Italian company, technology has become a strategic lever for business growth. "It's necessary to build a modern, scalable and resilient architecture based on a single corporate data model, enabling a modular and flexible ecosystem capable of supporting omnichannel and enabling new sales channels," Seneclauze explains. "The quality of our data is good, but we are striving for excellence with a truly data-driven approach."

Frédéric Le Guen, CEO of French pet retailer Animalis, emphasizes that the availability and reliability of data "is not yet perfect", but progress made in the past two years has been "tremendous". This is the result of the efforts of a new, highly data-driven leadership team.

[▶ SEE NEXT PAGE](#)

### 'What are your company's top strategic priorities?'



Source: The 2026 Commerce Readiness Index, Rithum, July 2025 \*Multiple responses allowed

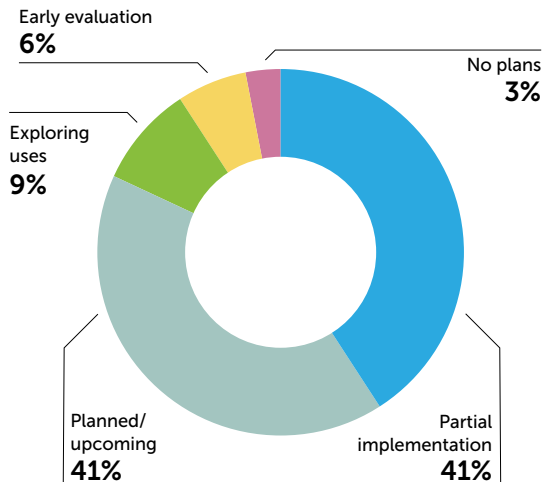
the  
**SYMPLY**  
group

**FIGHT  
BACK  
AGAINST  
D2C**

Europe's biggest range of independent pet foods

**See you at Interzoo '26. Hall 9, Stand 405**

## AI readiness across your organization: pricing, inventory and marketing



Source: The 2026 Commerce Readiness Index, Rithum, July 2025



“Today, our decisions are systematically backed by data. But we operate in a sector driven by passion, where perception, attachment and field intuition matter as much as hard numbers – and not everything can or should be modeled,” he adds.

### Continuing digital transformation

Belgian retailer Tom&Co has invested in broader digital transformation and connected all customer interactions, both online and in-store, into a central customer data platform. “By unifying transaction history, digital behavior, loyalty engagement and service interactions, we’re able to generate reliable customer profiles,” says CEO Jean Richard de Latour.

Some other retailers admit that there is still room for improvement. “We have very good data and we process it on numerous fronts, but not so much from a customer perspective,” explains Pipa Nogaró, CEO at Argentinian retailer Puppis.

This particular challenge is mainly concentrated in the brick-and-mortar business, especially regarding sales being allocated to the right customer. Although Puppis does have the technology to analyze omnichannel behavior, store staff sometimes fail to fulfill the company’s digitalization objectives.

### AI automation is top priority

Another survey finding is that three out of four business leaders say that AI is advancing faster than their organizations can adopt it.

This is also where the biggest opportunity lies, as only 41% of the retail respondents are already using AI automation across several functions. AI enablement is their top strategic priority (43%), with digital transformation coming third (37%).

In Brazil, Petz has plans to increase efficiency by automating and digitizing its operations plus using data and AI for smarter execution, whether in pricing, assortment or customer service. “The AI agenda is extensive, with many opportunities, but the company is already working with it on some fronts in its day-to-day operations,” says former CFO Aline Penna.

The Brazilian player still has “significant room for advancement”, and Penna highlights four areas of focus: demand forecasting and

[▶ SEE NEXT PAGE](#)

***Three out of four business leaders say that AI is advancing faster than their organizations can adopt it.***

# Ünye Maden

PREMIUM WHITE BENTONITE | CAT LITTER MANUFACTURER



— Engineered by Nature —  
**SHAPED BY US**

**Meet Us At**



**Interzoo**  
12-15 May 2026  
Hall: 3C Booth: 3C-414



**PLMA**  
PRIVATE LABEL MANUFACTURERS ASSOCIATION  
19-20 May 2026  
Hall: 8 Booth: 8.D79

inventory optimization, back-office productivity, personalized recommendations to reduce customer journey losses, and loss prevention for slow-moving or soon-to-expire products.

### Smart applications

At the UK's Pets at Home, AI use is integrated in personalized customer experiences and streamlining operations. "We've embedded AI across our business for nearly a decade. In the past year, we've accelerated our efforts with programs like AI-powered customer assistants in our Pet Care Centres, fraud detection systems in the support office and colleague support tools," says Simon Ellis, Head of AI Transformation and Enterprise Architecture.

Customer experience is also the focus of attention for Arcaplanet. The company increased its conversion rate by offering a personalized navigation experience across its digital touchpoints. "Our goal is to leverage AI in our physical stores as well, where traffic is significantly higher and where the biggest opportunities lie," Seneclauze states.

Tom&Co's strategy is to adopt AI where it strengthens efficiency, enhances customer experience and supports long-term business value. De Latour asserts: "By combining AI-driven efficiency with stronger digital

infrastructures and the development of new revenue opportunities, we aim to deliver consistent, long-term value to our customers."

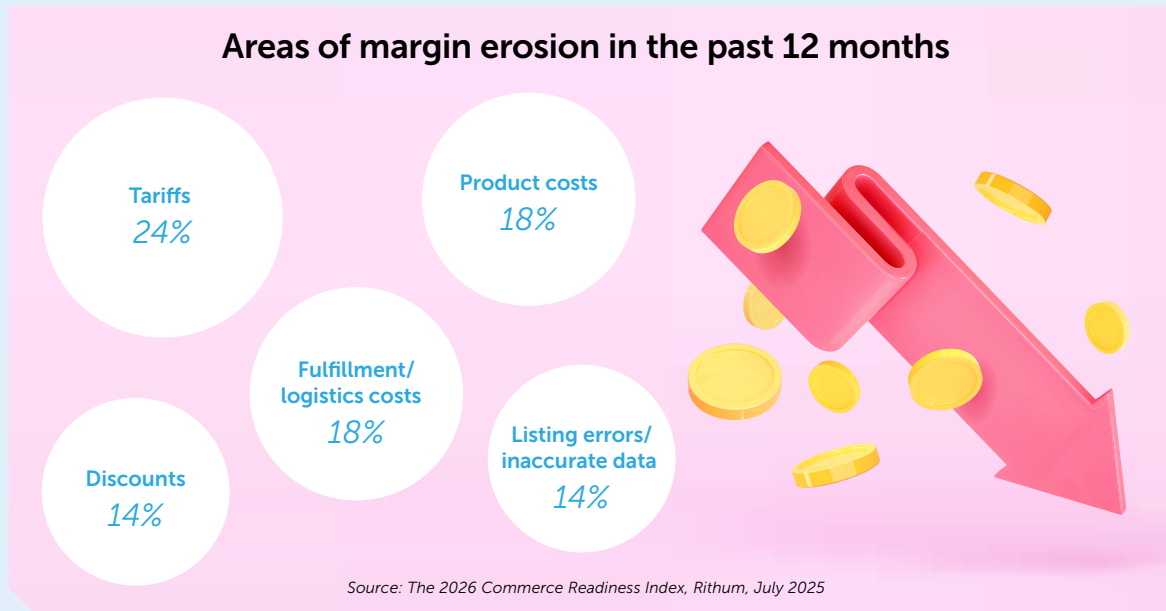
Puppis is also leveraging smart AI applications in marketing and customer service. The company plans to add more third-party apps and develop its own products. "We've launched a supply chain tool powered with AI, and we expect significant improvements from that," says Nogaró.

### Moving slowly but surely

Retailers are cautious when deciding the speed at which to implement AI in their business. For the Tom&Co CEO, gradual incorporation of AI is a result of periodic reviews of repetitive tasks. "We don't position ourselves as first movers, but we clearly recognize the necessity to embed AI as a logical component in every project and process," he concludes.

Spanish pet retailer IskayPet thinks along the same lines, believing in laying the foundations to enable it to pursue smarter decision making and more efficient operations. "Before unlocking the full value of AI, we must ensure our data is robust, accessible and fit for advanced use," says Caroline Arrú de Caveda, Chief Marketing and Chief Customer Officer.

[▶ SEE NEXT PAGE](#)





NBF LANES  
Biome

# Add *Reuteri* to your feeds

Boost your dog and cat feeds with our new  
EFSA – authorized Probiotics and Postbiotics

**100 billion**  
live probiotics  
per gram



## NBF1 probiotic for dogs

*L. reuteri* DSM 32203



## NBF2 probiotic for cats

*L. reuteri* DSM 32264



## NBF postbiotic for dogs and cats

*L. reuteri* NBF DC PRO



Want to know  
more?

Visit [www.nbfreuteri.com](http://www.nbfreuteri.com)

***Reliance on manual processes and workflows leaves companies vulnerable to inefficiency, errors, lost revenue and outdated or incomplete data.***

The debate about AI and the risk of replacing employees is something the pet retail sector is also taking into account. “The real challenge will be bringing AI into our back-office processes – not to replace employees, but to equip them with tools that enhance their operational effectiveness and improve process efficiency,” says Arcaplanet’s CEO.

### **Margins under siege**

Another survey finding concerns eroding profitability. Protecting margins is the top priority for 29% of retailers, and many attribute margin erosion in the past year to tariffs (24%), fulfillment or logistics costs (18%), product costs (18%), discounts (14%) or inaccurate data (14%).

In order to improve profit and competitiveness, Petz in Brazil sees the way it competes with marketplaces as a key challenge to address in 2026, and points to loyalty programs and services (primarily health plans) as ways to achieve that goal.

Puppis is also moving its business forward by further developing its health plan sales. But Nogaró says that investing in private labels and buying directly from non-major international brands are Puppis’ main drivers of better margins, and will help them in the promotions and pricing war. “Big brands are everywhere, and there’s very tough competition on price, providing very low margins for retailers like us,” he explains.

### **The right pricing is key**

For Animalis, price is an important differentiator in a market where both the company and its competitors are trusted by consumers. “We believe this is increasingly true, and are investing heavily in sustaining a strong price image,” the CEO says.

IskayPet tackles the balance between prices and margins with a combination of product mix optimization, strong brand positioning and disciplined pricing governance, maintains Arrú de Caveda. “Finding

the right equilibrium between private label ranges and external brands allows us to sustain healthy margins, while offering our customers variety and value.”

Arcaplanet is similarly investing in the development of its private label, to strengthen customer loyalty while ensuring better margin optimization. “We’re also shifting away from broad, undifferentiated promotions toward more targeted initiatives for specific customer clusters, increasing both effectiveness and relevance,” says Seneclauze.

### **Improving the customer journey**

The survey found that customer journeys are “bleeding revenue”, mainly in ad-to-product (26%), payment processing (19%) and customer care (17%). Nogaró notes that, in emerging markets such as Argentina, enhancing the customer experience through better designed stores and a more thoughtful in-store journey – plus expanding product availability by adding more SKUs – is crucial to retaining customers. IskayPet’s strategy is to improve in-store efficiency with better trained teams and offer a fully integrated omnichannel experience.

Ultimately, the research points out that companies which invest smartly in technology, efficiency and customer experience will go through transformations with less turbulence. And pet players are showing that they are already making the necessary structural changes to adapt.

Arcaplanet is going a step further, and is considering augmented reality, virtual reality and ‘phygital’ solutions – which combine physical and digital experiences – to enhance the way customers interact with the brand across all channels and boost consumer engagement. “We’re implementing a more localized approach to pricing and introducing dynamic pricing capabilities, enabling us to respond more precisely to market conditions and competitive pressures,” adds Seneclauze.

The path forward for pet retailers lies in balancing technology with human insight, automation with thoughtful strategy and efficiency with customer centricity. As the sector continues to evolve in 2026, those who embrace innovation while staying true to their core values will be ready to thrive in an evolving market. ♦

# AI's supply chain takeover

Predictive forecasting, vision-guided robotics and digital trade modeling are enabling companies to move from reactive operations to more resilient networks.



**Chris Austin**  
Chief Marketing Officer  
Alpine Supply Chain Solutions

It is hardly breaking news to say that the supply chain industry is experiencing a prolonged pattern of disruption and change. This encompasses both global manufacturing and agriculture, which means the impact may be even more significant across the pet sector.

## Investment is vital

As the industry navigates a period of structural transformation, and the humanization of pets continues to drive demand for premium, fresh and specialized products, the underlying infrastructure required to deliver these goods gets more complex by the day. For C-level executives, the traditional supply chain – once viewed merely as a cost center – is now a critical lever for competitive advantage.

In an era defined by volatile trade policies and demanding consumers, AI has emerged as the primary tool for building resilience and improving customer experience. According to data shared with industry forum Supply Chain Brain, nearly 60% of global logistics leaders are now definitely prioritizing AI to manage the volatility of the post-pandemic market, while 96% of them agree that long-term AI investment is a necessity.

For the pet sector, adopting AI is no longer a luxury. It is a prerequisite for scale because of the unique pressures

created by the short shelf life of fresh food, the logistical burden of heavy bags and the ever-changing landscape that must be navigated when importing from countries such as China.

## Warehouse intelligence

For decades, inventory management relied on historical data. This meant, essentially, looking in the rearview mirror to drive forward. In the pet industry, that often resulted in overstocks or debilitating stockouts of essential SKUs following slight shifts in consumer demand.

Modern, AI-driven, autonomous inventory management systems make use of demand sensing. Instead of looking at sales from the previous year, these algorithms ingest thousands of external signals to predict immediate demand and help retailers respond quickly to fast-changing conditions.

## Connecting owner data to stock

Leading UK retailer Pets at Home is already moving toward this type of agentic model – an AI system that can act on its own, making decisions and completing tasks without needing constant human input. By connecting data from its veterinary clinics, grooming salons and retail stores, the company can use AI for predictive replenishment.

This enables it to move from broad segment marketing to individual pet profiles. The system can anticipate

*The goal is a regenerative supply chain.  
This is a system that not only reacts to disruption  
but anticipates it and self-corrects.*

exactly when a specific customer is likely to run out of a bag of food, based on their pet's breed and age, therefore optimizing inventory levels across its network.

### Operational gains

Companies using AI-powered retail automation software have reported significant operational gains. For pet retailers managing upwards of 12,000 SKUs, AI-driven demand forecasting can lead to, for example, up to 50% less overstock by predicting seasonal shifts, e.g. tick and flea treatments.

Another real benefit seen by many businesses has been a waste reduction in fresh and short-dated products of up to 15%. And with inventory turnover observed as being 30% faster, capital that was previously tied up in slow-moving stock can be freed up.

### Production lines to inventory scans

One of the most significant leaps in supply chain technology is the integration of AI vision. In pet food and treat manufacturing, quality control has historically been labor-intensive.

Mars Petcare has addressed this by investing heavily in Digital Twin technology. By creating a virtual replica of its production lines, Mars uses AI to ensure product consistency and to minimize waste during the extrusion process.

Visual intelligence is also taking flight in distribution centers. US online pet retailer Chewy recently addressed the industry pain point of handling heavy, non-rigid items like very large sacks of dog food with its CHAMP (Chewy Autonomous Mobile Picking) initiative.

By partnering with robotics firms to develop vision-guided systems, Chewy has deployed robots that use high-confidence object detection to identify, grasp and place heavy bags into boxes.

Autonomous drones are replacing the dangerous task of manual cycle counting. Various third-party logistics (3PL) providers serving the pet industry are deploying drones to perform 'lights out' inventory scans.

Equipped with high-resolution cameras, plus light detection and ranging (LiDAR), these drones navigate narrow aisles to scan barcodes on racks reaching 40ft high. This allows for 99.9% accuracy without the need for warehouse downtime.

▶ [SEE NEXT PAGE](#)

### Volantis



### Yuron Hytec 300



### CMD<sub>2</sub>



### Hymaks



Together we cut  
your product  
to perfection



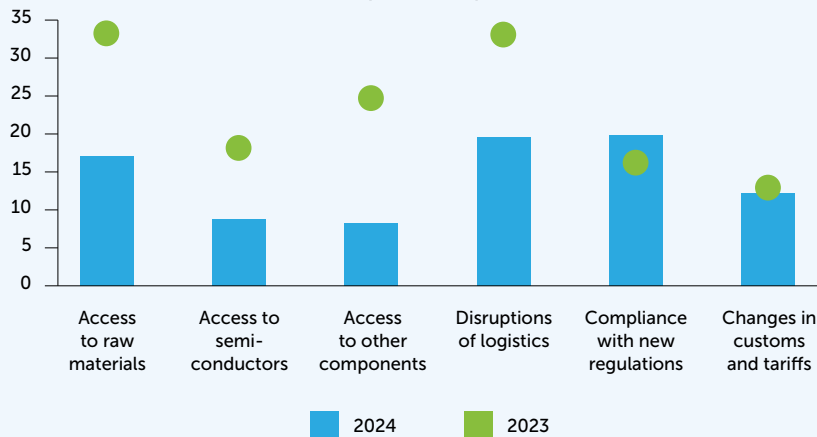
Website



eMail



## Major trade-related obstacles for EU importers (% of firms)



Source: European Investment Bank (EIB)

### Navigating the tariff minefield

The most immediate application of AI today lies in its ability to find a way through the complex web of global trade. As trade tensions fluctuate and tariffs go on/off, pet brands are often caught in the confusion. Components of pet accessories or specific vitamins used in food formulation are frequently subject to sudden duty increases.

AI is now being used for Digital Twin modeling of entire supply networks. This allows executives to run 'what if' scenarios. For example, if a 25% tariff is applied to certain raw materials, the system can calculate the exact cost impact of shifting production to Vietnam or Mexico. AI-powered global trade management systems can automatically reclassify products under different harmonized system (HS) codes, to ensure compliance while identifying the most tax-efficient routes.

### Beyond the data silo

The primary hurdle for many supply chain leaders – especially in the pet sector – is not the lack of AI technology but the fragmentation of data. AI is only as effective as the data it feeds from, and it's likely that not only legacy pet brands are still operating with siloed data.

The executive mandate for 2026 and beyond is the creation of a unified supply chain. That involves

integrating data from suppliers, 3PL providers and retail partners into a single AI-orchestrated platform. This transparency allows for exception-based management, where human intervention is only required when the AI identifies a significant anomaly such as a port strike or a sudden spike in raw material costs.

### Creating future resilience

As we look toward the future, the goal is a regenerative supply chain. This is a system that not only reacts to disruption but anticipates it and self-corrects. We are moving into a world where AI-managed fleets optimize delivery routes in real time to avoid traffic and where smart warehouses manage their own energy usage based on peak utility pricing.

For the C-suite, the takeaway is clear. AI is not a technical upgrade, it's a strategic imperative. The pet companies that will thrive in the coming decade are those that treat their supply chain as a living, breathing, thinking organism.

By investing in AI and piloting sci-fi sounding projects such as AI vision, autonomous drones and predictive trade modeling, leaders can turn their supply chain into a strategic advantage and ensure their brands remain resilient, regardless of what happens next in the world. ♦

# How a 1% moisture shift changes everything

Why a single metric dictates the entire nutritional label, and how pet food manufacturers can finally take proactive control.



**Viktoriya Liubych**  
Industry Marketing Manager  
BESTMIX Software  
bestmix.com

In pet food production, moisture looks like a small number on a spec sheet. In reality, it is one of the most influential variables in the entire process.

## Foundation of labeling

Change moisture by just 1% and the interpretation of every nutrient shifts with it. Protein, fat, ash and fiber values all move because they are calculated against moisture. Moisture gets attention because everyone knows it has consequences far beyond the number itself. As one nutrition leader notes: "Moisture frequently comes up as the single parameter that can change how every other nutrient is read."

In practice, moisture is still one of the most difficult values to keep stable. What appears compliant in formulation can suddenly look very different in the finished product.

## A live production variable

Formulators build recipes assuming certain moisture levels in raw materials, defining nutrient constraints and monitoring specifications. But once production begins, moisture stops behaving like a fixed value and starts behaving like a live variable.

Ingredient lots arrive with different moisture levels, seasonal conditions shift, slurry behaves differently from run to run and dryer performance fluctuates. Coating introduces another layer of variability. Suddenly, the 'same recipe' produces a different kibble.

When that happens, production teams adjust temperatures, water addition and screw speed, often based on experience and instinct. Quality teams measure the results afterward. And finance eventually sees the impact through yield differences and cost variance.

Another head of nutrition adds: "Moisture management becomes a plant-level challenge because operators are the ones continuously adjusting the process as conditions change."

## Unifying the data

This reflects a common industry pattern: Moisture often becomes a site-level responsibility, even though its consequences reach far beyond the production floor.

Most companies already have the math, but execution breaks down because the data lives in separate places. One team models it. Another team measures it. Another team reacts to it. When those handoffs rely on spreadsheets, stale assumptions or operator workarounds, moisture management becomes reactive by default. Ultimately, moisture moves across formulation, production, quality and cost faster than companies can adapt.

## The solution

Industry leaders are rethinking moisture management by abandoning siloed spreadsheets. They are uniting formulation, production and quality teams around a single source of truth through integrated solutions like BESTMIX Software.

This allows them to actively control moisture during the process, rather than just reacting to it after the fact. ♦

# Emotional gifting drives growth during key shopping events



**Pet parents are increasingly likely to buy gifts at special moments – both as a display of their affection and to take advantage of attractive discounts and promotions.**



**Thaís Matos**  
*Senior Business Reporter*  
*GlobalPETS*



**Diana Dominguez**  
*Business Reporter*  
*GlobalPETS*

Do holiday periods and promotional days like Black Friday really boost the sales of pet products? US and European findings from recent surveys monitoring purchase intent, plus analysis of online product searches and retail sales reporting, help to quantify the extent of this phenomenon.

## US owners love Valentine's Day

A record 35% of consumers planned to purchase gifts for their pets during Valentine's Day in the US this year, according to a survey by the National Retail Federation (NRF) and consumer-based intelligence firm Prosper Insights & Analytics. This percentage is the strongest in recent years, continuing a steady rise that started with a jump from 20% in 2019 to 27% in 2020.

Not surprisingly, total spending on Valentine's pet gifts was also set to hit a high. The survey, conducted among 7,791 consumers in January 2026, revealed that

these American pet parents were planning to spend a total of \$2.1 billion (€1.8B). That is a huge increase when compared to sales amounting to \$0.9B (€0.8B) in 2019 and \$1.7 billion (€1.5B) in 2020 and again in 2025, even when taking inflation into account.

For Phil Rist, Executive Vice President of Strategy at Prosper Insights & Analytics, holidays such as Valentine's Day tend to "underscore the value of relationships", celebrating not only love, but also connection and affection. So purchases on occasions like these are very much driven by emotion, which explains why pet gifts are increasingly taking a larger share.

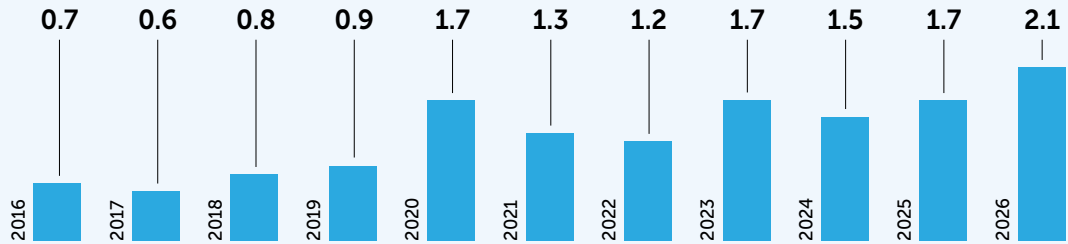
This emotional dimension is reflected in how pets rank among all gift recipients. For instance, they are given more presents than the respondents' other social groups, such as friends (33%), children's classmates or teachers (27%) and co-workers (21%).

## Treats and special occasions

The US is not the only country where owners celebrate with their pets. On average, half of the pet parents in the UK planned to buy them gifts for Christmas and Valentine's Day in 2025, according to findings from two separate surveys of 2,000 consumers conducted by pet insurers Petplan and Agria Pet Insurance.

## Valentine's Day purchase intention for pets

(US, in billion \$)



Source: National Retail Federation and Prosper Insights & Analytics, January 2026, (n=7,791)

Agria found that some 39% of pet owners would consider their pet their true love, and this is even higher among female owners (43%). Petplan reported that Christmas gifts last December averaged £42 (\$57/€48) per dog and £28 (\$32/€38) per cat. But the company found that one in four pet owners spend less at between £10 (\$13.4/€11.6) and £20 (\$26.8/€23.2).

A survey of 2,000 adults conducted by the UK pet retailer Pets at Home in October 2025 showed that one in five owners were planning to spend more on their pets at Christmas than on any other family member. The retailer then saw a 258% surge in Valentine's Day gift purchases in January 2026 compared to the same period last year. [▶ SEE NEXT PAGE](#)

# YowUp!

LICK LIFE



**ALL MADE IN SPAIN**

**CERTIFIED FUNCTIONALITIES**

**FRESH MILK & INGREDIENTS**

**LOW IN FAT 0% LACTOSE & SUGAR**

**INTERZOO Booth number: 3-228**

# xelflex™

**A new ingredient for joint health**  
*by Ingredia*



**Clinically  
proven:**

*Significant reduction  
of LOAD SCORE*

[www.ingredia-health.com](http://www.ingredia-health.com) 

**A UK survey showed that one in five owners were planning to spend more on their pets at Christmas than on any other family member.**

According to the company, dog customers are spending on average £4.72 (\$6.4/€5.4) on themed products – a 3.5% increase compared to 2024. Spending on a cat’s gift was slightly less, £3.63 (\$5/€4) on average, but a 66.1% rise year-over-year (YoY).

### Dressing up for Halloween

Although they don’t necessarily receive gifts, pets are sometimes included in consumers’ Halloween shopping in a different way. In the US, 23% of owners planned to dress up their furry friends for the occasion, according to a survey by NRF among 8,045 respondents in September 2025.

This intent led to a total forecast of \$860 million (€738M) in spending on pet costumes, up from \$700 million (€645M) the previous year. And a survey of 1,000 owners conducted by MetLife Pet Insurance in the same month revealed that one in five (20%) Americans say they invest over \$50 (€46) in their pet’s Halloween costume.

### What kinds of items are pet parents buying?

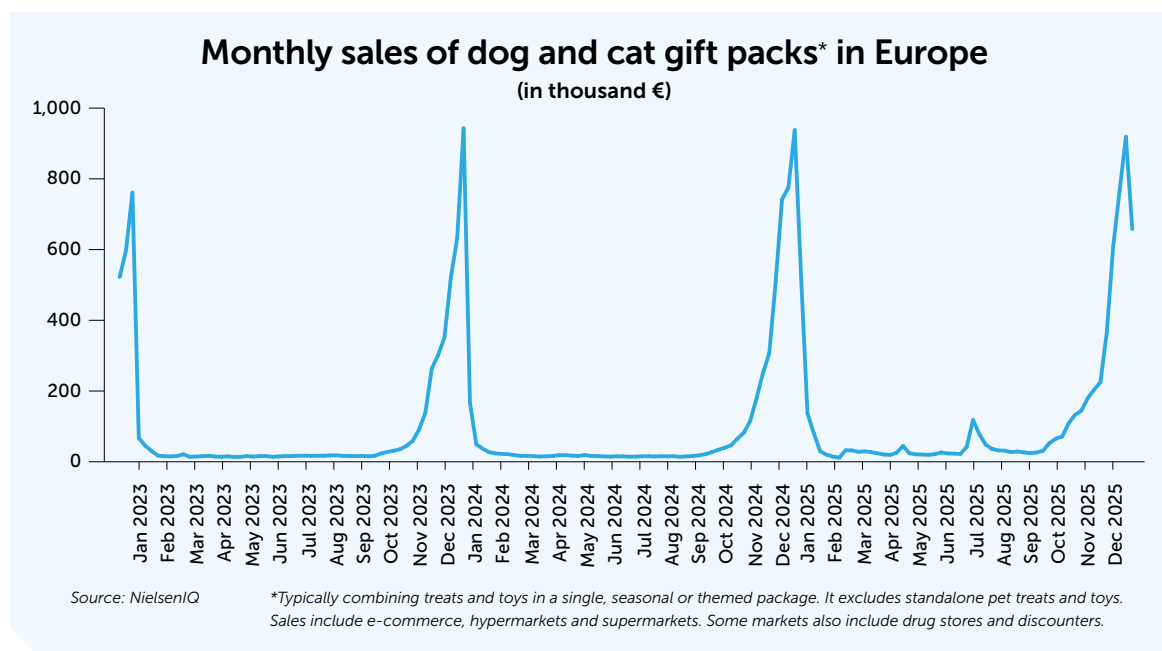
According to a Deloitte survey of 4,270 consumers in the US regarding general holiday spending last year, almost one quarter (23%) of all respondents planned to purchase pet food and treats as gifts, while 22% planned to buy toys, decor and accessories.

These numbers are slightly down from 2024, when food and treats were chosen by 26% of respondents and non-food items by 25%. This could have been partly the result of a new category in the Deloitte survey: pet tech (e.g. GPS trackers, auto-feeders and smart collars), which was chosen by 2% of respondents.

The Petplan survey in the UK showed a similar pattern, with 64.5% of pet parents saying they typically buy treats for their dogs and cats at Christmas, and 59.5% showing a preference for toys. Other popular gifts included beds and blankets (27.5%), personalized items (18.5%) and grooming products (17%).

UK dog food manufacturer Pooch & Mutt, which sells holiday-themed limited-edition treats, says these products perform well because they are low priced, increase the buyer’s basket size and give retailers “something fresh to merchandise”, according to CEO Paul Dennison.

▶ SEE NEXT PAGE





### Holiday retail peaks worldwide

Consumer intelligence firm NielsenIQ's European market data for 2025 also showed that, within the pet food sector, gift and selection packs and bundles reached a sales peak of almost €1 million (\$1.15M) during the Christmas weeks, while the annual average is €112,000 (\$129,400).

The broader festive retail period shows a similar dynamic for total pet care, as activity peaks. According to NielsenIQ, the six weeks of holiday sales in the US (last two weeks of November and four weeks of December) in 2025 reached a revenue of \$8.6 billion (€7.4B). This represents a 6% rise from an average six-week period in the full calendar year, which stood at \$8 billion (€6.9B).

The biggest differences were reported in pet accessories other than beds, toys and travel items, with purchases of these during the holiday period up as much as 119% more than the average, followed by toys (up by 75%) and beds (up 46%).

In Europe, NielsenIQ reported a rise of 5% in sales for main meals during Christmas 2025, compared to the off-season average, and a surge of 11% in care and treats, "indicating that holiday gifting and indulgence behaviors extend strongly to pets", the company notes. Globally, weekly pet food activity during the Christmas period (the four weeks ending 28 December 2025) corresponded to 8.11% of annual sales.

### Seasonal comparisons

Despite the growing inclusion of pets in other celebrations, Andrea Binder, Thought Leader in Pet Care for NielsenIQ, says that the trends in pet gift

purchasing are still not as strong during those periods as the upticks that have been reported for Christmas and Black Friday.

"We do know there are seasonal influxes of products for holidays such as Halloween and Easter in the US, but we don't see these products driving a significant enough lift to change the average category spend in those weeks or months," she explains.

### Across all channels

Extra pet gift spending for special moments is spread across virtually all retail channels in the US, with the weekly average outlay on pet care items generally higher during November and December compared to the annual average, according to NielsenIQ data. But the difference is greater for Amazon, with revenue that was 10% higher during holiday periods, followed by retail giants such as Walmart and Target, at 9%.

In Europe, the biggest revenue growth during the holiday season was reported on e-commerce platforms, mostly coming from online sales at grocery retailers, where sales increased by 11.41% YoY. The category also saw a more modest increase in pet stores, at 3.12%.

### Surges in search demand

In addition to actual purchases, holiday season momentum is reflected in online searches for pet supplies. This means that more owners are actively looking for particular items as gifts for their pets rather than just buying on impulse.

According to Algolia, an AI-powered platform that provides retailers with search software, online searches for pet products and accessories during last year's

Black Friday and Cyber Monday period surged by 81% across the e-commerce sites it serves in the US compared to 2024.

This was the biggest leap among all the product categories it measures, the company says. For example, the apparel and fashion category jumped by 51%, health and wellness climbed by 41%, and home goods rose by just 16%.

The data intelligence platform Similarweb also found an increase in visits to three major pet retailer websites in the last quarter of 2025. Among US online retailers, Chewy went from 41.5 million visits in October to 47.4 million in December, while PetSmart rose from 14.4 million to 17.2 million in the same period. And UK-based Pets at Home saw an increase from 4.2 million to 5.2 million hits.

### Data points to opportunities

Although celebrations such as Halloween, Valentine's Day and even Easter are emerging as activity drivers

**A record 35% of consumers planned to purchase gifts for their pets during Valentine's Day in the US this year.**

for the pet category, revenue growth remains concentrated in the traditional Christmas holiday period.

Binder mentions another reason for these gift purchases: "Humans spending more on their pets during holidays is likely also tied to decreased birth rates and couples choosing to acquire a pet as they delay or choose not to have children."

For brands and retailers, data showing the appeal of bundles and gift packs points to an opportunity to increase sales by focusing on promotions and seasonal merchandising. Binder concludes: "Gifting occasions offer opportunities to drive value-led growth, with consumers increasingly opting for premium brands across many categories." ♦

PORTA 21

# Superfood

MADE WITH HIGH-QUALITY FRUIT AND VEGETABLES



- Complete Food
- Protein-rich meat or fish
- "Superfoods" as vitamin and mineral boosters
- For cats at every stage of life
- For strength and energy for the day



Meet us at **INTERZOO**  
**12 - 15 May 2026**  
hall 7A stand 7A-528

Schulze Heimtierbedarf GmbH  
Osterkamp 11 | 32457 Porta Westfalica | Germany  
☎ +49 5731 98200-0 | ✉ info@portapet.de

# pramyp®

## COMPLETE NUTRITION WET FOOD FOR CAT WITH SPECIFIC NEEDS

HIGH PROTEIN | HIGH MOISTURE | GRAIN FREE | GMO FREE



**Interzoo  
2026**

Meet us at Interzoo  
12-15 May 2026  
Hall 9-225

**NO SALT & SUGAR ADDED +  
SPECIAL FUNCTIONAL INGREDIENTS**

IF INTERESTED TO BECOME DISTRIBUTOR,  
EMAIL US AT: [INFO@SHAWPETGROUP.COM](mailto:INFO@SHAWPETGROUP.COM) OR [SALES@SHAWPET.COM](mailto:SALES@SHAWPET.COM)

 **MADE IN THAILAND**

 [Pramycat](#)  [Pramycat](#)  [Pramycat.com](http://Pramycat.com)



# Counterfeiting: a threat to pet welfare

New guidelines are aimed at safeguarding pets and their owners against ineffective and unsafe medical products being sold through both online and offline channels.



**Alastair Gray**  
*Director, Anticounterfeiting*  
*International Trademark Association (INTA)*

Luxury goods and electronics are not the only sectors battling a steady stream of fake products. In the pet health business, illegitimate and sub-par medical treatments are putting animal welfare at risk, not to mention damaging consumer confidence.

## A growing global concern

Counterfeiting is one of the most significant challenges facing brand owners today. It reaches every corner of the world and affects almost every industry. It also undermines trust, harms legitimate markets and, in many sectors, creates risks for health and safety.

Largely due to the media's coverage of the issue, counterfeiting is most often associated with designer goods or electronics, but it increasingly affects other sectors too. In the pet industry, fake pet health products are threatening animal wellbeing and public confidence.

## Impact on animal welfare

According to the International Trademark Association (INTA), whose members include manufacturers of branded products for companion animals, counterfeit medicines are a significant issue in the pet industry. These fake products can leave pets sub-optimally treated for parasites, infections or chronic conditions, leading to prolonged suffering, preventable illness and, in some cases, death.

Ineffective or unsafe products may also cause adverse reactions, further jeopardizing pet health. These outcomes underscore that counterfeit medicines can directly harm the very animals they are supposed to protect.

## Low-cost imitations online

Pet owners seeking affordable and convenient solutions – sometimes limited by the cost or availability of veterinary care – often turn to the internet. Counterfeiters exploit this demand by offering low-cost imitations across popular e-commerce platforms. Parasite treatments for pets [▶ SEE NEXT PAGE](#)



**Interzoo  
2026**

**Gheda Petfood**

**Hall 4 - Stand 320**



**UNICA<sup>TM</sup>  
GHEDA**

**Where Quality Takes Root**

**Official reveal at Interzoo 2026**

Inspired by Italy's culture of real food, built on decades of expertise and driven by a commitment to transparency, UNICA GHEDA<sup>TM</sup> introduces a new vision of pet nutrition.

Be the first to experience it.



are a particular target for counterfeiters. Many such products are available as over-the-counter treatments (no prescription required), making them easier to market online.

Counterfeits often originate in Asia before spreading globally through e-commerce sites and social media marketplaces. The scale of reach and speed of communication via these channels make enforcement difficult, as listings are constantly refreshed or disguised to evade detection.

### Offline channels

Although online sales increasingly dominate, offline trade often overlaps with online advertising, reinforcing the need for vigilance across both channels.

In Latin America, for example, counterfeit preventatives are advertised both in person and online. Diverted flea and tick preventatives are moved across borders into markets with different regulatory requirements and are then resold through informal outlets such as swap meets or open-air markets. Meanwhile, counterfeit collars and similar products have been detected in certain European markets.

### A comprehensive approach

Recognizing that protecting consumers and their pets requires both enforcement and awareness, INTA and its members have adopted a layered strategy to safeguard against counterfeiting, including in the animal health industry.

One important measure is the monitoring of e-commerce platforms to detect and remove infringing listings while gathering intelligence to map counterfeit networks. At the same time, from a supply chain perspective, it is important to introduce strong distributor agreements, compliance checks and penalties for violations to preserve the integrity of legitimate channels.

Conducting proactive threat assessments ensures vulnerabilities across markets are evaluated and weaknesses are addressed before counterfeiters can exploit them. Last but not least, the strategy involves enhancing awareness and advocacy by training law

### ***Conducting proactive threat assessments ensures weaknesses are addressed before counterfeiters can exploit them.***

enforcement officials, educating the public (with a focus on young consumers) and conducting outreach in high-risk geographies.

### What can pet industry players do?

Safeguarding pet owners requires coordinated action across the supply chain. Industry stakeholders – from manufacturers and distributors to retailers and online platforms – each play a role in ensuring only legitimate products reach consumers.

For example, manufacturers can improve their product traceability by applying secure packaging, batch numbers and scannable codes to make it easier to authenticate products and detect counterfeiters. They should also verify their supply chain security, using only licensed distributors, enforcing supplier agreements and conducting compliance checks to prevent diversion.

Manufacturers and distributors can strengthen their partnerships with veterinarians to reinforce safe purchasing channels and educate consumers on the risks of unverified sources. They can also support more general consumer and retailer education to reduce the demand for counterfeit products and strengthen trust.

Meanwhile, online platforms can tighten their oversight, tracking e-commerce listings for red flags such as unusually low prices, missing documentation or absence of company details. Above all, to strengthen collective defenses, it is important for the various types of stakeholders to share intelligence across the industry and exchange information on emerging threats, enforcement results and suspicious actors.

By embedding these practices into operations, companies reduce exposure to counterfeiters and build a healthier, more transparent marketplace. ♦

*\*This article has been prepared with input from INTA's Anticounterfeiting Committee.*

# CREAMY TREATS

## ALL LIFE STAGE

wanpy®



Grain free



Healthy Digestion



No Preservatives or Colorants



# Safe, Delicious & Healthy Cat Treats

*Pets are our friends and part of our family*



Head Office: Yantai China Pet Foods Co., Ltd. STOCK CODE: 002891 Angie@wanpy.com.cn www.wanpy.com.cn

Wanpy Europe Petfoods B.V.

Martien van Bohemen

Mbl.: +31623375988

martien@wanpy.eu

# Clearing the hurdles to unicorn status

In a fast-moving technological world, what does it take for pet industry players to reach this coveted company valuation?



**Kirstie Pickering**

*Contributor*

*PETS International*

Achieving unicorn status – when a company’s value reaches \$1 billion – is a dream for many businesses. The journey to this milestone is rarely linear, and each achiever has a unique story to tell. What lessons can be learned from two of the pet sector’s current unicorn companies?

## Long-term defensibility and discipline

To find out more about what it takes to achieve – and subsequently maintain – unicorn status in the pet sector, PETS International spoke to two of the industry’s current unicorn companies: ManyPets and Pet Circle. They both reached this milestone in 2021.

Based in Sydney, Australia, Pet Circle operates an online platform offering multi-category pet supplies including food, toys, medication, clothes, training and grooming accessories, as well as tech products and vet plans. A spokesperson for Pet Circle says that reaching unicorn status was the result of investing heavily in technology, logistics and customer experience long before the market demanded it.

“There wasn’t one defining moment – it was a series of strategic steps that compounded,” says Pet Circle’s representative. “Securing major supplier partnerships and proving we could lead in high-growth categories all reinforced that we were building a business with long-term defensibility. That discipline is what pushed us into unicorn territory.”

## Tech-driven innovation

ManyPets is also an online platform, although it specializes in providing pet insurance. Based in London, UK, it has a current valuation of \$2 billion (€1.74B). The focus is on bringing a customer-centric, digital-first approach that enables better pricing and user experiences.

Luisa Barile, Group CEO at ManyPets, says reaching unicorn status was an exciting milestone and a strong sign that its proposition was solving real problems for pet parents. However, she adds that she personally places greater value on the fundamental metrics of business health, rather than the value investors attribute to it at a specific point in time.

“For us, these [fundamentals] relate to three key areas: our insurtech and business credentials, our strong

[▶ SEE NEXT PAGE](#)

customer focus, and creating an environment for our people to thrive and grow their careers – all of which are underpinned by tech-driven innovation,” says Barile.

### Future-ready with a low cost base

“Investing in technology and being data-driven means we have a stable, well-managed loss ratio, low operating expenses and highly efficient processes – which in turn means we can focus more on innovating in ways to benefit our customers,” comments Barile.

While becoming a unicorn made her proud, Barile says she is even prouder that ManyPets delivered its first annual profit in the last financial year. For the year ending March 2025, the overarching ManyGroup reported a net profit of £6.25 million (\$8.31M/€7.24M).

This result, she explains, was driven by strategy. ManyPets invested in technology and built its own scalable proprietary insurance platform for policy administration. This infrastructure enables the business to keep its cost base low and be future-ready.

### Data-enhanced approach

One key differentiator is that ManyPets is entirely data driven and has a unified, accessible data warehouse. According to the Group CEO, this enables the company to leverage valuable insights – from understanding customer retention better to supporting its underwriting decisions.

“Where more traditional insurers would look at data in a siloed way, we take a much broader approach for richer insights,” she states.

### Agility to tackle challenges

The journey to reaching a \$1 billion valuation is unlikely to play out without its challenges. Barile says one of ManyPets’ biggest hurdles was ensuring that its operational backbone could grow in line with the expectations of a rapidly expanding customer base.

“Technology-driven innovation has always been part of our DNA, which we’ve maintained as we’ve grown, and this agility has been a core part of our success: improving efficiency in our operations, reducing our internal costs and supporting our journey to becoming profitable,” explains Barile.

### Rollout of AI initiatives

As recent examples of tech-driven innovation at ManyPets, she mentions the rollout of AI initiatives across the business. These range from streamlining claims handling, to building AI-driven predictive models to identify fraud and creating AI agents to answer employees’ queries based on internal policies.

“We have successfully moved from a fast-moving scale-up to a more mature, resilient organization by strengthening our leadership, professionalizing our processes and building more robust infrastructure – particularly in underwriting, claims and customer service,” adds Barile.

### Growth pressure is a signal to invest

Pet Circle understands the need to balance growth with infrastructure changes. Rather than viewing growth pressures as obstacles, it treated them as a signal to invest in a new digital platform, a national fulfilment network and automation across its operations.

“These opportunities pushed us to build a business with stronger systems, faster delivery and deeper capability across complex categories such as pharma and fresh food,” says Pet Circle’s spokesperson. “The result is a far more resilient and scalable organization, well positioned for the next phase of acceleration.”

### Springboard to maturity

Since reaching unicorn status, Pet Circle has matured into a scale-up with the operational strength, infrastructure and category breadth to be a leader in the Australian pet care market. The business now offers more than 17,000 SKUs, has built dedicated supply chain capabilities for chilled and fresh food, and its fulfilment network delivers next day to more than 80% of Australians.

The brand has also rebuilt its technology from the ground up, launching a new website, integrating AI to improve the customer experience, and introducing automation into warehouses to increase accuracy and speed.

### Investing in change

At ManyPets, becoming profitable meant major changes to its operations, including restructuring

**European investors have historically been more cautious about pet tech compared to their US and Asian counterparts.**

the company's claims and customer service teams and migrating policy administration to its proprietary insurance platform.

"We've also invested heavily in technology, allowing us to operate differently from traditional players," explains Barile. "Automation has been embedded across almost every layer of the business. More than 50% of our claims are now fully automated, streamlining the service for customers and freeing up our agents to spend time with customers on more complex claims."

**Three challenges to scaling**

Many startups in the pet sector will look to unicorns like ManyPets and Pet Circle as inspiration for their own goals. But in a challenging economy and investor environment, what is the state of play for pet businesses reaching for the stars?

Angela Jones is an equine vet and co-founder of Petscribers, a UK-based search engine for pet medication. She outlines three key challenges to scaling: a fragmented, slow-moving veterinary regulatory landscape and infrastructure; slow and cautious market adoption of new tech; and a European funding environment that undervalues pet health innovation.

"Veterinary practices are busy, risk-averse and often understaffed," says Jones. "Even when a solution is a clear improvement, decision-making can be slow. Adoption typically requires extensive relationship-building, onboarding and training. This can create long sales cycles that limit the rapid revenue growth often required for unicorn valuations."

**Investor caution in Europe**

Jones says that while achieving unicorn status requires access to large-scale capital, European investors have historically been more cautious about pet tech compared to their US and Asian counterparts. Many still see the sector as niche, despite its rapid [▶ SEE NEXT PAGE](#)

**INTERZOO 2026**  
**LET'S MEET AGAIN!**  
**HALL 7A | BOOTH 424**



Natural odour binding



400 % Absorption capacity



Anti-tracking formula

**THE ADVANTAGES**

- Very economical: 1 cat = 100 days of odor control
- With fresh aloe vera scent
- Easy to Clean formula: 35% lighter lumps
- Made in Germany





growth. This means fewer late-stage funding rounds and lower valuations, with European founders often facing more barriers at Series B and beyond.

“European investors prioritize profitability and capital efficiency, leading to conservative funding rounds,” she adds. “In contrast, US and Asian investors take bigger, riskier bets on scale, enabling companies to reach billion-dollar valuations quickly. This gap in capital appetite and market size is why European pet tech often exits below \$1 billion, despite strong fundamentals.”

#### The importance of trust and welfare

Axel Lagercrantz is CEO and co-founder of Pet Media Group, a network of online marketplaces that connects users with trusted breeders. He says that there are some real structural challenges to building unicorn scale companies in pet tech, including fragmented markets and regulation, and a high bar for trust and welfare.

“Long-term value hinges on trust: from breeders, from adopters and from regulators,” states Lagercrantz. “Implementing ID verification, secure payments and proactive welfare controls is expensive and often suppresses some short term volume, but it’s non-negotiable. The trade-off is that you grow more steadily, but perhaps not at the hyper growth trajectory of some other unicorns.”

Lagercrantz points out that “Europe alone is a patchwork of regulatory regimes, and the US adds

a second layer of state-by-state complexity”. He concludes: “Our view is that unicorn status [in the pet industry] will increasingly be reserved for companies that can prove both genuine impact on welfare and trust, and scalable, profitable economics.”

#### Maintaining unicorn status

Over the next five years, Pet Circle believes more businesses will reach unicorn scale in pet care. They will do so thanks to investing in logistics, personalization, automation and the ability to service complex categories at speed.

“But only those with robust infrastructure and a customer-first operating model will maintain that position,” Pet Circle’s spokesperson says. “Demand for premium pet care, fresh and therapeutic diets, and fast, reliable delivery will continue to grow. Companies that can deliver all three will lead the sector.”

Barile’s advice for European pet companies who are struggling to scale at pace is simple: “Stay close to your customers – ensure your proposition resonates fully with them, and make sure your infrastructure allows you to scale, test and adapt as needed,” she says. “A strong data capability is critical to this.” ♦

***To balance expansion with infrastructure changes, treat growth pressures as a signal to invest rather than as an obstacle.***

PLATINUM GERMANY

# PLATINUM invests in international expertise to drive next growth phase



The German premium pet food brand has assembled a seasoned leadership team to accelerate its international expansion and strengthen partnerships worldwide.

Founded more than 20 years ago, PLATINUM has built its reputation on natural, species-appropriate nutrition for dogs and cats. Now the company is strengthening its international team to advance its premium portfolio and grow its global footprint.

## Nourishing for a lifetime

At the heart of every PLATINUM recipe is fresh meat of human-grade quality, prepared using gentle methods that preserve valuable nutrients while enhancing digestibility. Combined with carefully selected plant ingredients and oils, the result is balanced, wholesome recipes – rich in meat, easy to digest and efficiently utilized by the body. Everything pets need to thrive and to feel cared for every day, for a lifetime.

## Building a global team

As the pet food market increasingly seeks true innovation and clear differentiation, PLATINUM is strengthening its distinctive position within high-quality pet nutrition. Rooted in the pet specialty channel, the company is expanding its international presence to accelerate growth and build strong long-term partnerships.

International sales are led by Joseph Obrovac, who joined PLATINUM two years ago as International Sales Director.

With more than 30 years of experience in the global pet food industry – including a previous role as International Sales Director EMEA at Champion Petfoods – he brings deep expertise. Working closely with Managing Director Sascha Galinski, Joseph has helped evolve sales structures and expand PLATINUM's presence across key markets.

## Strengthening the roster

To further support global expansion, Antonio Martone and Denis Rodriguez have joined as International Business Development Directors. Both previously worked alongside Joseph in the pet food industry and bring extensive knowledge of global markets and premium brand development.

PLATINUM has also reinforced its brand leadership. Most recently, Christin Gaspard joined the company. With strong experience in strategic brand management at Danone and HiPP, she leads the strategic direction and



international communication of the PLATINUM brand. Her mission is to ensure a consistent and meaningful brand presence across markets, aligned with evolving consumer expectations.

With this expanded leadership team, PLATINUM aims to further develop the unique category it has created in dog and cat nutrition and to remain a trusted long-term partner for distributors and pet specialty retailers worldwide.

For distribution opportunities worldwide, visit PLATINUM at Interzoo. ♦

**Interzoo: Hall 1, Booth 545**

**PLATINUM GmbH & Co. KG**  
*platinum.com*



**Matt Simister, Group CEO, Fressnapf | Maxi Zoo**

## “We will increase customer engagement and personalization through our loyalty program”

**Eight months into his appointment, the German pet retailer’s new leader unveils his agenda for targeted multichannel expansion.**



**David Palacios Rubio**  
*Editor-in-Chief*  
*GlobalPETS*

With more than three decades of experience in retail, Matt Simister stepped into the role of CEO at Fressnapf | Maxi Zoo bringing a wealth of expertise from his career at British supermarket giant Tesco.

Having led operations across the UK and Europe, including a nine-year stint as CEO of Tesco’s Central Europe division, he has now turned his attention to strengthening Fressnapf | Maxi Zoo’s footprint across 15 markets in Europe.

Germany, Italy, and France take center stage, thanks to their scale and growth potential, while Switzerland, Austria, Poland and Hungary are emerging as fast-growing hubs.

In a conversation with PETS International, Simister shares how Fressnapf | Maxi Zoo is leveraging data and loyalty programs to personalize offerings, adapting assortments to meet the evolving needs of dogs and cats, and strengthening key markets.

***You come from a supermarket background, where convenience drives purchases. How has your view of product assortment changed moving from mainstream retail to a pet specialty outlet?***

My background was very much focused on fresh and chilled foods, with the question always being: how do you give consumers the best food for themselves? Pet markets are different, of course, but that focus on understanding customers and what they truly want remains consistent.

Often, it’s the same customers, but their ‘mission’ is different. In grocery, customers are usually trying to

*“The single biggest priority is what we call customer centricity. That includes offering the right product range at the right value.”*

complete a full basket – they want to get everything they need and get out quickly. In pet specialty, even if it's the same people, their goal changes. They're looking to meet all of their pets' needs and they expect a bit more engagement with staff, and advice and guidance.

They might also want to drive up in the car and move a heavy bag of food or litter directly into their vehicle – something that isn't very convenient in a grocery store when they have other items to fit into their basket. So what's consistent is that laser focus on understanding customer needs and supporting them in the mission they're on that day.

Regarding assortment, we have the ability to stock a much broader range for customers, catering to all of their pets' needs.

*What have been your main priorities since stepping into the role?*

My initial focus over the first six months was to understand the business: meet the teams, see the competition in each market and recognize that every market is different. From there, my focus has shifted increasingly toward the customer.

We've been gathering more insight into what our customers truly want, thinking about how to develop customer propositions, and how to adapt both stores and online channels to better meet their needs.

The single biggest priority is what we call customer centricity. That includes offering the right product range at the right value. With inflation affecting many markets, customers are naturally focused on value. So delivering a broad range of quality products at competitive prices is essential.

Looking further ahead, we are also focused on how we engage with customers more deeply through initiatives like our rewards program, Friends. [▶ SEE NEXT PAGE](#)

**handtmann**  
Ideas for the future.



**Interzoo  
2026**

HALL 5 / STAND 5-207

**YOU NAME  
THE PRODUCT.  
WE PROCESS IT.**

Explore our inspiring concepts at Interzoo 2026! From premium treats to innovative pet nutrition – our smart and connective technologies for portioning, forming, dosing, and automation set new standards. Visit us and help shape the future of pet food!

[▶ HANDTMANN.COM/PETFOOD](https://www.handtmann.com/petfood) #WEAREHANDTMANN

OUR *Favourite Family* RECIPE

OUR *Favourite Family* RECIPE

**BRONCO**  
ALWAYS GOOD!



Simple Origins  
**OVEN-BAKED**  
FORMULA DOG FOOD



COUNTRY TRADITIONS  
**BEEF & BARLEY**

NET WT  
1.5KG



COMPLETE & BALANCED

**Single Meat Protein Diet**  
enhanced with Ocean Fish Oil



100%  
REAL MEAT



NUTRITIOUS  
WHOLESOME GRAINS



NO ARTIFICIAL  
PRESERVATIVES



NO ARTIFICIAL  
COLOURS



NZ GARDEN  
SUPERFOODS BLEND



We welcome inquiries from international distributors and retail partners at [enquiry@broncopetfood.com](mailto:enquiry@broncopetfood.com).



broncopetfood

**COMPLETE & BALANCED NUTRITION**

In the medium term, this means improving our retail operations, becoming more sophisticated in personalization, optimizing pricing and ultimately providing more value in ways that matter most to our customers.

#### **How will this translate into specific action points?**

When it comes to loyalty and data, we're currently capturing information from roughly half of our customer base. The first step in our loyalty campaign is to increase customer engagement – what I'd call the acquisition phase.

For example, at Arcaplanet, we capture 90% of customer spend, which shows the potential to significantly increase acquisition for our Friends program. Once we grow that base, we can increasingly personalize and optimize the benefits we offer, creating more value for our customers.

#### **How has Fressnapf | Maxi Zoo navigated recent market challenges?**

Last year the market was fairly flat. As a result, we focused on becoming more cost-efficient and managing the post-inflationary slowdown. When I arrived, I saw an opportunity to be more proactive in driving top-line growth.

I'm pleased to see that trading picked up over Christmas and that momentum has carried into the new year. Retail businesses thrive when they satisfy customers and grow, and that's exactly what we're seeing. We're expanding through new stores, growing our online channel and driving performance through our core estate. That, in turn, boosts volumes for suppliers, making Fressnapf | Maxi Zoo not only Europe's largest pet specialist but also a fast-growing and reliable partner.

#### **What are the main strategic priorities in your key markets, and how does Germany influence the group's overall approach?**

Germany remains our largest and most important market, it's the heart of the business and home to our headquarters.

That said, we're still expanding and we continue to open around 20 new stores each year. At the same time, we're investing significantly in refreshing



our existing store base. Given the company's long history in Germany, parts of the estate are older, so modernization is a key focus. In contrast, newer markets like France, Poland and Italy naturally see more new store openings.

Germany is also where we have our most advanced digital operations. It's our strongest online market and a leader for our omnichannel strategy, shaping how we think about integrating physical and digital retail across the group.

That said, Germany is just as competitive as any other market. Grocers are increasingly targeting the pet category, while players like Zooplus and Amazon are strong, alongside DIY stores and garden centers. Competition is intensifying across the board.

So the priority now is not just expansion, it's about becoming a better retailer. That means improving category management, optimizing stock flow, increasing store productivity and strengthening our processes and systems. Ultimately, it's about delivering a better experience for customers and building a more robust foundation for future growth.

#### **You opened a new sourcing hub in Hong Kong in November 2025. How has that developed in the months since?**

It's going very well and we're really excited about the opportunities it brings.

It gives us much closer proximity to key sourcing markets, particularly for non-food products and snacks. That allows us to be faster – reducing lead times, strengthening our design capabilities and staying closer to emerging trends.

▶ SEE NEXT PAGE

# WE CARE ABOUT YOUR BRAND



Natural recipes

Scalable production

Sustainable packaging solutions



Also, other sizes availables



Tins: formats from 70g to 400g



Stews



Fillets



Toppers

Many more textures and product concepts in our portfolio



Visit us! Booth: 3A-308

SPAIN | [petsselect.eu](http://petsselect.eu)

***“Our colleagues, supported by trusted and exclusive brands, deliver veterinary advice and personalized help that no other channel can match.”***

We also see strong potential to expand our exclusive brands, especially in non-food. While we already have a solid foundation in exclusive food brands, and some presence in non-food, this move opens up new opportunities – particularly in accessories and lifestyle products.

Looking ahead, broader shifts in pet ownership, combined with the capabilities we’re building in Asia and the expansion of our urban store formats, all point toward continued growth in non-food categories.

#### ***You hired a new Chief Product Officer...***

Mikko Forsström is a very experienced European retailer, having led commercial operations in several markets and managed group buying as well.

Having come from the commercial world myself, I think we share the same perspective: commercial success is fundamentally about developing categories that meet evolving customer needs and grow the business, while also managing supply chains and buying effectively to deliver real value.

Mikko brings deep experience on both the buying and selling sides, and he understands how to balance centralized strategy with the needs of national operations. I’m very optimistic that, under his guidance, our product offering will improve significantly in the coming years.

#### ***Which categories are you prioritizing based on consumer trends?***

One of the things I love about moving from grocery to pet specialty is that, after covering 30+ categories in my career, I can now focus on a smaller number and go much deeper.

At Fressnapf | Maxi Zoo, the dog category is our core. There are important shifts happening in the population – for instance, we’ll see more small dogs – so it’s crucial to protect the core of the business while

adapting to these changes. Across both cats and dogs, many ‘Covid pets’ are aging, which means nutrition, preventative healthcare and other products tailored to older pets are becoming increasingly important.

Cat is another key opportunity. While our cat business is significant, penetration is smaller compared with dogs. Understanding what cat owners want and addressing their specific needs gives us a major growth potential.

There are also lessons we bring from grocery retail. Beyond driving sales through value and product differentiation, we’re looking at seasonality and trading opportunities – things like Christmas, Valentine’s Day or even pets’ birthdays. Our customers are highly engaged, and there’s room to be more proactive in how we present these opportunities and deliver incremental sales.

#### ***What share of your business currently comes from online sales?***

At the moment, online accounts for around 12% of the business. It’s very likely that this share will increase in the coming years.

#### ***What is Fressnapf | Maxi Zoo’s strategy to ensure a strong presence online?***

Online is a fast-growing part of the market, with DTC and q-commerce trends shaping customer expectations. This is an area where we need to be proactive.

We have a strong digital platform, supported by our network of almost 3,000 stores, which gives us a unique advantage in meeting our [▶ SEE NEXT PAGE](#)



digital customers' needs. Our online business is solid, particularly in Germany and Italy, but across other countries there are clear opportunities to improve things like assortment, pricing and delivery promise.

The market is growing, and the opportunity online may even exceed what we currently see in stores. That's why we're putting increased focus on online, while also integrating our physical and digital capabilities to create a seamless omnichannel experience that meets customer expectations.

#### ***How is the Nörvenich fulfillment center helping you scale online?***

We've made a significant investment, and we're just starting to fully utilize its potential. It's a fantastic operation that gives us the capacity and capability to grow rapidly online.

But it's not just about fulfillment. Nörvenich also enables us to deliver better value through click-and-collect. Customers can pick up products at stores when it suits them, leveraging both our distribution and store networks. Finding the right balance between home delivery and click-and-collect will be a key focus in the coming years, allowing us to optimize both convenience and value for our customers.

#### ***With your growing online capabilities, how do you envision the balance between online and in-store sales evolving over the next few years?***

It's very likely that online participation will grow, given both market trends and our expanding capabilities. We'll track that growth, of course, but my main focus is on satisfying more customers.

Whether they shop primarily in stores, online or a mix of both doesn't matter as much. I care more about customer lifetime value than the specific channel they use. Naturally, we'll optimize our channels and make sure we leverage our assets to make each visit, physical or digital, more efficient and valuable for customers.

#### ***Where do you focus your efforts when it comes to in-store services?***

We do offer various services across our stores and countries, but to be honest, that's not my primary focus. My main priority is the core retail disciplines – turning



customer insights into compelling propositions, driving value, optimizing our range and developing strong health offerings.

Managing category dynamics, like the evolving needs of dogs and cats, is also central. I'm really energized by what we can achieve with space, merchandising and stock flow, and ensuring our core retail operations are efficient while enabling our colleagues to deliver the excellent service Fressnapf | Maxi Zoo is known for.

That's a key competitive advantage. Online-only players can't provide human engagement, and grocers are limited in the support they can offer during busy trips. Our colleagues, supported by trusted and exclusive brands, deliver veterinary advice and personalized help that no other channel can match.

Going forward, I want to make our operations and processes even more efficient so colleagues can spend more time with customers, both in-store and online. That combination of service and retail excellence is what sets us apart in every market.

#### ***Are there plans for Fressnapf | Maxi Zoo to expand into new markets?***

Founder Torsten Toeller has always loved the industry and thinking about the next generation of opportunities across Europe and beyond, so there are always ideas.

That said, our main focus will be on growing and consolidating where we are today. We're already in 15 markets, and the priority is to strengthen our position in those rather than rushing into new territories. ♦

Logical Brands, Inc. USA

# Playology<sup>®</sup>: science-backed innovation

At the core of Playology is a simple but powerful belief: scent and instinct drive longer-lasting engagement.



## Playology

Playology partners with leading institutions including the Purdue University College of Veterinary Medicine to understand how scent disperses through materials and how pets respond to sensory cues.

The result is a product line engineered for enriched play and extended engagement. Already a top 10 brand in the US across both dog and cat, with strong growth across Europe, Playology delivers meaningful innovation retailers can trust for strong sell-through.



## Why it stands apart

- *Science first:* Products are built on behavioral research, not trends. Science drives the entire portfolio.
- *Real innovation:* A research-driven pipeline delivers meaningful updates and true newness that fuels repeat purchase.
- *Retailer growth:* Built for sell-through, supported by marketing tools and strongly resonating with Gen Z and millennial shoppers.

## Grrreen<sup>®</sup>: Sustainability without compromise

Grrreen brings environmentally responsible solutions to pet hardlines. Made using 100% recycled water bottles (rPET), it transforms waste into durable, engaging toys.

## Hound2O<sup>®</sup>: Built for outdoor play

Hound2O taps into the growing active lifestyle trend in pet ownership. Focused on functional outdoor toys and accessories at value-driven price points, the brand delivers practical innovation designed for adventure.

## Licensed powerhouses

Logical Brands also offers high-impact licenses including SpongeBob



SquarePants<sup>®</sup>, Yellowstone<sup>®</sup>, Garfield<sup>®</sup>, and Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles<sup>®</sup>.

These properties offer instant recognition and cross-generational appeal, from nostalgic millennial shoppers to family households.

## Meet Playology at Interzoo!

Discover everything Logical Brands has to offer at Interzoo in Nuremberg this May, where it will showcase the innovation that won the Fressnapf Innovation Award in October 2025.

For questions or to set an appointment at Interzoo, email Petra Honeck at [phoneck@logical-brands.com](mailto:phoneck@logical-brands.com) ♦

**Interzoo: Hall 5, Booth 330**

**Logical Brands, Inc.**  
[logical-brands.com](http://logical-brands.com)



**Josera petfood** GERMANY  
**The first B2P company at Interzoo 2026**

Josera petfood presents itself at Interzoo as a pioneer and innovation driver. As the first B2P (Business to Pets, Partners, Planet) company, Josera rethinks pet nutrition holistically.

**Business to Pets**

Products tailored to pets' needs, with innovative recipes, functional snacks and products designed to address specific challenges. Experts provide on-site advice and practical insights.

**Business to Partners**

Customized concepts and digital tools for retailers and the industry, as part of ERBACHER the food family.

**Business to Planet**

A commitment to responsible, future-oriented action.

Interzoo: Hall 1, Booth 338

**Josera petfood GmbH**  
 kundenbetreuung@josera.de  
 josera.com



**Bama** ITALY  
**Hula Dog: the new Bama Pet game**

All mammals love to play, not just humans.

Hula Dog is a new non-toxic dog toy, 100% made in Italy, which floats, bounces and rolls.

As suggested by veterinarians, the benefits of playing are numerous: muscle stimulation, strengthening the heart and lungs, developing coordination and promoting mental wellbeing to reduce stress and anger.

Ideal for stimulating your dog's intelligence: insert tasty treats into the holes and hide the toy so your dog activates their sense of smell to search for it.

Perfect for summer at the beach or river because it floats!

Available in two sizes: 15 x 3cm and 19 x 3cm.

Interzoo: Hall 3A, Booth 112

**BAMA SRL**  
 export@bamagroup.com  
 bamagroup.com





**BSM Partners** UNITED STATES  
**Your complete pet industry partner**

BSM Partners is the world's largest pet industry consulting firm, quietly shaping the products, strategies and standards behind thousands of new product launches each year.

Running the gamut of formats and formulations, their team of subject matter experts is guiding the future of pet nutrition.

With more than 500 years of cumulative expertise spanning disciplines, industries and global markets, BSM Partners thrives in complexity and revels in solving problems that make others feel stuck.

Their team turns uncertainty into actionable, end-to-end solutions that move ideas from concept to commercialization with precision and speed.

Come meet the team at Interzoo and discover what's possible when the right minds are behind your next move.

Interzoo: Hall 7, Booth 613A

**BSM Partners, LLC**  
 sales@bsmpartners.net  
 bsmpartners.net



**Kit Cat International** SINGAPORE  
**Daily wellness made easy: Kit Cat Daily Supplement Gel in single-serve sachets**

Kit Cat Daily Supplement Gel is a convenient, individually packed daily supplement designed to support your cat's overall health at every life stage.

Each serving comes in a hygienic single-use sachet, neatly packed in an eco-friendly paper tub for freshness and easy storage.

Formulated with targeted functional benefits, the range includes Pre + Probiotics, Daily Vitamin, Kidney Guard, Dental Care and Lysine Care. The smooth, palatable gel can be fed directly, mixed with food or used as a bonding treat.

Precisely portioned to avoid overfeeding and mess, Kit Cat Supplement Gel makes daily supplementation simple, effective and stress-free for modern pet parents.

Interzoo: Hall 7, Booth 375

**Kit Cat International Pte Ltd**  
 info@kitcat.com.sg  
 kitcat.com.sg





# Tracking key trends in the pet accessories market

A new survey finds that most pet parents buy these kinds of items a few times a year, with spending shaped by changing budgets and shifting shopping habits.



**Thaís Matos**  
Senior Business Reporter  
GlobalPETS

The accessories category has now become a key expense for many owners, so they want to ensure quality items that are safe for their pets. And online marketplaces – including major e-commerce platforms and discount sites – have become the primary purchasing channel.

## Tracking regional variation

A new survey by Yummypets, powered by Loop, and PETS International among 2,708 pet owners in Australia, Brazil, Canada, France, Mexico, the UK and the US shows that most consumers purchase accessories a few times a year. Their spending tends to be in the middle range, although some pet owners do make higher-priced purchases.

Beyond reporting on all the general trends, the data also highlights the specifics of the purchasing journey in these seven countries, uncovering some interesting similarities as well as differences.

## Top dog accessories

Toys were the most commonly purchased accessory among both dog and cat owners over the past 12 months. While the overall share was similar, slightly more owners bought toys for their dogs (44%) than they did for their cats (40%).

Other accessories, however, show quite distinct variations depending on the type of pet. Among dog owners, around one in three respondents (36%) gave leashes, collars and harnesses as the second most purchased accessory. Items like these were mentioned more among respondents in Mexico (45%) and Australia (43%) compared to other pet owners surveyed.

Bedding items such as blankets and beds (32%), and grooming apparel including brushes and combs (31%) completed the top four most purchased accessories for dog owners, with the latter found to be more popular in Brazil (40%) and Mexico (39%).

## Items for felines

For cats, on the other hand, there were more purchases of bowls and feeding accessories (31%),



scratchers (28%) and grooming items, especially brushes and nail cutters (24%). A key finding for the global cat accessories market was the particularly high level of activity in the US.

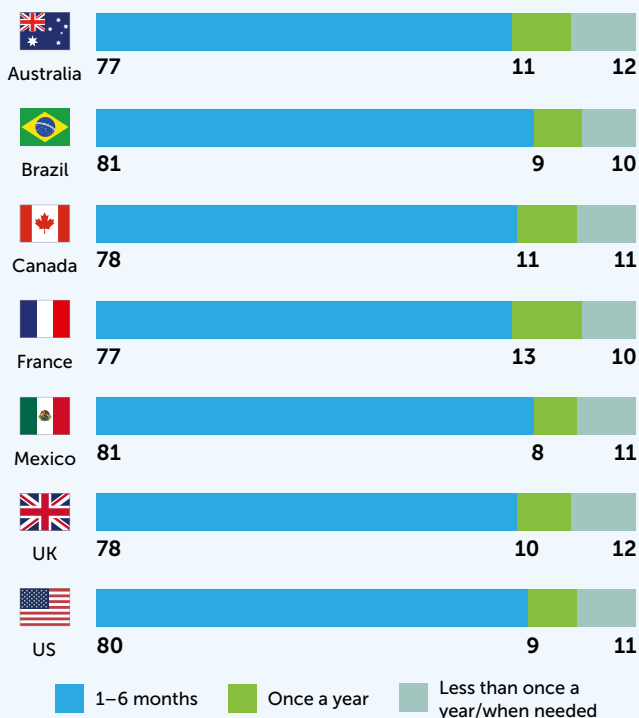
Cat owners in the US surpass the global average purchasing rates in no less than six categories. This includes toys (50%), scratchers (36%), cat trees and climbing furniture (28%), and bedding items (26%). The latter also saw a notable uptake in the UK (27%).

### Deciding factors

There are two factors that most influence the choice of accessories. The first is pet safety, mentioned by 72% of owners overall, and particularly significant in Brazil (78%), France and the UK (both at 76%), and Canada (75%).

Respondents also consider product quality and durability very important (71%) – US consumers even more so (76%). Pet parents also look at price when choosing a product (60%), and price sensitivity is slightly higher in Brazil (65%) and Australia (64%), followed by the US and Canada at 63%. [▶ SEE NEXT PAGE](#)

### 'How often do you buy pet accessories?' (in %)



Source: Yummypets-PETS International, February 2026, (n=2,708)



- › Nutraceuticals
- › Hygiene products
- › Insecticides and repellents
- › Education



Other product characteristics rank lower among owner priorities, such as design or aesthetics (23%), reviews and ratings (23%), sustainability or eco-friendly materials (17%) and brand reputation (9%). The survey allowed each respondent to choose the three aspects that matter most to them.

Although brand is the lowest priority when choosing an accessory, more than half of the pet owners (51%) say they buy a mix of branded and generic items. But only 13% opt for mostly branded products, while 5% prefer mostly unbranded. Almost a third (31%) declare no preference in that regard.

### Frequent vs infrequent shoppers

Overall, respondents to the Yummypets and PETS International survey see accessories as occasional buys, which is reflected in how infrequently they purchase them.

That said, there are still a significant number of pet owners (41%) who regard these items as essential and shop for them several times a year. While there's no major difference between countries overall, France and Mexico do have a slightly higher group (44%) in this category.

Frequent shoppers are the second largest group, as 38% of respondents make purchases more than once every three months. This behavior is more frequent in Brazil and Canada (both at 41%), and less frequent in France, where just one in three pet owners shop for accessories more often during the year.

Purchasing accessories just once a year is the case among 10% of the respondents surveyed. Another 3% do this even less than once a year. And an additional 8% say they make a purchase only when replacement is absolutely necessary.

### Gifts for special occasions

The data reflects how pet parents around the world view accessory purchasing, as 51% of them say they think of these items as 'an occasional treat' for their pet. That is even more the case in France (59%), as well as Brazil and Mexico (both at 56%).

On the other hand, 44% of the respondents see pet accessories as 'a needs-based purchase', with even more owners stating this in Australia (57%), and in Canada and the UK (50%). An interesting marketing opportunity for the industry could be the 5% of pet owners who classify this kind of item as a 'special occasion purchase'.

## Spending patterns

When it comes to yearly spending, the majority of respondents (64%) fall within the middle range. The biggest group (35%) indicates spending between \$30-\$75 (€26-€65) per year on accessories. A similar percentage (29%) reserves higher amounts for these purchases, between \$75-\$150 (€65-€131).

The data also shows a positive trend: globally, more respondents are spending at the higher than at the lower end. As much as 14% of pet parents say they spend \$150-\$300 (€131-€262), with one in 10 purchasing more than \$300 (€262) worth of accessories a year for their furry friends. At the other end of the scale are those spending less than \$30 (€26) – 13% of all respondents globally.

Most of the countries in the survey follow the same spending pattern, particularly Brazil, France, Mexico and the UK. The US and Australia have the highest percentages of high spenders, while Canada has the largest share of owners spending at the low end.

*The US and Australia have the highest percentages of high spenders, while Canada has the largest share of owners spending at the low end.*

## Budget allocation

Apart from absolute figures, the survey reveals how much of the owner's pet care budget (which includes nutrition, grooming, veterinary care and other needs) is dedicated to accessories and enrichment products. For almost half of the pet owners (49%), this category represents 10-25% of their average spending on pet care. In Mexico, more owners budget this amount (56%).

One in four owners dedicate less than 10% of their budget to these products, especially in Brazil (34%) and France (28%). Fewer than one in five respondents (17%) allocate 26-50% of their pet care budget to accessory purchases, while 7% reserve more than 51% for this category.

▶ SEE NEXT PAGE



# RELIABLE SOLUTIONS FOR FISH HEALTH IN AQUARIUMS AND PONDS

- ✓ Proven formulations for decades
- ✓ Practical solutions for hobbyists

- ✓ Developed for aquatic retailers
- ✓ Stable demand in the market



Widely applicable for common diseases, fast turnover due to high market demand



Targeted solution for white spot disease, clear and easy to recommend



Supports vitality and the immune system, complementary product with additional sales potential

# 16 Years of Play. The Party is Just Getting Started.

Introducing the All-New Party Animal Collection

Join the Party  
at Interzoo  
Hall 7 Booth  
#7-331



100% Machine Washable



Certified Non-Toxic



Durable by Design



Interactive Features



PlanetFill® Stuffing  
from Recycled Bottles

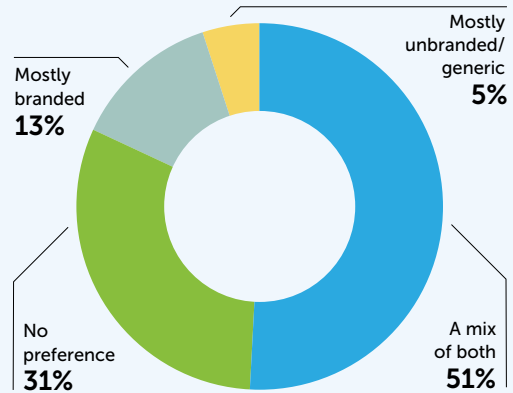
play BY play pet  
BRANDS

sales@playpetbrands.com | www.playpetbrands.com





## Preference for branded vs generic accessories



Source: Yummypets-PETS International, February 2026, (n=2,708)

### Popular marketplaces

Marketplaces such as Amazon are central to pet accessory purchases, with two-thirds of respondents (66%) reporting that they usually shop there. Reliance is highest in the US (85%) and Mexico (73%), while in France (52%) this channel still has potential.

The popularity of e-commerce players also extends to discount marketplaces based in Asia (Temu, AliExpress and Shopee) and the US (Wish). These channels are used by 30% of the survey respondents, highlighting the growing role of lower-cost online platforms in the category.

Brazilians stand out with almost twice as many owners (55%) opting for these sites than the global average. On the other side, the penetration of this channel among pet parents in the US, Canada and France is only around 20%.

### Amazon is increasingly important

Eight out of 10 respondents stated that they had already purchased these types of products from Amazon. Overall, 28% said they had increased their purchases on the platform in the past 12 months, indicating that it can become more important to them over time.

Frequency of purchase differs tremendously, depending on the country. Mexican, US and UK pet parents make

up the majority of regular buyers. At the other end of the scale are the larger numbers of Brazilians and Australians who have never bought from Amazon.

Looking at the numbers of times that purchases are made on this platform, there are some countries that stand out. While 28% of the respondents report six times or more, almost one in four Canadian (36%) and UK (38%) pet owners have done so, with US buyers on top, at 47%.

### Discounter potential

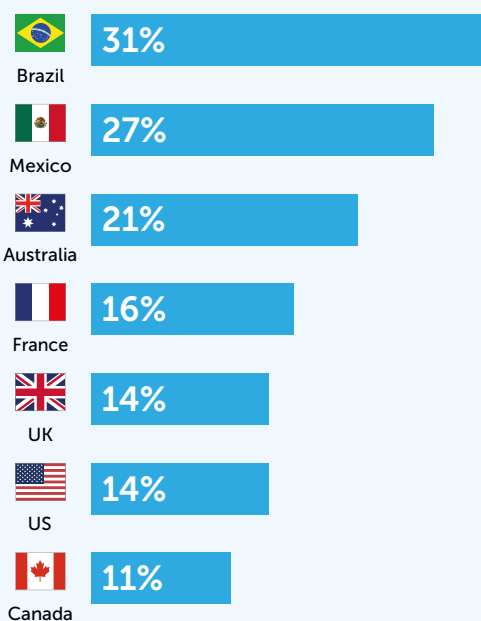
Unlike Amazon, which is already well-established for regular accessory purchases, discount marketplaces seem to be on the rise. Among the respondents, the distribution between those who have and haven't bought from this type of channel is exactly the same: 50/50. But the nuances in the responses give hints about how this may evolve.

The findings reveal that 14% of those who have never bought from one of these marketplaces say they are aware of the possibility, but don't trust them. Another 11% say they have never done so, but are willing to try.

Meanwhile, 25% simply said "no" to the question, and didn't point to a reason why they wouldn't buy there or for their unwillingness to change their minds.

► SEE NEXT PAGE

## Pet owners strongly or very strongly influenced by social media when buying accessories



Source: Yummypets-PETS International, February 2026, (n=2,708)

Of the respondents who have bought on discount marketplaces, most (26%) say they did so occasionally. Next come those who have tried this once (13%) and, finally, the regular shoppers (11%). There is a marked difference between the countries surveyed.

Canada has the highest share of respondents (31%) who simply haven't ever bought from these platforms. The US has both a higher percentage of owners who are willing to try (16%) and those who don't trust them (22%). Meanwhile, the French share the same level of distrust as the Americans (22%).

Brazil, on the other hand, leads both the occasional (38%) and regular (20%) shopper segments. And Mexico has the highest share of respondents who have tried discount marketplaces only once (19%). Australia and the UK display purchasing behavior at discounters similar to the average.

Accessory purchasing through these channels is, in general, quite irregular, perhaps representing experimentation. Most pet owners had purchased

something from one of these marketplaces only a few times (2-5). Just 13% of them did so more frequently, 9% of which reported several times (6-10) and 4% many times (more than 10).

### Rationale for buying online

Shoppers who choose to buy accessories online instead of in physical stores do so primarily because of lower prices, which is a reality for 60% of respondents. There are more consumers interested in cheaper items in Brazil, Australia, Canada and the US.

After that, two reasons were the most relevant for the same number of consumers (52%): the appeal of convenience and home delivery, as well as promotions and discounts. While convenience was more often a reason for Canadians and Americans, discounts were much more important for Brazilians. Driven primarily by responses from French owners (52%), the fourth reason for buying online was a wider product assortment (41% overall).

At the other end of the scale, logically, it is higher prices, inconvenient location or opening hours, a limited assortment and simply better online alternatives that were given as the main reasons that prevent consumers from buying more pet accessories in physical pet stores.

### Traditional retail

While online dominates, specialist stores do retain an important part of the sales in the category. More than half (54%) of respondents to the survey opt for large pet retail chains. A further 49% go to independent pet stores when they need accessories for their pets.

Looking at it from a regional perspective, while large chains are a lot more popular in Australia (69%) and the US (63%), Brazilians and Canadians are the ones who most frequently visit independent pet shops (60% and 57% respectively).

Supermarkets are the fourth most important retail channel for the category, mentioned by four in 10 owners (41%). They are mainly popular in Mexico (61%) and the UK (55%). The number of Canadians who buy accessories in a supermarket (17%) is much lower than the average. And although only mentioned by 11%

of respondents overall, hardware and garden stores are significantly more popular in France, with 27% of the pet owners shopping for accessories there.

### Spending outlook

Overall, 69% of the respondents expect to maintain their spending on accessories over the next 12 months. This tendency is stronger among French and Canadian owners, with more than 75% of respondents from both countries saying this was their intention.

Those who expect to buy more next year are more numerous than those saying they'll spend less, as roughly one in five pet parents (19%) say they'll probably spend more in the future, while just 5% plan to reduce their spending on accessories. Brazilian owners (31%), lead on the expected increase in expenses regarding accessories, followed by Australians (22%) and Mexicans plus Americans, both at 21%.

The pet owners were asked whether different sources of information have an effect on what they buy. In general,

it's family and friends who have the most influence, with 40% saying this is the case, followed by in-store information and staff (34%) and social media (20%). Just 14% say that traditional advertising has a strong or very strong effect.

### Influences on purchasing decisions

There are interesting regional differences. In Brazil and Mexico, there's even more influence from family and friends (47%) plus information received in-store (40% and 47%). The effect of social media is also greater in these two countries, at 31% in Brazil and 27% in Mexico. Canadians seem to be the least influenced by both traditional advertising, at just 7%, and social media (11%).

As the accessory market develops and smart products are increasingly on offer, consumers may well look for even more expert advice before purchasing. How they get this information, and the demographic differences between the sources used, will continue to be a useful part of future consumer research. ♦



knovus

**READY TO SORT YOUR PET FOOD  
FASTER AND SMARTER?**

Meet the belt sorter that delivers superior throughput and industry-leading accuracy



VISIT OUR  
WEBSITE

**INNOVATIVE  
SORTING SOLUTIONS  
FOR DRY PET FOOD**

[WWW.OPTIMUM-SORTING.COM](http://WWW.OPTIMUM-SORTING.COM)



# Sanicat®

— Nature at heart —



## ESSENTIAL OILS ODOUR CONTROL

THE 1ST ULTRA CLUMPING  
LITTER WITH ESSENTIAL OILS  
ODOUR CONTROL



INTERESTED?  
SCAN HERE

VISIT AS AT INTERZOO:  
HALL 4, STAND 122

# Shaping the future of pet care through industrial expertise

A cat litter showcase that illustrates the power of vertically integrated industrial models in modern pet care.



**José Barco**  
*Chief Sales & Marketing Officer*  
Tolsa Pet Care  
[tolsa.com](http://tolsa.com)

The industry is rapidly evolving, bringing higher standards for product performance, safety, sustainability and supply reliability across the value chain. For manufacturers and retailers, success increasingly depends on combining technical knowledge with long-term operational responsibility.

## The evolution of cat litter

The cat litter category illustrates this evolution perfectly. Once a basic hygiene item, it's now a performance-driven sector where absorption, particle structure, odor control and ease of use dictate consumer satisfaction and repeat purchases.

With environmental considerations like responsible sourcing and sustainable packaging taking center stage, vertically integrated industrial models are more important than ever. Controlling raw materials, processing and formulation guarantees consistent quality, traceability and regulatory confidence.

## Industrial expertise in practice

This comprehensive approach has long underpinned Tolsa Pet Care. Founded in 1957, the company has evolved from its Spanish mining origins into a global industrial group developing over 250 applications. Today, its pet care division is built on more than 65 years of expertise in hygiene and cat litter solutions.

Tolsa operates a fully integrated value chain, from Green Mining certified mineral sourcing to finished

products. This industrial expertise now extends to plant-based alternatives, reflecting a commitment to sustainable innovation. The company's operations span Europe, the Americas and Africa, supporting a market presence in more than 95 countries.

## Validating consumer innovation

To address diverse market needs, Tolsa's portfolio includes brands like Sanicat, Kittyfriend, Citycat and Sanilove. Driven by continuous investment in R&D, process optimization and industrial partnerships, their expertise was recently validated by two major awards for the Sanicat Essential Oils range.

In France, the range was named Innovative Product of the Year by PromoJardin Promoanimal. Additionally, it won the Trofeo del Hogar & Top Innovation from Top Mascotas, which was based on real-life testing by cat owners evaluating odor control, ease of use and effectiveness.

The range has six products: two unscented options delivering up to 50 days of hygiene and four scented variants offering up to 60 days. It combines an ultra-clumping mineral formula with essential oils designed to neutralize odors at a molecular level.

All products are packaged in FSC-certified materials, aligning performance-driven innovation with modern sustainability expectations.

These recognitions illustrate how directly controlling the value chain from mine to market allows industrial material expertise to translate into consumer-validated innovation, reinforcing Tolsa's role as a reliable long-term partner shaping the future of pet care. ◆



# PET FAIR ASIA 2026

August 19-23, 2026 | Shanghai, China



Asia's Leading International Hub  
for the Pet Industry



## Pet Fair Asia 2026 – Shaping the Future of the Asian Pet Industry

Pet Fair Asia is the continent’s leading international hub for the pet industry, providing a premier platform for innovation, trade, and global connections. In 2026, the show will expand to a record **320,000 sqm**, featuring over **2,600 exhibitors** spanning the full spectrum of the pet industry and its supply chain.

The event expects to welcome more than **130,000 professional visitors** from over **90 countries**, with international attendance continuing to grow, highlighting China’s rising influence in the global pet market. Beyond traditional markets like South Korea and Japan, emerging regions including India, Southeast Asia, the Middle East, and South America are increasingly represented, making Pet Fair Asia a true global meeting point for the industry.

The fair remains the go-to stage for new product and brand launches across Asia-Pacific. While core categories such as food, supplies, and healthcare remain strong, emerging trends stand out, including functional nutrition, fresh pet diets, smart technologies, fashion, travel solutions, and

human-pet co-living. These innovations not only showcase the sector’s diversity but also its ability to intersect with adjacent industries, creating new business opportunities and shaping consumer lifestyles.

Pet Fair Asia is the flagship event of the Pet Fair Network, which includes also Pet Fair Southeast Asia in Bangkok (28–30 October 2026), Pet Fair South China in Guangzhou (11–13 December 2026), and Pet Fair Beijing (11-13 March 2027). Together, these shows continue to support international trade and Asia’s booming pet markets.

 [en.petfairasia.com](http://en.petfairasia.com)

 [pfa@globusevents.com](mailto:pfa@globusevents.com)

**#petfairasia**



**Register here**



# Stability defines an evolving pet landscape



**Ownership levels remain high while younger consumers drive the latest adoption trends and reshape attitudes toward health, sustainability and spending.**



**Elien Van Stichel**  
*Secretary General*  
*Belgian Pet Food Association (BEPEFA)*

A 2025 study provides a structured overview of Belgian pet ownership levels, purchasing behavior and consumer attitudes. The results confirm that this Western European nation of around 11.8 million people has a mature and stable pet market. Household penetration remains high and the emotional attachment to pets is significant.

## Ownership levels up since pandemic

Last year, 58% of Belgian households said they owned at least one pet. This represents a clear increase compared to 2021, when 52% of households indicated pet ownership.

This is one of the main conclusions of a survey conducted by the Belgian Pet Food Association (BEPEFA) and market research agency iVOX among 1,500 adults and is representative in terms of language, gender, age and education.

Since 2023, ownership levels have stabilized (59% in 2023, 58% in both 2024 and 2025), suggesting that the market has consolidated at a structurally higher level following the pandemic period.

## Demographic breakdown

Pet ownership varies across demographic groups. Among respondents under 34 years of age, 73% say they have a pet, compared to 39% among people aged 55 and over.

French-speaking respondents report higher pet ownership rates than Flemish-speaking owners – 65% vs 52%. These differences illustrate how generational and regional dynamics continue to shape the Belgian pet landscape.

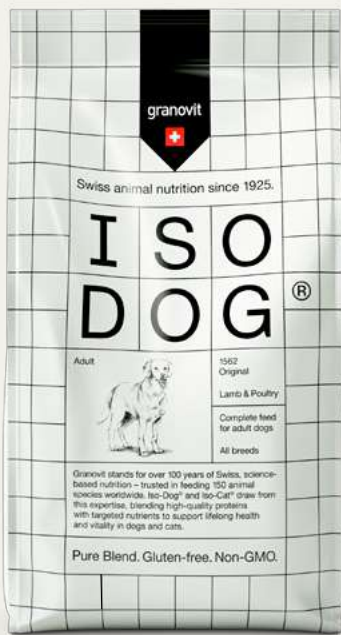
Pet-owning households have an average of 3.1 companion animals. Cats and dogs remain the most popular: 33% of respondents own at least one cat – more women than men – and 28% own at least one dog. Ownership levels for these categories have remained relatively stable in recent years.

[▶ SEE NEXT PAGE](#)

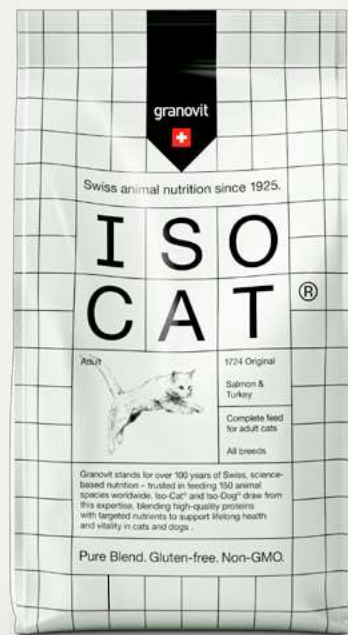
granovit



Swiss animal nutrition since 1925.



[iso-dog.com](http://iso-dog.com)



[iso-cat.com](http://iso-cat.com)

Visit us at Interzoo:  
Hall 5  
Stand 5-142

### Significant part of the household

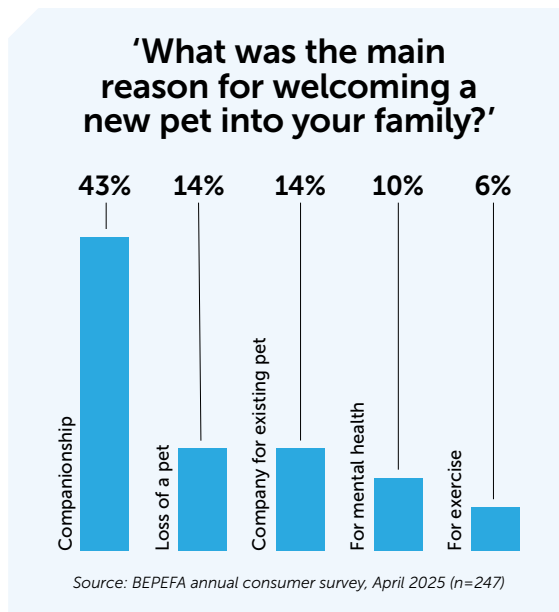
For the first time, the 2025 survey measured the perceived importance of pets in daily life. Among pet owners, 25% describe their pet as 'the most important' part of their life or family life, while 45% describe them as 'very important'. In total, 70% of the owners attribute a very high level of importance to their pet.

This strong emotional dimension is consistent across the country, with French-speaking respondents reporting slightly higher levels of importance. The data confirms the central role pets play within Belgian families and provides context for the purchasing and spending behavior observed elsewhere in the study.

### Reasons for pet adoption

Between March 2024 and March 2025, 17% of Belgian households welcomed a new pet. The proportion is significantly higher among younger respondents – 30% among those aged under 34 – and lower among older respondents, at 7% of people aged 55 and over.

Cats and dogs account for the majority of newly acquired pets. The primary reason for welcoming a new pet remains companionship for family members (43%). Other frequently cited reasons include coping with the loss of a previous pet (14%) and providing company for another pet (14%).



***If the cost of pet care were to increase, 63% of Belgian pet owners indicate that they would not change anything and are prepared to pay more.***

There has been steady growth in recent years for two other reasons the respondents give. Some get a new pet for their mental health (10%, up from 6% in 2024) or for exercise purposes (6%, up from 4% the previous year). This is perhaps a sign of changes in society regarding attitudes to both mental and physical health.

Breeders, friends and family, and other private individuals remain the main channels for acquiring a pet. Compared to the previous survey, the share of pets in Belgium adopted from shelters has increased, with rescued animals now representing 32% of all pets – a figure that reflects a continued willingness within the Belgian market to give a home to an animal in need.

### Functionality over sustainability

When choosing pet food, Belgian consumers primarily focus on functional suitability. The most important criteria in their choices are food tailored to the pet's life stage and food adapted to the pet's size, sensitivities or health issues.

Taste and price follow these functional aspects as important choice factors. While price is clearly considered, it does not rank as the primary driver in purchasing decisions. Less attention is also paid to packaging size and meat quality, as well as whether the food is adapted to a specific breed.

Sustainability-related attributes receive lower average scores in direct purchasing criteria. However, when asked separately, 47% of pet owners indicate that they would definitely or probably be willing to pay more for pet food that is sustainable or has a lower ecological footprint. Among younger pet owners, this share increases to 54%.

### The value of recommendations

The survey indicates that 43% of pet owners have already decided which brand to purchase before going to a store or visiting a website. An additional 32% compare brands in-store or online [▶ SEE NEXT PAGE](#)



nature's  
eco

# All-Natural PLANT-BASED PET LITTERS

from

# EPPM

Booth  
9-506

Upcycled • Sustainable • Superior Odour Control

[eppmfg.com.my](http://eppmfg.com.my)



before making their final decision. Recommendations also play a role in the decision-making process. Advice from a vet accounts for 14% of pre-store decisions, while 8% purchase the brand used by friends or family.

Pet shops and supermarkets remain the most frequently used purchasing channels in Belgium, confirming the continued importance of established retail formats. There are significant differences between dog and cat owners, however, with the former buying more often online, from a pet shop or at a vet's practice, while cat owners show a definite preference for supermarkets.

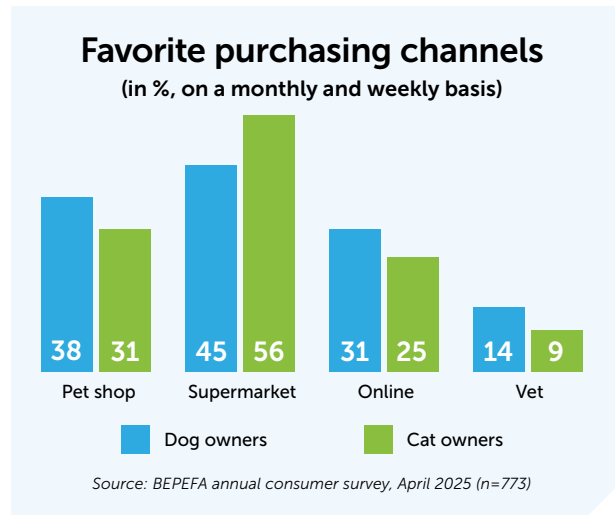
### Dealing with price pressures

If the cost of pet care were to increase, 63% of pet owners indicate that they would not change anything and would be prepared to pay more. Another 18% say that they would start looking for a cheaper alternative, while a smaller number of respondents would adopt other cost-cutting methods, such as reducing extra purchases of specific product categories.

It appears that, for many households, pet-related expenditure is not always closely monitored in detail. Over half (51%) of the owners surveyed say that they do not know exactly how much they actually spend on their pet each month.

### Emotional and practical challenges

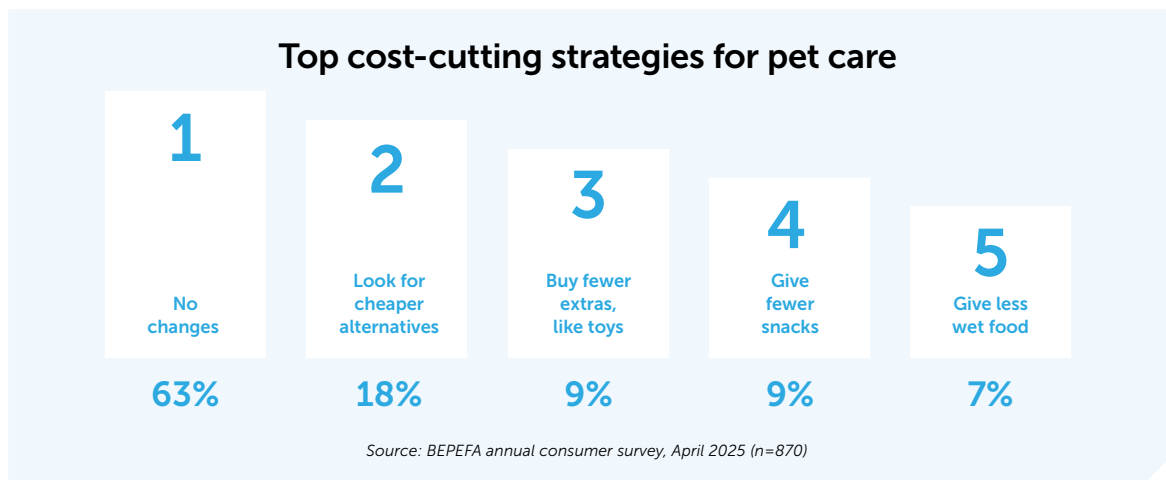
Among the Belgian pet owners, the challenges most frequently cited are coping with the illness or loss of



their pet (47%), feeling guilty when leaving the pet by themselves (32%) and the limited travel flexibility that comes with pet ownership (30%).

The main barrier to owning a pet is being away from home too often to care for one properly (39%), followed by respondents not considering themselves animal lovers. Other reasons given are unsuitable living situations and that a pet would make their life too complicated.

In conclusion, the 2025 BEPEFA survey confirms that Belgium is still a structurally stable pet market with high household penetration, strong emotional attachment and consistent spending patterns. ♦



Versele-Laga BELGIUM

# Something extraordinary is coming...

Versele-Laga is entering a new chapter. As a global producer across nine animal categories, the company is taking a strategic step forward – one that will be unveiled at Interzoo.



Every day, more than 25 million pets around the world rely on Versele-Laga. From a canary in a city apartment to a performance horse, from a family dog to backyard wildlife. This diversity defines who the company is.

## Nine categories, one partner

With an active presence in more than 95 countries, Versele-Laga is a trusted global partner for pet care professionals. The company is the only multipet producer active across nine categories, giving its customers access to unmatched cross-category expertise, deeper consumer insights and innovation that goes beyond silos.

Versele-Laga's journey began in 1932 as a small family-run grocery shop specializing in spices and herbs. Driven by a deep passion for pets, the company set out to ensure they receive the very best – and has since grown into an international manufacturer of high-quality pet nutrition and care products.

Today, that same entrepreneurial spirit continues to shape how Versele-Laga works with its partners. The company

believes long-term relationships create the greatest value, which is why it invests in collaboration, reliability and shared growth across its global network.

## Built from the inside out

At the core of the company's offering lies a fully integrated model. Versele-Laga develops and produces 95% of its 2,000+ products in-house, across state-of-the-art facilities, guaranteeing consistent quality, supply reliability and fast response to evolving market needs.

Backed by in-house veterinarians and nutrition experts, the company translates science into practical, high-performing solutions for pets and pet parents alike.

For its B2B partners, this translates into a clear advantage: a partner that combines scale with flexibility, innovation with operational excellence, and a portfolio that can unlock growth across multiple categories.

## Looking ahead

As pets are increasingly seen as full family members, expectations around nutrition and care are rising. Versele-Laga's cross-

category expertise enables it to identify trends early and convert them into relevant innovations for its customers.

The company is also committed to responsible growth, from local sourcing and biodiversity initiatives to reducing CO2 emissions and improving energy efficiency.

2026 marks a new milestone. Versele-Laga has bold ambitions to become the leading international consumer brand in nutrition and care for all pets. At Interzoo this year, the company will unveil its plans and show how it is building the future of pet care together with its customers.

Because in the end, the ambition is shared: unleashing the extraordinary in every pet. ♦

**Interzoo: Hall 9, Booth 451**

**Versele-Laga NV**  
[versele-laga.com](https://www.versele-laga.com)



Anna Mao, Chief Procurement and Supply Chain Officer, Tom&Co

# “We are rolling out the first in-store vet assortment in Belgium”

As well as expanding its range to include products for specific conditions, the pet retailer is trialing an urban store concept and completing a new warehouse.



**David Palacios Rubio**  
*Editor-in-Chief*  
 GlobalPETS

In today’s retail environment, procurement and supply chain have become more critical than ever. Retailers face evolving consumer demands, rising costs and a need for operational resilience, making strong oversight of these areas essential.

Anna Mao, recently appointed Chief Procurement and Supply Chain Officer at Belgian pet retailer Tom&Co, brings extensive experience from retail giants Delhaize Group and Ahold Delhaize, along with hands-on expertise in franchise operations from her time at French hospitality chain Accor.

One of the major initiatives she is currently leading is the relocation and expansion of Tom&Co’s central

warehouse from northern to southern Belgium by June. The retailer is also rolling out in-store programs offering specialized products and veterinary diets to respond to evolving customer needs.

Mao shares with PETS International more about these projects and how they are shaping the company’s future.

### *What are the biggest challenges Tom&Co is facing in logistics and supply chain?*

In the macroeconomic environment, we are facing a lot of unpredictability. So we remain very alert about what is happening in Europe, but also more broadly. I think in this context, the biggest challenge is to find the right suppliers and to build strong partnerships. But we also need to be flexible and agile enough to find solutions with other suppliers when unforeseen events happen.

▶ [SEE NEXT PAGE](#)



***With the recent US tariffs making raw materials more expensive, how are you coping?***

We are pretty lucky in Belgium to be surrounded by a strong ecosystem of very big and renowned pet food suppliers. Having that ecosystem of big suppliers in the surrounding 200km from us really allows us to source locally. That's the biggest part of our business, which is luckily covered.

For the non-food part, we source abroad and we have conversations with our long-term partners to find solutions in terms of tariffs. But these are also linked to other factors. Sometimes tariffs increase but raw materials decrease or suppliers have over-capacity.

***Have you made any recent changes in sourcing or assortment to manage the impact of tariffs or other disruptions in logistics and the supply chain?***

We work with many local suppliers here in Belgium, but for certain products – like toys – we source from China. We have a partner there who negotiates directly with the producers and factories.

After Covid, many factories have over-capacity, so we continue to maintain discussions with our partners to ensure alignment. We've been able to renegotiate prices and make sure our costs reflect market developments, including production costs, raw materials, tariffs and currency fluctuations.

Changing suppliers for imported goods is a significant move, and building long-term, trustworthy relationships takes a lot of time and energy. Our focus is on optimizing the partnerships we already have, and only considering changes if absolutely necessary.

In parallel, we complement long-distance sourcing with European suppliers. Europe offers a wide range of distributors, which allows us to be more agile and adjust our assortment more quickly in response to trends and short-term needs.

Ultimately, the key is finding the right balance: a stable, reliable partner for imports combined with flexible local distributors. This approach allows us to manage lead times, maintain assortment dynamics and respond effectively to market changes.

***How are you adapting your assortment in response to evolving consumer demands?***

Defining the right assortment is central to our business, and it starts with observing trends. One trend we've noticed is a clear shift in pet ownership toward cats and smaller dogs. Another trend is what we call 'affordable premium'. This represents around 65% of our portfolio and has been steadily growing over the past years. We keep developing this segment in our assortment with our own brands as well as with national brands.

Finally, there is a rising demand for specialized products. Many pets face issues such as weight problems, skin conditions or chronic diseases. Pets acquired during Covid are now reaching ages that require specific care.

To address this, we've developed the Para Corner, which focuses on products for specific needs, and we are currently rolling it out. Alongside this, we are piloting the Vet Corner in two stores, offering veterinary diet products. This is the first in-store vet assortment in Belgium, made possible through strong partnerships with international players.

By combining Para Corner and Vet Corner, we aim to create in-store spaces that meet today's consumer expectations for both quality and specialization.

***How is the rollout planned?***

We are still finalizing the rollout with our partners. The first phase will run until mid-year, with up to 10 Vet Corners launched. After that, we plan to expand further in the second half of the year. This initiative requires significant effort, as it's not just about placing products

on shelves. It's about building knowledge and trust within the veterinary community.

We collaborate closely with in-house and external veterinarians, and we also maintain discussions with universities and other professionals. It's a comprehensive project, focused not only on the assortment but also on upgrading the concept and fostering a strong community around it.

***Is Tom&Co aiming to position as a more premium retailer?***

We continue to carry mainstream products because they're important, and we also offer super-premium options. Between those, we focus on affordable premium, which allows us to address different needs. With the Para and Vet Corners, the emphasis is really on expertise and services.

We don't want to be just a store with products on shelves; we want to provide advice and support. Pet parents visit us more frequently than their vets – maybe once a month compared to twice a year – so our stores are an important point of contact.

***You opened your first urban concept in Brussels in February. How is it performing so far?***

The store has delivered very encouraging early results. While we are still in a learning phase, we see a clear positive dynamic building, which confirms that customers are embracing both the assortment and the concept.

We're also seeing strong traction in some of our service elements. For example, the dog wash is steadily gaining awareness and usage, which shows that these added-value services resonate well in an urban context. Just as importantly, customers who have received advice in-store are coming back, which reinforces our belief that expertise and personalized guidance are key drivers of loyalty in this category.

***Do you have plans to expand the concept soon?***

Certainly, in terms of expansion, this concept is particularly interesting because it allows us to operate on smaller footprints while maintaining a full-value proposition. It therefore opens up new opportunities for us in dense urban areas where traditional formats are less suitable.

***"The key is finding the right balance: a stable, reliable partner for imports combined with flexible local distributors."***

That said, we remain in a test-and-learn phase. Our priority is to further validate the economic model and customer experience before defining the pace and scale of a broader rollout.

***We've come through a period of significant inflation. How is this impacting your role and how are you managing product prices for customers?***

Pricing is definitely an interesting and ongoing challenge. During Covid, everyone experienced significant tariff increases, and the situation was further affected by the Ukraine conflict. Those years were very impactful for retail. Now, tariffs have stabilized on the purchasing side – even though we stay alert – but market pressure on prices for consumers remains high.

At Tom&Co, we're very attentive to this – we want to offer the right price for our customers. We operate across different segments, from mainstream products to affordable premium and super-premium options, and we make sure pricing is appropriate for each segment.

To stay on top, we regularly monitor the market both online and offline. We use online tools to scrape pricing data and conduct offline research as well. Pricing is a constantly evolving task – it requires daily attention to ensure we have the right price for each product range and stay well positioned for our customers.

***How do you approach your online channel to remain competitive?***

Online currently represents about 20% of our sales and continues to grow. One area where we're performing particularly well is our subscription model. This has helped us build a loyal customer base across our banners, including Pharmapet and Vetostore in Belgium and France. The subscription model has been very successful and continues to expand, making online one of our key growth pillars for the coming years.

***Do you aim to maintain that 20% or even grow it?***

There's definitely room for growth in online. Our goal is to increase that share to 25%, and potentially even higher. We want online to play an even larger role in our overall portfolio moving forward. [▶ SEE NEXT PAGE](#)



# ZOOMARK

22<sup>nd</sup> international trade show for pet food and pet care

an event by



11–13 May 2027  
Bologna, Italy

Connecting minds

Shaping futures

see you at



**Interzoo 2026**

**12–15 May  
Stand 124  
Hall 1**

Certified Trade Fair



The USFCS logo is registered trademark of the U.S. Department of Commerce, used with permission

Show Office  
info@zoomark.it  
zoomark.it



**Nowadays, there's a lot of focus on resilience and efficiency, particularly in logistics and procurement. How are you working to strengthen these aspects of the business?**

Resilience is extremely important, especially in a world with so many unpredictable factors. On the procurement and supply chain side, having a strong network of trusted partners is fundamental. Long-term, reliable partnerships are the foundation of resilience, but you also need contingency options in case something goes wrong.

Internally, it's about operational efficiency and ensuring we provide the right products that are relevant to consumers. Developing our own brands is part of this strategy, as it builds loyalty and strengthens our offering. So resilience isn't just about operations – it's about having the right partnerships, the right assortment and products that keep consumers coming back.

**How is sustainability impacting your supply chain decisions?**

It's a responsibility for every company nowadays and we're very proud to have released our first CSR report. It's part of a continuous process of improvement, impacting day-to-day business across the company.

For example, in our supply chain, we're moving our main warehouse this year to a location that's more central to our network. Currently, we're based in the north of Belgium, but by relocating closer to the French border, we reduce the kilometers needed to transport goods to our stores, which has a positive environmental impact.

Moving a central warehouse is a major project, and this year it's one of our top priorities. We're also transitioning our company car fleet to electric vehicles. In addition, we regularly remodel our stores, and over the past few years all new lighting installations have been upgraded to LED.

Packaging is another area of focus: all packaging for our own brands is now sustainable, recyclable and made from mono materials. Sustainability extends beyond operations – it also includes people. We prioritize the wellbeing of our employees and provide training in stores. It's an ongoing process, and we

track our progress year by year to ensure continuous improvement.

**Can you share more about your new warehouse?**

The new warehouse will fully replace our current location in the north of Belgium, which is 15,000sq m. The new facility is 20,000sq m with additional vertical storage capacity, giving us more space and flexibility for future growth.

It's strategically positioned at the center of our store network, which improves operational efficiency, optimizes transport distances and enhances the quality of service we provide to our stores. The move is planned to be completed by mid-year, around the end of June.

There's a lot involved, including project management, IT integration, supplier coordination, warehouse planning and operational considerations, such as ensuring service levels remain high during promotions and peak periods. It's a complex project with many moving parts, but the goal is to achieve operational excellence and continuous improvement.

While the consumer may not see these changes, behind the scenes it's crucial for efficiency and the smooth running of our business.

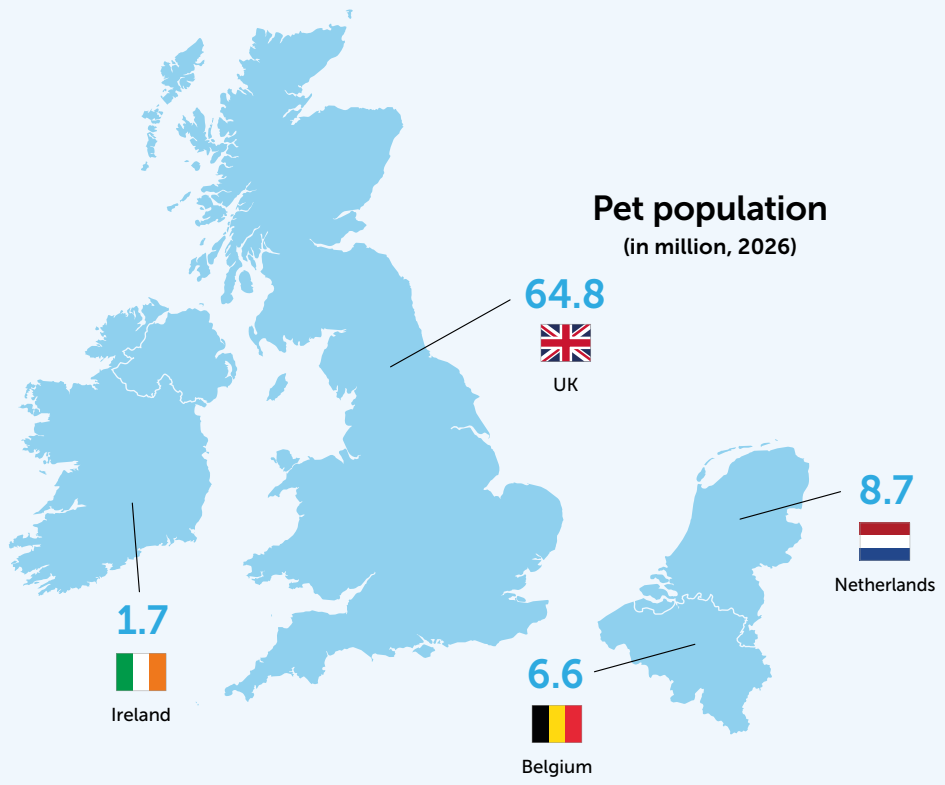
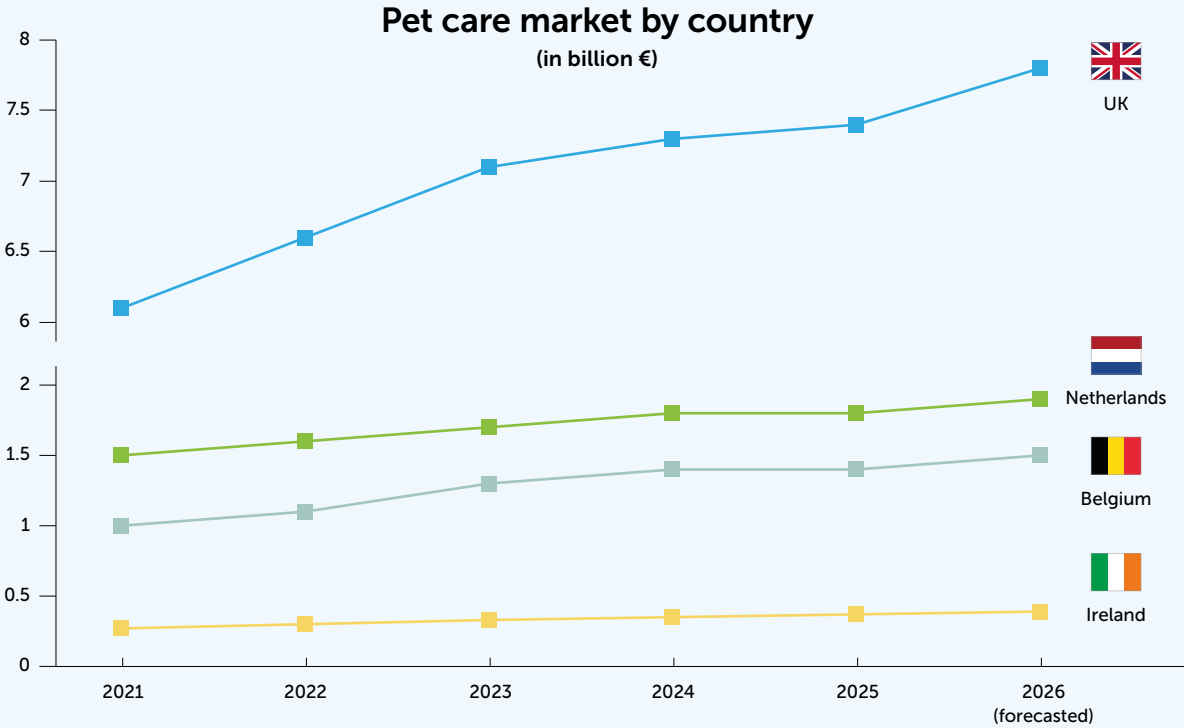
**What are Tom&Co's top priorities in procurement, supply chain and logistics?**

From a supply chain perspective, the top priority in the short term is the success of our warehouse project. It's a major undertaking and will be crucial for operational efficiency and future growth.

In terms of procurement, we're focused on two main areas. First, continuing to build strong partnerships with the major brands we work with. These brands are well-known to consumers, bring innovation and play an essential role in our assortment. Second, we are continuing to develop and strengthen our own brands, a key pillar in our assortment strategy. ♦

***"In terms of expansion, the urban concept is interesting as it allows us to operate on smaller footprints while maintaining a full-value proposition."***

# Pet industry snapshot: UK, Ireland, Netherlands and Belgium



Source: Euromonitor International



# Five years of Brexit: the state of the UK-EU pet food trade

Importing and exporting is still costly and complex for British businesses, but current talks to scrap health certificates and border checks offer a glimmer of hope.



**Thaís Matos**  
Senior Business Reporter  
GlobalPETS

Half a decade since leaving the European Union, UK-based importers and exporters claim that they still bear a high cost burden due to red tape and logistics delays. What is being done to relieve the pressure on traders of some pet-related products?

## Familiar set of complaints

Companies exporting animal products – including pet food – from the United Kingdom to the European Union have all voiced similar complaints recently: higher costs due to more stringent checks, longer waiting times at borders and rejections due to bureaucracy.

“Every food order we send into the EU from the UK gets rigorously checked despite the hoops we jump through with veterinary health certificates, specific labeling and other documents, all of which are increasing in cost and complexity,” Chris Keightley, Export Business Unit Controller at pet food manufacturer Pets Choice, tells PETS International.

## EHC increases cost burden for exporters

Pet food going from the UK to the EU needs to have an Export Health Certificate (EHC). To receive one, the manufacturer must contact an official vet or inspector to certify its products.

Additionally, British companies need to make sure their import agent has notified the Border Control Post (BCP) – a land-based site where imported goods are checked – in the EU country that their consignment is arriving.

For pet food containing animal byproducts (parts not intended for human consumption), they also need to find specific BCPs that accept this type of food, “as not all BCPs and points of entry accept all goods”, according to the UK government.

In contrast, pet food being exported from the EU to the UK only needs to have an EHC if it is considered risky, says the British pet food industry association UK Pet Food. Low-risk items, such as canned and processed pet food, are exempt from certification.

[▶ SEE NEXT PAGE](#)

EHCs must be issued separately for each product category and for each country of origin. As a result, shipments containing various types of pet products manufactured in different countries require multiple certificates. "Our product range splits between three countries, so we need three certificates," Keightley says.

With an EHC typically costing from £100 (\$133/€115) to £200 (\$266/€230), this extra requirement since Brexit has considerably increased the cost burden on UK-based traders.

### Broader impact on logistics

The extra paperwork and tighter regulations since Brexit can also cause logistics disruptions for exporters. Although Keightley admits it is hard to put a figure on it, he estimates that Pets Choice has suffered over £20,000 (\$26,620/€22,970) worth of failed deliveries and lost contracts and clients over the past 12 months.

Other UK-based companies exporting products of animal origin are experiencing a similar impact following Brexit. Toby Ovens, Managing Director of the logistics firm Broughton Transport, was one of the witnesses at a meeting of the Business and Trade Committee of the House of Commons that took place on 16 January to discuss the UK's trade relationships with the US, India and the EU.

"The introduction of health certificates has had the biggest knock-on impact, resulting in severe delays at BCPs and rejections due to paperwork issues," Ovens says, pointing to prolonged wait times both at loading points in the UK and at BCPs in the EU. His company's main business is serving abattoirs exporting to the EU.

"At the loading point, there are frequent delays – waiting for vets, or for paperwork to be done, completed and stamped. This is then sent to the border for approval," he explained at the meeting. According to him, the worst delay in France lasted for 27 days, which led to additional costs of £16,000 (\$21,288/€18,381).

The meeting also heard from Alastair Gunn, Trade Policy Lead at the Road Haulage Association (a trade association representing operators of heavy goods vehicles, coaches and vans) and Julian Walker, Chief Commercial Officer and Regional Director at

Associated British Ports (ABP), the operator of 21 ports across the UK.

According to Gunn, the association represents 82% of goods moving around the UK. He told the House of Commons that the situation is posing a threat to companies' survival. "The sad reality is that, in the last few years, a lot of haulage firms have gone out of business. In 2024, margins were down to about 1.5% or 1.6% from about 2%. We are a low-margin sector," Gunn stated.

### UK importers feeling the pinch

It's not just exporters who are paying a higher price. British companies that import animals, animal products, plants and plant products are also incurring additional costs. One example cited at the committee meeting is the £12.71 (\$17/€14.70) fee charged to trailers passing through any of ABP's ports.

According to ABP's Walker, this duty was imposed to "recover both the OpEx and the CapEx costs" resulting from the association having to build four new BCPs in the UK since Brexit. "We are charging the importer, so it will ultimately feed through to the consumer," he told the committee.

### Deadlock on the UK-France border

Both Pets Choice and Broughton Transport cite particular delays and rejections at the French port of Calais, where much of the UK's trade arrives in continental Europe via the Strait of Dover. For example, Keightley recalls how multiple shipments have been turned around by French Customs due to small matters that had not been reported in the past.

One load destined for Portugal was initially rejected because things were in the wrong box – resulting in thousands of pounds worth of shipping being sent back. "Then the next time we sent it, there was one item that had managed to make its way through that was not for the EU. Rather than taking that single product off, they just rejected it all," he says.

***The extra paperwork and tighter regulations since Brexit can cause logistics disruptions for exporters.***

"In the end, we suspended the agreement with the customer while we set up the third-party logistics (3PL)," adds Keightley. In order to have a smoother supply process, the company opted to partner with a 3PL in Germany to set up a production line and a warehouse.

However, according to a European Commission (EC) spokesperson, goods should be receiving equal treatment in every country, because sanitary and risk-based checks are carried out by Member States' competent authorities in a "harmonized way" across the bloc.

"Numerically, more controls are naturally carried out at Border Control Posts that receive more consignments. In relation to pet food from the UK, this results in the highest number of checks being carried out by French authorities at Calais," the spokesperson explains.

### EU reinforces control


In December 2025, the EC announced a reinforcement of controls on animals, goods of animal origin

(including food of animal origin, animal byproducts and germinal products) and plant products entering the bloc for all exporting countries. "Commissioner for Health and Animal Welfare Olivér Várhelyi set out various measures to strengthen controls at EU borders and in third countries," the EC says.

Those measures include a 50% increase in the number of audits carried out on non-EU countries programmed for the next two years, a 33% increase in audits of European BCPs, "closer monitoring of non-compliant commodities", and a dedicated EU Task Force to focus on pesticide residues, food and feed safety, and animal welfare, among other things.

While such measures increase control checks, they do not change any rules already established. "GB-EU exports, including products of animal origin such as pet food, are subject to the same requirement that came into force following the UK's departure from the EU, as set out in the Trade and Cooperation Agreement," a spokesperson from the UK government says.

▶ SEE NEXT PAGE



**MOVA**  
MOVE AHEAD

# The Future of Pet Care: AI-Driven System Solutions.

MOVA revolutionizes pet care with an **AI-driven hardware ecosystem**. By linking smart devices into a central **"Pet Data Hub,"** we create a dynamic **"Digital Twin"** for every pet.

Leveraging species-specific algorithms, MOVA transforms isolated tools into 24/7 pet bodyguards. This evolves pet wellness from subjective guesswork into **quantifiable, proactive health alerts**, ensuring a smarter, higher-quality life for pets and their owners.

🐾 Meet us at Interzoo Hall 10, Booth 515

[mova.pet@mova-tech.com](mailto:mova.pet@mova-tech.com)  
<https://www.mova.tech/collections/pet-care>

# CHEWLLAGEN

## Two needs. Two solutions.

### Comparison: similarities and differences.



	CLASSIC	BAR
<b>PRODUCT NATURE</b>	Original collagen based chew, made from grass-fed cattle hide collagen (Type 1 & 3), oven-baked and coated with real beef or chicken.	Next generation collagen bar combining beef collagen with functional ingredients for a complete nutritional profile.
<b>CORE BENEFITS</b>	Promotes joint health, supports cartilage regeneration, aids digestion, and contributes to muscle maintenance.	Offers all the benefits of collagen plus added functional advantages: glycemic control, antioxidant protection, vitamins and minerals support, and sustained energy.
<b>FUNCTIONAL ADDITIVES</b>	Pure collagen + beef or chicken coating.	Enriched with tapioca (glycemic balance), resveratrol (antioxidant), vitamin C sources and essential minerals.
<b>POSITIONING</b>	Functional, natural chew for joint, healthier fur and skin, fully digestible.	Super Premium nutritional bar for overall wellbeing joints, vitality, and longevity.
<b>VALUE PROPOSITION</b>	Simplicity, purity, affordability. Premium classic collagen treat.	Advanced, multifunctional formula. A "SUPER PREMIUM" evolution of the Chewllagen concept.
<b>PERCEIVED VALUE</b>	Affordable PREMIUM.	SUPER PREMIUM plus added science and health benefits.

Because if everything cost the same,  
nothing would be worth more.



**pet'sUp**<sup>®</sup>  
PREMIUM PRODUCTS

[www.petsup.co.uk](http://www.petsup.co.uk) / [info@petsup.co.uk](mailto:info@petsup.co.uk)

Loved by dogs  
Chosen by dog lovers



**Interzoo 2026**

VISIT US AT

**Hall 5 / Booth Number 5-347**

## ***Shipments containing various types of pet products manufactured in different countries require multiple certificates.***

### **Opportunities for increased collaboration**

To handle the “additional administrative complexity” that arose post-Brexit, Emma Gibson, Supply Chain Manager at British pet food manufacturer Burgess Pet Care, says that the company has increased collaboration across its supply chain. “In partnership with our customers and logistics partners, we’ve been able to strengthen our processes and build resilience into our operations to minimize disruption,” Gibson says.

According to her, the company’s close relationships with both UK Pet Food and its European equivalent, FEDIAF, help Burgess Pet Care to not only remain compliant with, but also shape EU regulations for the production and labeling of pet food. “We recently contributed to the updated FEDIAF rabbit nutrition guidelines, for example,” Gibson adds.

“Overall, we continue to see a lot of opportunities in the EU market. The pet food sector there, particularly in markets such as Germany and Scandinavia, is growing,” she concludes.

### **UK’s attempts to negotiate**

The British government is currently negotiating a Sanitary and Phytosanitary (SPS) agreement with the EU, it says, “which will remove the need for an Export Health Certificate and routine checks”. If agreed, this deal could deliver up to £5.1 billion (\$6.8B/€5.8B) a year for the UK economy, according to the government, by cutting costs and delays at the border.

UK Pet Food is following these negotiations closely. “We have participated in a number of round table discussions with Defra [Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs] and the Food Standards Agency to represent the interests of the UK pet food sector,” says Donna Holland, UK Pet Food’s Head of Technical and Regulatory Affairs.

According to Holland, the removal of EHCs is one of the most significant practical changes being requested as it “would reduce administrative burden and help streamline the export process”.

“Both the UK and EU have agreed to complete talks on an SPS deal before the next UK-EU Summit this year. The date for this has not been publicly set yet. EU Relations Minister Nick Thomas-Symonds has confirmed previously that the aim is to have the legislative arrangements in place to implement an SPS deal in 2027,” states the government.

If these negotiations are successful, the bureaucracy and cost of trade – at least for some pet-related products – may see some relief in the near future. ♦

### **Agri-food trade figures**

In January, the EU Directorate-General for Agriculture and Rural Development released data on agri-food trade in the bloc between January and November 2025.

The UK is the biggest export destination of agri-foods from Europe, at €51.3 billion (\$59B). It is also the country with the largest absolute increase in comparison with 2024, with a rise of €1.6 billion (\$1.8B). This is mainly due to higher trade of chocolate, cocoa and dairy products.

On the import side, the UK is the second largest exporter of agri-food products into the EU, at €14.7 billion (\$16.9B). Although the value of imports from the UK increased by 4% last year, this does not put it on the list of countries with the largest import rises. The most substantial absolute increases were recorded from Côte d’Ivoire, Canada, the US, Vietnam and Ghana.

The bloc is a net exporter of pet food and forage crops (cultivated plants used to feed livestock), with a positive trade balance of €5.2 billion (\$6.9B) registered in the first 11 months of last year considering all the countries it trades with.

In relation specifically to products of animal origin, the bloc also sells more poultry and eggs, beef and veal, and other animal products than it buys, but has a negative balance for sheep and goat products.



## Symply Group UK

# Five premium brands, one strategic partner

How Symply Group is helping pet retailers strengthen margin and win on differentiation.

As consolidation reshapes the global pet industry, specialist retailers face a clear choice: compete on price or compete on proposition. Supermarkets are expanding premium ranges. Online marketplaces accelerate price comparison. Vertically integrated brands increasingly control both product and distribution. For independent pet retailers, differentiation has never mattered more.

At Interzoo, Symply Group will present five premium brands together on a unified stand for the first time. According to James Milbourne, Joint Managing Director, this is not about scale for its

own sake, but about strengthening the specialist channel.

“We’re building structure that strengthens margin, simplifies operations and gives independent retailers clearer positioning,” he says.

### Built from the shop floor

Symply Group’s roots remain close to independent retail. Founder Eddie Milbourne began as a pet shop owner in the south of England. Frustrated by inconsistent product quality, he started importing premium US brands into the UK and became one of the largest importers of Nutro.

When that brand was later acquired by a multinational corporation, he witnessed how reformulation and corporate shifts can alter product integrity – and how specialist retailers can lose control of the brands they helped build.

That experience shaped the principles that still define the Group:

- Strengthen the specialist channel
- Maintain product integrity
- Build brands that cannot be substituted by mass retail

Today, Symply Group remains 100% family-owned, operates in 45 countries and supports more than 10,000 independent retailers globally.

“Our brands were built in independent stores and for the customers they serve,” says Milbourne. “We grow alongside our retail partners, not at their expense.”

### A portfolio built on positioning, not price

Rather than competing on discount cycles, Symply Group focuses on clear category architecture.



The Group brings together five complementary premium brands offering possibilities for every customer type:

- **Canagan:** the original ancestral diet. Grain-free nutrition developed following retailer demand
- **Symply:** trusted, accessible premium nutrition
- **Tribal:** cold-pressed, fresh meat, minimally processed recipes
- **McAdams:** ethically sourced, high-welfare foods
- **Yora:** sustainable insect protein superfood

Each brand occupies a defined role, enabling retailers to offer trade-up pathways and distinct solutions within premium nutrition. Crucially, the Group's brands are not distributed through supermarkets. There is no mass retail dilution and no price-led race to the bottom. For specialist retailers, that exclusivity translates into stronger margins and preserved brand equity.

"Working with Symply Group allows us to offer products our customers genuinely cannot find elsewhere," says Sarah Bourne, Purchasing Director of Pets Corner in the UK. "That exclusivity strengthens our proposition."

### Strategic simplicity

Managing multiple premium suppliers often means fragmented account management, varying commercial terms and operational complexity.

By consolidating five differentiated propositions under one Group relationship, Symply simplifies that structure, without limiting quality or choice.

"For us, it's a perfect partnership," says Pets Corner. "We can offer grain-free, cold-pressed, sustainable and ethically

sourced products from one Group. It reduces complexity while giving us more ways to serve customers."

This model offers:

- Reduced supplier management burden
- Clearer range architecture
- Coordinated marketing support
- Greater strategic alignment

Rather than diluting brand identity, the unified structure strengthens it.

### Values-led differentiation

Independent retailers rarely win long-term by reacting to short-term discount pressure. Symply Group's philosophy is that sustainable growth is values-led – built around sourcing, integrity and brand story.

The business has been carbon neutral since 2020, generates solar energy at its UK headquarters and distribution centre, and supports environmental initiatives including rainforest protection projects in Cambodia.

For retailers, this is not simply corporate responsibility. It is commercial relevance.

"Our customers increasingly ask about sustainability and sourcing," says Kevin Massart, founder of Belgian premium retail chain Cats & Dogs. "Having brands like Yora and McAdams within the same Group allows us to answer those questions with clarity."

### A long-term partnership model

Symply Group remains committed to specialist retail.

Canagan itself was developed following requests from one of the Group's earliest retail partners – an example of how innovation is shaped by in-store conversations.



"Retailers are closest to the customer," says Milbourne. "When they identify a need, we listen." Operating internationally while remaining family-owned allows the Group to combine global reach with long-term stability, a balance valued by independent retailers and distributors alike.

### Interzoo 2026

At Interzoo, Symply Group will bring its brands together while preserving each brand's distinct identity.

As the market continues to evolve, the Group believes the specialist channel has a strong future, provided it is supported by protected distribution, clear positioning and strategic partnership.

"Independent pet retailers are the backbone of our industry," says Milbourne. "Our role is to provide the brands, structure and support that help them stand apart and grow."

At Interzoo 2026, Symply Group invites specialist retailers and international partners to explore how five premium brands under one strategic partnership can reduce complexity, strengthen margin and unlock long-term growth. ♦

**Interzoo: Hall 9, Booth 405**

**Symply Group**  
symplygroup.com



## Keeping pace with UK spending trends

**Pet food persists as an appealing category for retailers and investors alike, but value remains king in the bid to attract and retain British shoppers.**



**Sam Farnfield**  
*Director*  
*PwC Strategy&*

According to new consumer research, value reigns supreme in the UK pet food category, but spending is expected to rise and loyalty remains strong. What can brands, manufacturers and retailers do to improve their chances of success?

### The watchword is value

Data from PwC Strategy& primary consumer research shows that around 15% of pet owners adjusted their buying habits during the cost-of-living crisis in the UK. In 2022-23, 56% of these consumers purchased pet food in bulk to save money, while 47% sought discounted products.

These habits have proven sticky. Even after 2023, 47% continue to buy in bulk and 34% still take advantage of discounts. This indicates that 'value is king'; pet parents are increasingly discerning about how they allocate spend within the category.

### Pet food spend expected to rise

Nevertheless, purchasing of pet food continues to demonstrate resilience relative to many other consumer goods categories, despite the prolonged economic uncertainty in the UK.

The statistics continue to show that pet food remains an area of protected spend – ahead of vacations and babies. On balance, British pet owners expect to increase expenditure over the next 12 months, even as spending intentions remain constrained elsewhere.

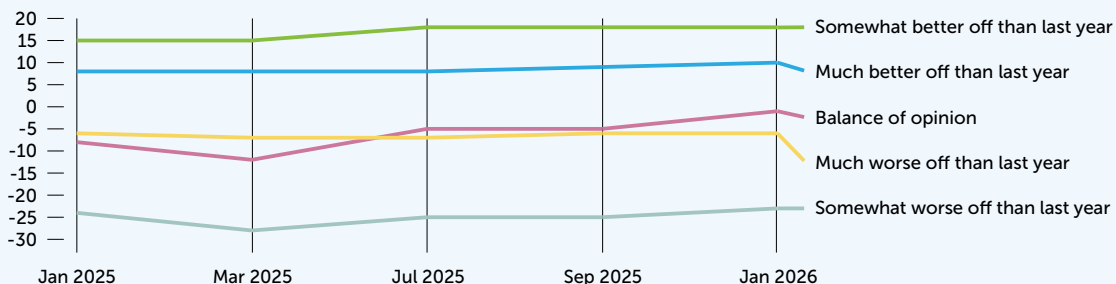
When asked about their top purchase criteria for pet food, owners placed "my pet enjoys the taste" first (78%), making it the most important factor across the board. "High quality" came in second (59%), followed closely by "reasonable price" (55%). Taste was slightly more decisive for cat owners than dog owners, but it remains a key driver for all pet parents.

### Private label vs branded products

The recent inflationary cycle has reshaped the competitive dynamics between branded pet food and

## Outlook for household disposable income

(%, next 12 months)



Source: PwC Consumer Sentiment Index, January 2026

retailers' own brands. Private label pet food gained market share in 2023, rising to 14-15%. This was largely driven by mid-market and value shoppers trading down from branded products amid rising cost pressures. Growth was also supported by increased shopping at discount retailers.

Today, private label products account for around 13% of pet food value, which is broadly in line with long-term trends. However, while branded products have

regained momentum as macroeconomic conditions stabilize, private label products continue to evolve, with improvements in quality, formulation and packaging.

As a result, branded manufacturers must justify premiums through demonstrable benefits, such as functional nutrition, ingredient transparency or veterinary endorsement. Meanwhile, retailers must carefully manage assortments to balance value perception with margin and brand equity.

[▶ SEE NEXT PAGE](#)

# The wiiiidest range in natural petfood

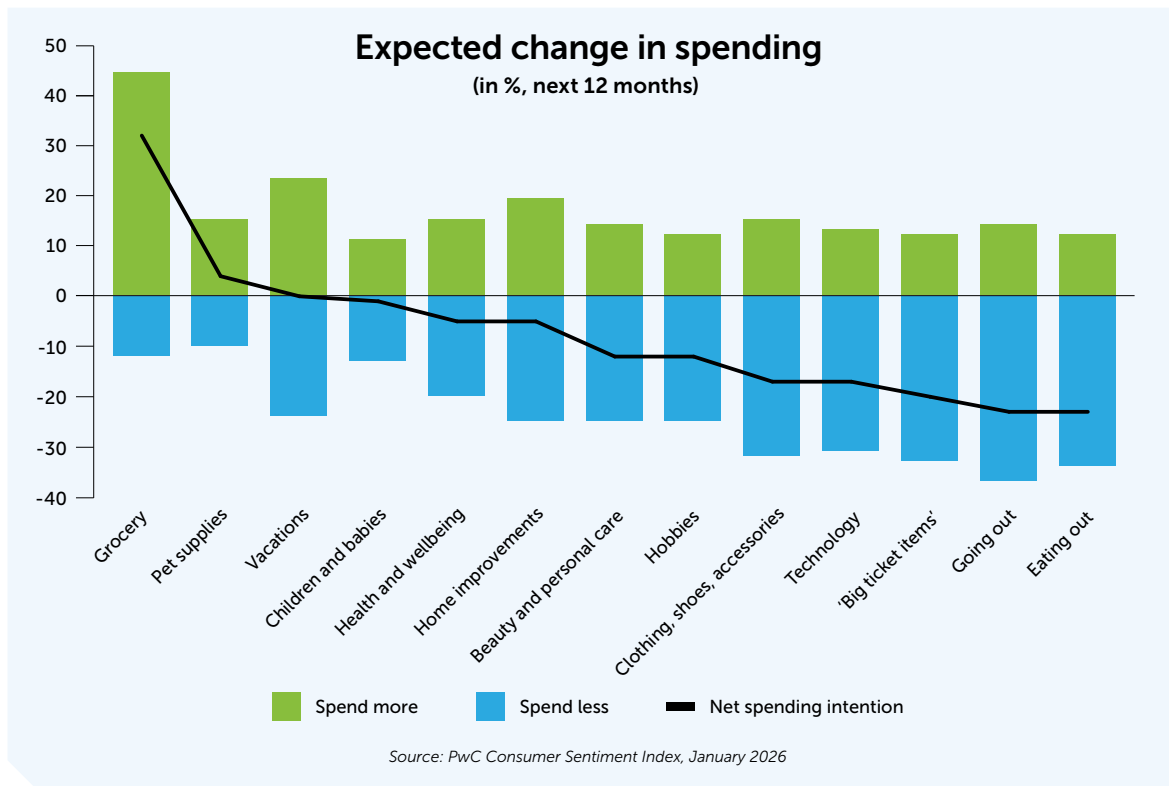


NATURAL, with LOCALLY SOURCED INGREDIENTS

MADE with PLENTY of FRESH MEAT and FISH

Free of COLOURANTS, no ARTIFICIAL PRESERVATIVES

Visit us in Hall 9, at Booth 9-251



### Embedded multichannel behavior

When it comes to purchasing channels, pet food sales in the UK remain dominated by grocery stores (around 40%) and pet specialty retailers (around 25%). However, online channels have grown significantly over the past five years, in a way that sets pet food apart from other consumer categories.

Online penetration jumped during Covid, rising from roughly 18% of sales in 2019 to 27% in 2021. Unlike many other sectors, which saw online sales decline again after the pandemic, pet food has continued to shift online. Today, it captures about 32% of the market.

Most UK pet parents now adopt a multichannel approach, with 53% of cat owners and 50% of dog owners shopping both online and in-store, according to PwC Strategy&’s latest data.

### Growth in DTC and subscriptions

Direct to consumer (DTC) remains a key channel for some brands selling in the UK, particularly those targeting dog owners. This highlights the importance of

pet food brands having a clear strategy across multiple channels, defining the role of each channel both strategically and at every stage of the customer journey.

From an investor perspective, DTC metrics are scrutinized closely. Detailed diligence on customer cohorts, and the ratio of the company’s customer lifetime value to its acquisition cost (LTV/CAC ratio), form a critical part of assessing any business.

Moreover, the research indicates that subscription models are likely to stay popular among UK pet parents. This popularity is driven by convenience (68% of users), good quality (58%) and high-quality food (48%). Current subscribers tend to be relatively affluent, with 50% reporting household incomes of £150,000+ (€173,609/\$199,163), younger (around 65% are under 54), and more often dog owners.

### Loyalty and barriers to switching

Despite greater choice and growing channel fragmentation, brand loyalty in UK pet food remains relatively high. Pet owners typically stick to a

repertoire of brands – up to around 10 in the case of cat owners – over a 12-month period. This reflects regular behavior reinforced by trust, and the perceived risk of switching. Loyalty is strongest for brands that meet multiple needs across life stages or functional requirements.

Trialing remains crucial, but this can be challenging – especially among cat owners. According to the research, a cat's taste preferences are the biggest barrier to switching. Nevertheless, some owners indicate they may consider trying a new product if they are offered a meaningful discount. This underscores the importance of product distribution, visibility and clear communication in driving growth.

### Looking to the future

Having tracked the sentiment of around 2,000 nationally representative consumers over the past 18 years, PwC Strategy& is able to draw meaningful conclusions about future outlook. After some nervousness ahead of November's UK Budget, British

***The statistics continue to show that pet food remains an area of protected spend – ahead of vacations and babies.***

consumers are now feeling relatively positive about the future. The sentiment tracker rose to around 0 in January 2026, well above the long-term average of approximately -15.

The research findings outlined above point to a UK pet food sector that remains structurally resilient yet competitive. While overall market growth is expected to continue, value creation will hinge on execution rather than demand alone.

The brands, manufacturers and retailers that succeed will be those that clearly articulate value, operate effectively across channels, and continue to earn consumer trust in a category where purchasing decisions are closely tied to perceptions of care and responsibility. ♦

# Partnership that powers performance.

We work as an integral part of your operation, combining technical nutrition expertise and bespoke premix formulation with commercial understanding to help your business perform, adapt and grow.

[premiernutrition.co.uk](http://premiernutrition.co.uk)

PREMIER  
NUTRITION



Partners  
in Progress





# Winning Formula

for Food, Treats and Supplements



For over 20 years, Fish4Pets has led the way in super-premium, fish-based nutrition for dogs & cats, setting the standard for quality, innovation and results. Born from a simple truth, just like humans, dogs and cats thrive on fish and they love it!

## Why fish delivers

Fish is the “perfect protein” for our pets. Naturally rich in Omega 3, it supports skin, coat and overall optimum health. Fish is highly digestible and most importantly supports a healthy gut and is ideal for sensitive stomachs. Low in saturated fats and hypoallergenic, fish avoids common triggers like beef or poultry.

Our super-premium range of dry foods, wet recipes and natural treats is vet-formulated, free from artificial preservatives and uses responsibly sourced fish as the sole animal protein.



Our story began with humble beginnings, selling high-quality dried fish skins as treats for dogs. This has developed into a globally recognised approach to pet nutrition rooted in one clear belief: fish is not just an alternative protein; it is the optimal one.

Today, our flagship brands Fish4Dogs and Fish4Cats are enjoyed by pets in over 35 countries around the world.

## Proven benefits owners can see

Modern pet owners demand more and Fish4Pets products deliver. From improved skin condition to enhanced joint mobility, cognitive development and heart health, the benefits of fish focused high-quality recipes are well recognised and enjoyed by thousands of pets around the world - including world champions!



GRAIN FREE RECIPE



CONTAINS OMEGA 3



JOINT SUPPORT



DIGESTIVE AID



Join our Journey

We're looking for new partners to join our international program of distributors and retailers. We offer territory partnerships and collaboration on tailored, country-specific, sales and marketing strategies that drive brand growth and long-term success.



# PAWSTRONG™

Serious Supplements for Playful Pets



Cold Pressed



Fish & Plant Based



Hypoallergenic



Made in the UK

Where Fish4Dogs and Fish4Cats use fish as the perfect protein, PawStrong moves beyond the bowl, delivering science-led support for dogs at every life stage.

PawStrong supplement chews are designed to work alongside any diet and meet the evolving needs of today's dogs.

### Pet owners demand more

This evolution reflects a market shift. Owners are no longer simply feeding; they are actively managing health, and this is driving growth in supplements.

PawStrong responds with a premium range of serious supplements formulated for visible, measurable results. The range includes products targeted to support Gut Health, Skin & Coat, Joints & Mobility, Calming & Anxiety, Senior Support plus a Multi-Vitamin option.

### Naturally excellent

At its core PawStrong uses high-purity Incomomega® fish oil, rich in Omega 3 EPA and DHA to support joints and reduce inflammation. In addition, each formula uses clinically recognised, purpose-led plant ingredients selected for efficacy and safety.

Building on decades of expertise, Fish4Pets continues to push boundaries with PawStrong. Cold-pressed for maximum nutrient retention, the marine and plant-based formulations are 100% meat free and hypoallergenic.



One of the fastest growing product segments.

Gummies and Chews are estimated to be \$701.5m, or 30.5% of total sales by 2032.



The category opportunity is significant

Supplements - in a chew or gummy format - are a fast-growing segment. The latest humanisation trend in the pet category, consumers are seeking solutions for proactive health management. For retailers, the appeal is clear: a high-growth, high margin category that increases basket value and expands consumer engagement from nutrition into total wellness.

(Global Market Insights Inc.)

fish4pets.com pawstrong.com

Fish4Pets Ltd. Unit 3, Velocity Way, Redditch, Worcestershire, B98 7FX, UK  
hello@fish4pets.com

VISIT US AT  
INTERZOO  
**HALL 3**  
STAND 132

BOOK YOUR  
MEETING  
**TODAY**





# Paws for thought

**Research shows certain dog breeds, shapes and ages are more prone to overgrown nails, highlighting the need for targeted veterinary guidance and owner education on this aspect of canine wellbeing.**



**Dr. Dan O'Neill**  
*Royal Veterinary College  
University of London*



**Dr. Lavin Ahmed**  
*Veterinary Surgeon*

Regular nail care is essential for a dog's overall health and comfort. Unlike some other routine pet grooming tasks that mostly help a dog to look neat and tidy, trimmed nails support comfortable movement, proper posture, and help prevent injuries and infections.

## Importance of nail management

Overgrown nails can cause pain when walking, as they force the dog's toes into unnatural positions and may alter their gait, leading to joint or posture problems. Long nails are also more likely to split, break or get caught, which can result in bleeding and infections.

Keeping nails properly trimmed helps prevent these issues, supports healthy paw structure, and ensures that the dog can move comfortably. Regular nail checks also give owners a chance to spot signs of injury, inflammation or underlying health concerns early on.

Previous research from the UK's Royal Veterinary College (RVC), published in *BMC Veterinary Research* showed that overgrown nails were the fourth most frequently diagnosed disorder in dogs under primary

veterinary care in the UK in 2019. Despite this, further RVC research in 2025 reported that nailcare is one of the most underfunded areas of canine research.

## Nailing the science

Filling this gap in evidence on dog nail care, a new study by the RVC's VetCompass research programme, published in *Journal of Small Animal Practice* in 2025, revealed that nail clipping in dogs in the UK is a highly common procedure.

Using analysis of data from a random sample of 2,440 nail clipping cases taken from over 2 million dogs under UK primary veterinary practice care during 2019, 5.6% of UK dogs had their nails clipped annually at least once as part of their primary veterinary care.

Nail clipping was the primary reason for attending the veterinary visit for more than half (59.4%) of those dogs, showing just how important the issue of good nail care was to these owners. The most cited reasons for nail clipping veterinary visits were overgrown and/or ingrown nails (12.7%) and broken claws or dewclaws (8.8%), suggesting nail care is an area that requires more clinical and research attention.

## Do breed and age matter?

The VetCompass researchers identified that certain dog breeds were more likely to require nail clipping. Compared with crossbred dogs, the four breeds with the highest percentage of getting their nails clipped

each year were the chihuahua (13.3% clipped each year), beagle (12.6%), greyhound (12.0%) and pug (9.4%). Owners of these predisposed breeds should take extra care of nail length in their dogs.

Age and body weight also affected a dog's chances of undergoing nail clipping. Young dogs were the most likely to have nail clipping procedures. Smaller dogs weighing less than 10kg had higher odds of overgrown nails compared to larger dogs weighing 40kg or more.

### The effect of body shape

Dog breeds with a skull shape either shorter or longer than typical had a higher risk of needing nail clipping. Flat-faced dogs breeds (e.g. pug, French bulldog) were 1.7 times more likely to have their nails clipped, while breeds with long faces (e.g. greyhound, whippet) were 1.3 times more likely, compared to breeds with a medium length skull (e.g. Labrador retriever, English springer spaniel).

Dog breeds with shortened and often twisted legs (chondrodystrophic breeds) were also 1.4 times more

likely to have their nails clipped compared to dog breeds with straight legs. These results suggest that optimal nail length is achieved most easily in dogs with a natural dog body shape, and that human interference to push dogs towards more extreme body shapes could promote more nail health issues.

### Overall observations

The findings provide insights into the characteristics of different dogs that are more likely to need regular nail clipping. This highlights the importance of tailored veterinary guidance and breed-specific considerations in promoting optimal nail health, contributing to better overall canine welfare.

The frequency of nail clipping in primary veterinary care also indicates the need for comprehensive teaching of canine nail care in veterinary education, as well as proactive monitoring and owner instruction.

Together, this may help to reduce preventable complications such as overgrown nails, ingrown claws and associated pain or infections. ♦



## Happiness begins in her bowl





**DoggyBag** ITALY

### Dogolattier: the NON-chocolate, as GOOD as chocolate

Designed to deliver the indulgent taste of chocolate while giving pet parents complete peace of mind, Dogolattier is crafted using natural, sustainable ingredients. Its unique recipe is based on Italian carob pulp and contains no cocoa, no caffeine, no preservatives and no added sugars.

What sets Dogolattier apart from traditional carob-based alternatives already on the market is its manufacturing process. Thanks to two patented processes – the fermentation and roasting of the carob pulp – Dogolattier achieves the rich taste, color and consistency of real chocolate.

The Dogolattier Line includes Cookies with FreeCoa drops, Biscuits with oat flakes and shortbread Frollini with FreeCoa filling. Each product is available in two convenient pack sizes: Regular (180g) and Pocket (65g).

Interzoo: Hall 7, Booth 865

**Platto Srl**

info@doggybag.it  
doggybag.it



**VAFO** EUROPE

### Brit Veterinary Diets support dogs and cats with specific health needs

Brit Veterinary Diets offer a comprehensive range of dietary pet foods for dogs and cats, developed to provide nutritional support for specific health conditions. These meat-based formulas help manage issues such as digestive disorders, food allergies, overweight and other health complications, and are developed in cooperation with veterinary experts.

The Brit diet range is gluten-free, with carefully selected protein sources that respect the natural physiology of carnivores. The recipes are enriched with functional ingredients that support overall health and vitality, including components rich in probiotics, bioactive vitamins, DHA and EPA, enhancing both the nutritional and functional value of the diets.

Brit Veterinary Diets provide veterinarians and pet professionals with reliable nutritional solutions to support the health and wellbeing of dogs and cats with specific dietary needs.

Interzoo: Hall 7, Booth 364

**VAFO Group a.s.**

info@vafo.cz  
vafo.com



**Sorgal Pet Food** PORTUGAL  
**Our best friends deserve the best food**

Sorgal Pet Food develops high-quality nutrition for dogs and cats, combining 25+ years of expertise with trusted solutions worldwide.

Its circular economy model ensures sustainability and efficiency. Supported by veterinarians, it creates balanced formulas using natural ingredients for optimal nutrition and digestibility at every life stage.

Interzoo: Hall 9, Booth 440

**Sorgal, S.A.**  
 sorgalpetfood.pt  
 info@sojadeportugal.pt



**TATRAPET** SLOVAKIA  
**High-meat premium snacks for dogs and cats**

PET EXPERT nature snacks for dogs and cats – high meat content and a premium look that adds value:

- ◆ Modern packaging boosts shelf impact and speeds up decision-making, supporting repeat purchases and strong sell-through
- ◆ Ideal for retailers and distributors looking for a fast-moving upgrade

Interzoo: Hall 4, Booth: 104

**TATRAPET s.r.o.**  
 sale@tatrapet.sk  
 tatrapet.com



**Camon&Croci Pet Group** ITALY  
**Italian roots and an international vision serving the pet industry**

Camon&Croci Pet Group will attend Interzoo 2026 following its recent full integration, further strengthening its ambitious vision for responsible and sustainable pet care.

Formed through the union of two historic Italian pet care companies, Camon and Croci, the group has embarked on a shared journey built on common values, respect for its heritage and a clear vision for the future.

With a strong portfolio of five brands (Camon, Croci, Amtra, Bobby, and Marpet), Camon&Croci Pet Group serves every major segment of the pet market, reinforcing its position as the ideal partner for retailers, professionals and pet owners alike.

The Group stands out as a European and international point of reference for the breadth of its offering, as well as for the quality and innovation of its products and services.

Interzoo: Hall 6, Booth 308

**Camon&Croci Pet Group**  
 info@croci.net  
 camon-crocipetgroupspa.com

# Packing a punch

Driven by changing consumer habits and attitudes, brands are rethinking packaging formats, materials and messaging, with a heightened focus on clarity and credibility.



**Diana Dominguez**  
Business Reporter  
GlobalPETS

As pet owners look beyond visual appeal when they buy a product, they are seeking environmental standards as well as nutritional and health benefits for their pets. Manufacturers must strive to meet these demands while still creating marketing impact.

## Upgrading for premium appeal

Kulbhushan Malik is Global Business Head at Cosmo Films, a Delhi-based manufacturer of specialty film for packaging. He says that beyond rising worldwide demand for packaged foods in general, and smaller pack sizes in particular, the pet food packaging market is also benefiting from growing global awareness of branded nutrition and higher spending on pets.

This shift in consumer behavior is driving innovation and compelling manufacturers to accelerate operational efficiencies.

Subscription models and changes in consumer lifestyles are pushing premium products. "With all of these trends, pet food packaging is shifting more towards specialty films, mostly among premium and DTC brands, as companies continue to spend more

on better finishes, unique laminates and functional nutrition segments," Malik says, adding that customers are seeking features such as matte finishes, soft colors, ingredient storytelling, see-through windows and clean typography.

An example of this is The J.M. Smucker Co., which has purposeful ingredients as part of its strategy. According to CEO Mark Smucker, the US corporation is modernizing the packaging of its pet brand Milk-Bone to highlight its protein content and functional attributes.

## E-commerce requires flexibility

Ray Recchia, Global Innovation Manager for Sustainable Paper Packaging at ProAmpac, an Ohio-based company, tells PETS International that the rapid expansion of e-commerce, along with the rise of single-serve and convenience-oriented formats, is accelerating demand for flexible packaging solutions.

Made from materials that can change shape when filled or during use, this type of packaging is widely used in pet food due to its durability and efficiency in distribution – particularly necessary for e-commerce. "These formats also provide high-impact graphics that communicate freshness, quality and premium positioning," Recchia says.

Malik explains that lightweighting (reducing the weight) and downgauging (reducing the material thickness) are facilitating transportation without affecting barrier properties. He agrees that e-commerce has also changed packaging designs, as they need to be stronger, puncture resistant and better for shipping purposes.

"There is clear rising demand for flat-bottom pouches, resealable zippers, retort pouches – multi-layered metal-plastic laminate packaging – for wet food and smaller trial formats," he says.

For pet owners, bags like this bring convenience given they are resealable, portable and support portion control. Malik says: "Furthermore, these demands are now coming with strict specifications, such as better barriers to oxygen and moisture to protect high-protein and fresh formulations."

### Packs of different dimensions

While small is popular, some customers are also looking for value and bulk options, which has led to pack sizes becoming more fragmented over the years. "Today, one

***While small is popular, some customers are looking for value and bulk options – meaning packaging must adapt.***

size doesn't fit all in pet food packaging. While larger 10-20kg packs are still popular, there has also been a demand for smaller 1-3kg packs, for trial purposes, retaining freshness or ease of use," Malik says.

According to Laura Latišonoka, Tetra Recart Product Management and Market Support Director at Tetra Pak, a Swiss-Swedish multinational packaging manufacturer, the continuous rise in the cost of living is prompting consumers to reassess their purchasing habits, which also influences demand for different pack sizes.

Many pet owners are choosing to buy in bulk, look for promotions, mix premium and more affordable brands, or research alternative options that offer both quality and value. "In response, producers may increasingly seek packaging solutions that help them meet these evolving consumer expectations while maintaining cost efficiency," Latišonoka says. [▶ SEE NEXT PAGE](#)

**NewAge Pet**  
[www.newagepet.com](http://www.newagepet.com)

Come see us at **Interzoo 2026**

**BOOTH  
7-157**





# Recyclable Ready Monomaterial Flexible Packaging



Visit Us  **Interzoo 2026**  
HALL 9 • STAND 9-422 • NUREMBURG

**12<sup>TH</sup>-15<sup>TH</sup>  
MAY**

In December last year, raw pet food manufacturer Carnivore Meat Company introduced a new 3lb (1.4kg) format for its Vital Essentials brand, as part of its continued expansion of pack sizes. The new format is now available across the US for both Crunchy Mini Nibs and Soft Nibs, two of the brand’s most popular freeze-dried meals.

“Every pet parent’s raw feeding journey looks different,” says Heather Govea, CEO of Carnivore Meat Company. “Expanding into a 3lb format allows us to better serve families who are ready for larger feeding routines, while continuing to support those just getting started.”

### High levels of personalization

For pet brands, personalization is an opportunity to venture into high-margin segments. They are now also incorporating this into their packaging by trying out breed-specific, age-specific and condition-specific segmentation to make pet food look unique or more distinctive.

Blue Buffalo, for instance, has invested in more segmented options, highlighting functional ingredients as well as age-specific messaging in its offerings. Dana McNabb, Group President of North America Retail and North America Pet at parent company General Mills, talked about this during a conference in February.

**Packaging customers are seeking features such as matte finishes, soft colors, ingredient storytelling, windows and clean typography.**

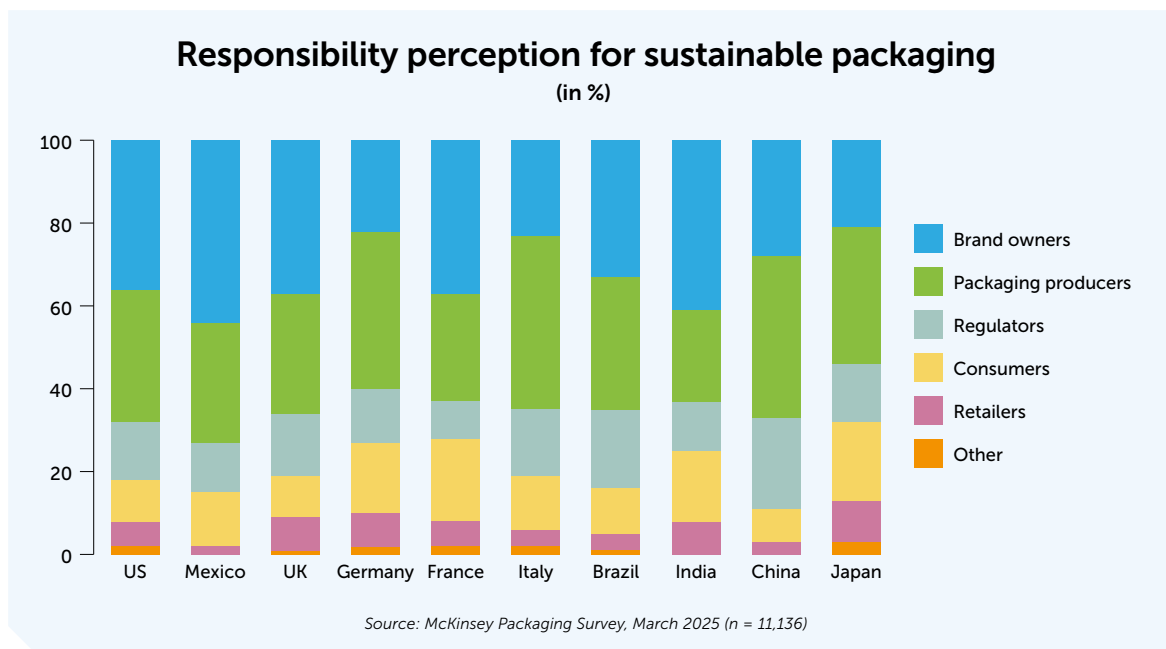
“We’re expanding support behind our new Life Protection Formula (LPF) salmon innovation, which is our biggest launch in three years and the third largest new product in the entire dog feeding segment. We’ve also expanded the assortment on our LPF senior dog food line,” she said.

### Sustainability and transparency

Material innovation is also being accelerated by sustainability expectations. Recchia explains that, when coupled with regulatory requirements, this is advancing the transition to Post-Consumer Recycled (PCR) content – material made from items that consumers recycle after use. This includes plastic bottles and aluminum foil, mono-material structures, recyclable formats and fiber-based solutions.

While brands are increasing investments in recyclable, compostable and plant-based packaging materials, the growing number of on-pack sustainability claims underscores the need for clearer messaging, according to consumer intelligence firm NielsenIQ.

▶ SEE NEXT PAGE



***Rapid e-commerce expansion, along with the rise of single-serve and convenience-oriented formats, is accelerating demand for flexible packaging solutions.***

The company explains that straightforward statements such as ‘recycle me please’ are clearer, but ambiguous or more technical claims such as ‘biodegradable’ and ‘eco-friendly’ – provided without context – can create confusion.

According to Euromonitor International’s 2025 Voice of the Consumer Lifestyles Survey, product labels and other information on packaging are perceived among consumers globally as some of the most trustworthy sources of information, ranking just behind word of mouth.

Retailers are beginning to prioritize shelf space for products with verified sustainability certifications, adding pressure for standardization. At the same time, transparent labeling is becoming more important. NielsenIQ data shows that nearly half of pet food products are formulated without artificial dyes, yet only a limited number explicitly communicate this on their packaging.

### **The regulatory imperative**

Regulations are being introduced across the world to reduce the environmental impact of packaging, and this also affects the pet industry. One example is Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR), a framework designed to improve sustainability and accountability across product lifecycles. It requires manufacturers to take greater financial responsibility – from production and distribution to the post-consumer stage, including the management of packaging waste.

In the UK, the Plastic Packaging Tax was introduced in 2022 to encourage higher rates of plastic waste collection and recycling. Across the US, EPR policies are also gaining momentum. As of August 2025, seven states – California, Colorado, Maine, Maryland, Minnesota, Oregon and Washington – have enacted packaging EPR laws, while more than a dozen others have introduced or are considering similar legislation.

Under these policies, brands may be required to report packaging data such as material type, weight

and recyclability, to pay EPR fees based on the environmental impact of materials, and to meet recycled content and recyclability targets over time.

TerraCycle, a private recycling company in the US, is working with the pet sector to help advance its EPR goals with in-store recycling programs. Some of its partners in the industry include pet retailer PetSmart, pet care company Mars Petcare, pet retail chains Pet Supplies Plus and Wag N’ Wash, plus pet food brand Earthborn Holistic

### **On-pack communication**

Harm Geurs is Director of Product Marketing at Missouri-based BW Packaging and provides strategic direction for the global bag filling and palletizing division. He says that on-pack communication is increasingly focused on recyclability, reduced material use and ingredient transparency. “In premium pet food, packaging plays a meaningful role in reinforcing trust, as consumers often associate packaging quality with product care, safety and brand credibility,” he says.

He explains that brands are navigating a balance between cost, sustainability, shelf impact and functional reliability. In terms of operational efficiency, producers are increasingly looking at automation and data-enabled performance.

“Producers are investing in systems that improve consistency, support shorter product lifecycles and reduce operational risk. These developments reflect the growing need for packaging operations that can absorb complexity without sacrificing efficiency,” Geurs says.

### **Improvements to materials**

ProAmpac has introduced sustainable packaging solutions for pet food products across both recyclable fiber and film formats. Its PRO-EVO Recyclable SOS Bags are multi-wall paper bags for pet kibble, designed with barrier properties and grease resistance while remaining recyclable.

For wet pet food, ProAmpac has developed recyclable mono-material film structures for both small and large bags, as well as mono-material retortable packaging.

Cosmo Films also expanded its flexible packaging portfolio last year with a new range designed for pet

food packaging. This includes films for outer layers used in printing and protection, materials for sealing or heat-processed packaging, and polyester films stretched in two directions to improve strength and stability.

The portfolio is designed for dry and wet pet food, treats and other functional nutrition segments, offering strong oxygen and moisture barrier performance. In addition, Cosmo Films launched a heat- and tear-resistant film that can withstand temperatures of up to 185°C.

### Collaborating on ways forward

In Switzerland, a three-way partnership has produced new recyclable packaging for pet food. This incorporates recycled plastic derived from advanced recycling processes that is food-contact approved. The initiative brings together Dow, a global materials science company, packaging manufacturer Zermatt and the Spanish pet food brand Nature's Variety.

The resulting pouch, specifically developed for Nature's Variety products, contains 10% recycled content. It is designed to support the EU's 2030 requirements

for contact-sensitive packaging under the Packaging and Packaging Waste Regulation (PPWR). The brand is aiming for 30% recycled content in four years' time.

A collaboration in France between sustainable packaging producer Mondi and pet food company Saga Nutrition led to the introduction last year of recyclable packaging for Saga's dry pet food portfolio.

The new design improves recyclability by replacing traditional multi-material plastics with a mono-material structure. It also incorporates secure sealing for easier storage and handling, while maintaining durability to protect products during transport and distribution.

### Impactful solutions

As both mainstream and niche pet food manufacturers continue to expand worldwide beyond specialty retail into grocery, mass and e-commerce channels, they are increasingly looking at how to use the packaging itself to make more impact. At the same time, they are improving packaging materials to meet today's demands from both consumers and distribution channels. ♦

Visit our booth at **Interzoo**  
**12 - 15 May** | Nuremberg, Germany  
**Booth #4A-304**

When scientific legacies  
join forces, **INNOVATION**  
**LEADS** the way.



**QUALITY IN  
PACKAGING:**  
EVEN OUR  
GREENEST SOLUTIONS  
MEET YOUR HIGHEST  
EXPECTATIONS.



**Quality always comes first in your new packaging projects with IPV PACK, even in the choice of sustainability.**

For pet food companies wanting to **protect our most precious resource**, Nature, we have come up with a number of packaging solutions responding to the need for a **circular economy**.

Like all our solutions, our **green packaging** guarantees product **safety** and **shelf life**. And it meets the **highest quality standards**, thanks to our experience and comprehensive monitoring throughout our production process.



See you at  **Interzoo 2026** *Always forward!*  
NUREMBERG, MAY 12/15 **Hall 4A - Stand 230**



Contact us: IPV Pack looks forward to working with you on custom packaging for your pet food products.

follow us:



[ipvpack.com](http://ipvpack.com)

**IPV PACK is an industry 4.0** company with BRCGS PACKAGING MATERIALS and UNI EN ISO 9001:2015 certification.



# Welfare check: what new EU regulation means

The introduction of minimum standards on how cats and dogs are bred, sold, sheltered and tracked is set to reshape the European pet market.



**Levie Cequena**  
Vice President  
Edelman Public & Government Affairs

With Europe close to adopting its first bloc-wide rules on the welfare and traceability of cats and dogs, there will be wide-ranging implications for breeders, sellers, shelters and others throughout the pet value chain. So, what do the new rules mean in practice and how can industry players best prepare?

## A set of minimum standards

In November 2025, the European Parliament and the Council of the European Union reached provisional agreement on minimum standards for how cats and dogs are bred, sold, sheltered and tracked. Formal adoption is expected in the first half of this year.

This will be the first time that such rules apply across the whole of the EU. That alone marks a significant shift for a market that has long existed under uneven national rules and a wide mix of formal and informal practices.

Much of the political attention has focused on animal welfare and cracking down on illegal trade, including practices such as puppy mills and unregulated cross-border sales. Those objectives sit at the heart of the agreement. But for the pet sector, the bigger change is less about the politics and more about what happens next.

These rules change how the market works in practice. They raise the baseline for how animals are bred and sold across Europe – reshaping cost structures, how the market operates and how trust is built with consumers. This has implications for breeders, sellers, shelters and others involved across the pet value chain.

## Higher baseline for EU pet market

The most immediate effects will be felt on the operational side. Minimum welfare requirements will apply across all member states, covering breeding limits, restrictions on harmful practices and mandatory veterinary oversight.

In many cases, breeders and sellers are not large commercial businesses, but individuals working out of private homes or in small local settings who have until now had to adhere to fewer formal requirements. For them, this means changes to everyday practice – from how animals are bred and cared for, to record keeping and veterinary involvement.

This shift also brings cost implications. Compliance moves from the margins to the core of how animals are bred and sold. At the same time, a more harmonized baseline brings greater predictability, making it easier for those working across borders – or interacting with buyers and platforms – to plan and act, even if national differences remain. [▶ SEE NEXT PAGE](#)

## Rerouting the path to success

The rules will also reshape competition. By raising minimum standards, they make it harder for low-compliance traders to compete on price by cutting corners on welfare and traceability.

Practices such as close inbreeding, non-medically justified mutilations and irresponsible breeding will no longer fall through regulatory cracks. That matters for responsible breeders and sellers, including small-scale ones, who have so far struggled to compete with others acting outside clear regulatory oversight.

Over time, the new standards will change the path to success in the market. Those who align early with higher welfare and transparency requirements will be better placed to compete on credibility rather than cost alone, particularly as cross-border enforcement becomes more consistent.

## Enhanced EU-wide traceability

The biggest change relates to traceability. All cats and dogs will need to be microchipped and registered before they are sold or donated, with national databases linked across the EU. That improves insight into how pets are moved around within the European market and leaves far less room for blind spots.

Illegal and informal trade, including puppy mills and unregulated cross-border sales, are being directly targeted by stricter identification at the point of sale and tighter oversight of online channels. For responsible breeders, sellers and shelters, enhanced traceability is not just a compliance exercise. It helps protect their reputation, supports responsible sourcing and builds trust among people looking to bring a pet into their home.

Crucially, imports will be subject to the same or equivalent requirements. Animals entering the EU will need to be registered within defined timeframes, and new tools such as the EU pet travel database will give authorities better visibility into non-commercial movements. Together, these measures will close longstanding loopholes and make it harder for non-compliant businesses to undercut those who are investing in animal welfare and traceability.

*Consumers care more than ever about where companion animals come from and how they are treated before they enter a home.*

More broadly, traceability changes the relationship between breeders, sellers, regulators and consumers. As identification and registration become standardized, expectations around accountability rise. That has implications not just for compliance, but for how trust is built between people breeding or rehoming animals and those buying or adopting them.

## How the industry can keep up

Registration systems, record keeping, veterinary relationships and day-to-day practices will need to be aligned, and anyone involved in breeding, selling or rehoming animals will need a clear understanding of what is expected of them. The phased implementation of these rules gives pet industry players some room to plan and adapt. However, that space will narrow quickly for those that hesitate.

Moreover, while the rules set EU-wide minimum standards, member states can go further. For those working across multiple countries, or interacting with buyers beyond their home market, this means keeping a close eye on how national approaches to implementation diverge and managing consistency.

Beyond compliance, there is a wider point about trust. Consumers care more than ever about where companion animals come from and how they are treated before they enter a home. Welfare standards, traceability and transparency are no longer side issues for the sector. Instead, they shape credibility and, ultimately, demand.

The new EU rules should not be seen as a choice between welfare and commercial viability, but as a necessary shift in how the market operates. By setting clearer expectations across Europe, the new rules will change the conditions for everyone involved. Those who engage early and adapt their practices will be more strongly and confidently positioned in a more regulated but also more trusted pet market. ♦

Spectrum Brands GERMANY

## A bigger stage for strong brands: Spectrum Brands Pet Care expands its Interzoo presence



**Spectrum Brands Pet Care will bring together its strong portfolio of individual brands to Interzoo on a significantly expanded stage, built to lead and designed for experience and partnership.**

Spectrum Brands Pet Care's Interzoo presence will consist of a main booth of nearly 300sq m featuring IAMS, EUKANUBA, FURminator, Good Boy, Nature's Miracle and 8in1. A second, adjacent stand of 40sq m will be dedicated entirely to the aquatics brand Tetra.

The main booth brings together the company's dog and cat expertise in an environment designed to encourage interaction and exchange.

An eye-catching two-level booth concept clearly separates immersive brand experiences on the ground floor from focused business discussions above, including three spacious meeting rooms, several semi-open seating areas and a dedicated hospitality zone with a coffee bar.

### Bringing brands to life

Across both booth areas, visitors will experience immersive brand worlds

with clearly defined zones, engaging storytelling and interactive touchpoints that make each brand identity tangible and memorable.

Interzoo's audience will have the opportunity to discover the world of Good Boy, the UK's No. 1 dog treat and toy brand and one of the most trusted names in the market. Good Boy stands for joyful bonding moments between dogs and their owners, offering a broad portfolio of high-quality snacks made with carefully selected ingredients.

From tasty meaty treats to long-lasting chews, the brand will showcase a wide selection designed to reward dogs in a fun yet responsible way.

Claire Wheeler, Director Marketing Snacks & Care, emphasizes: "Since the last Interzoo, we have enhanced our brand positioning and expanded our product portfolio. With a strong focus on

innovation, we're pleased to showcase our latest ranges."

Tasting opportunities and interactive product experiences will allow visitors to explore the variety, texture and appeal of the Good Boy portfolio first-hand. In addition, 8in1, one of the leading brands in the snack segment, will present its latest product innovations.

### EUKANUBA in action

One of the key highlights will be the EUKANUBA Action Wall, designed to bring the brand's performance DNA to life. As a premium nutrition brand rooted in science, EUKANUBA stands for high-quality animal protein as the first ingredient, tailored nutrition for every life stage and visible benefits such as healthy digestion and overall vitality.

A special spotlight will be placed on EUKANUBA Magic Pink World – a bold and eye-catching

► [SEE NEXT PAGE](#)

initiative that embodies innovation, confidence and modern premium positioning. Within this vibrant framework, EUKANUBA will introduce its new wet food portfolio, carefully developed to complement the brand's trusted dry range.

"We want to surprise, inspire and create wow moments. It will be bold, fresh and emotional," emphasizes Janina Garving, Director Marketing Dog & Cat Nutrition.

The booth will also showcase the strong presence of IAMS, a brand built on nutritional expertise and everyday trust. With a comprehensive portfolio of dry and wet food for both dogs and cats, IAMS delivers complete and balanced nutrition tailored to different life stages and specific needs.

Moreover, 2026 marks an outstanding milestone for IAMS as the brand celebrates its 80th anniversary. This anniversary represents eight decades of nutritional expertise, continuous innovation and strong consumer trust within the global pet care market.

### Tetra returns with ambition and a clear point of view

Tetra's return in 2026 marks a clear step forward in scale and ambition. The expanded footprint and the introduction of a dedicated Tetra Experience Area underline the brand's long-term commitment to the aquatics category and the specialist trade, while celebrating 75 years of brand history.

"Tetra's presence at Interzoo 2026 is about reasserting our leadership role in shaping the future of aquatics," says Casey Sims, Division Vice President Marketing & Innovation, GPC International. "By listening, sharing expertise and engaging in open, constructive dialogue with the industry."



### Experience, expertise and interaction

The Tetra Experience Area invites visitors to immerse themselves in a vibrant aquatics world, featuring beautifully designed aquariums with livestock, hands-on product experiences and insights into Tetra's 75-year legacy of scientific expertise and innovation.

A central highlight will be a live aquascaping workshop hosted by internationally recognised aquascaper and influencer Michał Adamek on Wednesday, 13 May, starting at 1pm. For several hours, Adamek will create a complete aquascape live on site while explaining his creative decisions and engaging directly with visitors throughout the process.

"Our ambition is to make aquatics more accessible, sustainable and rewarding – for retailers and hobbyists alike," adds Kristin Heithecker, Director Marketing Aquatics International. "By combining scientific expertise with education and inspiration, we want to help the trade grow the category through better experiences, not just more products."

### Cleaner homes, better care

Last but not least, Spectrum Brands' care segment will showcase its expertise through quality-driven solutions. FURminator, the original brand in grooming for cats, dogs and other furry animals, will present its range of products designed to make at-home grooming accessible and effective.

Visitors will be able to experience the quality of the original deShedding Tool first-hand, demonstrating the brand's authority in coat care.

Nature's Miracle completes the care portfolio with its effective and safe pet stain and odor removers. A sensory highlight at the booth will be the fragrance tester, allowing visitors to apply Nature's Miracle's versatile fragrances to carpet samples and experience them directly.

### Interzoo as a place for global dialogue

Compared to the previous edition, Spectrum Brands Pet Care will increase its exhibition space by approximately 25%, becoming the largest exhibitor in Hall 3C. The expansion reflects a clear commitment to brand building and to personal, in-depth dialogue with partners across the global pet care industry.

"Our presence at Interzoo 2026 is about much more than visibility," says Patrick Kaczynski, Senior Category & Trade Marketing Manager at Spectrum Brands Pet Care. "It is about creating the right space where our brands come to life – and where conversations strengthen partnerships, build trust and move categories forward." ♦

**Interzoo: Hall 3C, Booth 316**

**Spectrum Brands**  
[spectrumbrands.com](https://www.spectrumbrands.com)

# EU deals set to expand pet trade horizons



**Lower duties could unlock new markets for European brands while also enabling emerging producers to trade more productively with the bloc.**



**Thaís Matos**  
*Senior Business Reporter*  
*GlobalPETS*

In January, the EU signed two promising trade deals: a Partnership Agreement with four Southern Common Market (Mercosur) countries – Brazil, Argentina, Paraguay and Uruguay – and a Free Trade Agreement with India. While both could ultimately increase trade volumes, industry players expect the effects to unfold gradually.

## Changing international climate

The new deals either remove or decrease tariffs on exports of goods, including pet products and food, paving the way for strengthening the pet industry worldwide. The moves come at a time when international trade is reorganizing, after the US increased tariffs on several countries in 2025.

## High levies to be abolished

Within Mercosur, Brazil is the biggest EU trading partner, but its basic import tax is 12.6% for pet food plus additional levies of 18.2%. The EU-Mercosur deal plans to end customs duties on cat and dog food imports in two different ways.

For some products, such as food that doesn't contain starch or milk, there will be an immediate elimination

of tariffs when the agreement comes into effect. For others, reductions will follow a schedule of 11 equal annual stages, leading to items becoming completely duty-free by year 10. This classification takes into account the different formulations and the presence of glucose and maltodextrin (powdered filler or preservative) beyond starch and milk.

In March, after all four Mercosur countries ratified the trade deal, the European Commission (EC) set in motion the process to provisionally implement the agreement, likely from the start of May. This interim arrangement would then remain in effect until final ratification, after which it would be replaced by a comprehensive trade deal and investment accord.

Meanwhile, the agreement with India – which the EC describes as the largest trade deal ever concluded by either side – also covers the agri-food sector and will reduce the current tariffs on pet food imports from levels of up to 50% to zero.

## Opportunities for premium exports

Industry players expect the deals to create excellent opportunities for pet supplies in general, but especially for the premium and specialized pet food segments in emerging countries. "The tariff reductions outlined in these agreements are expected to significantly boost European pet food exports to new

▶ [SEE NEXT PAGE](#)

**The agreement with India will reduce the current tariffs on pet food imports from levels of up to 50% to zero.**

markets while strengthening our existing presence,” Tommaso Gagliardi, Group Sales Director at French-based business Nasta Pet Food, tells PETS International.

“This is particularly true for premium and high-quality products, such as therapeutic diets like our leading brand Forza10, which are currently confined to a niche segment due to high import duties,” Gagliardi adds.

It is common practice for international companies to avoid costs and barriers in the export process by establishing a presence locally, such as Farmina Pet Foods, which opened its first Latin American distribution center in Brazil in 2025, and Nestlé Purina, which invested CHF370 million (\$472M/€409M) in a wet pet food factory in the country in March 2026.

**Following the letter of the agreement**

Without this local production, some companies are uncertain about operating in emerging countries. During the 2026 GlobalPETS Forum, German-based Bunny Nature, which produces food for small mammals, and the Spanish manufacturer of dairy products for pets YowUp! told PETS International

that they were following the agreement precisely to overcome barriers and enter the countries sustainably without margin loss or uncompetitive prices for new products.

**Entering the EU market**

Producers from emerging countries also hope to gain a share of the European market, which is considered demanding in terms of quality. One of them is the Brazilian pet food manufacturer Special Dog Company, which currently exports to 13 countries in Latin America and Africa.

Rafael Venanzoni, Foreign Trade Manager, says the firm already has plans to qualify its 218,000sq m São Paulo production plant for export to the EU and is evaluating strategic commercial opportunities. “Entry will be planned gradually, prioritizing markets with greater regulatory and commercial synergy.”

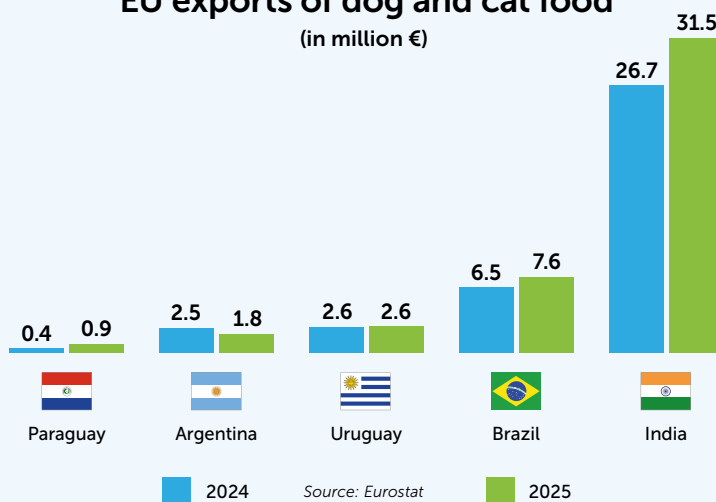
**Improved margins**

According to Nasta Pet Food, the new deals may initially have a greater impact on profit than on sales performance. “In the short term, the reduction in duties will help stabilize and improve profit margins,” Gagliardi explains. Over time, however, increased accessibility and broader consumer awareness are likely to drive higher sales. “Volumes will grow in the medium to long term, as the consumer base expands,” he adds.



**EU exports of dog and cat food**

(in million €)



Gagliardi does not anticipate a “drastic decline in retail prices” for European companies operating in these markets, as their brands and products will likely have a competitive advantage in quality-oriented categories – premium and super-premium – rather than in more price-sensitive categories, where domestically produced items may be cheaper.

### Gains for ingredients and tech

Beyond food, players also expect benefits in the trade of ingredients and technology. According to Venanzoni, the agreement could generate some opportunities for importing micro-ingredients, functional additives, processing technologies and packaging from the EU into Latin America and India.

Sebastian Dates, General Manager of the Argentine Chamber of Animal Nutrition Companies (CAENA), also highlights the potential to reduce the cost of accessing these materials.

“It will allow the import of ingredients or additives from the EU that are not produced in our countries at a lower cost, thus improving the competitiveness of our products,” Dates says.

### Working both ways

The benefit also goes in the opposite direction. Mercosur countries are major producers of grains, meat byproducts and other agricultural commodities used in pet food, often in volumes that exceed domestic demand, say both Venanzoni and Dates, which creates opportunities for supplying European manufacturers more easily.

For instance, Brazil recorded a record grain harvest between 2024 and 2025, reaching 352.2 million tons and representing a 17% increase compared to the previous cycle, according to the country’s Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Food Supply.

“In livestock farming, production reached record levels for beef, pork and chicken, allowing for exportable surpluses,” the Ministry says, stating that beef exports generated \$17.9 billion (€15.5B) in revenue, a 39.9% annual increase.

### Monitoring developments

Companies operating in the global ingredient market are watching the potential impact of the agreements. German supplier Symrise, which provides flavors and aroma for pet food manufacturers, considers Brazil one of its key markets for sourcing natural raw materials.

While the company does not comment directly on trade policy, it says it is closely monitoring developments to ensure continuity in its supply chains.

▶ [SEE NEXT PAGE](#)

## Mineral solutions for cat litter

### Clumping

- ✔ European super premium bentonite grades
- ✔ Excellent clumping ability
- ✔ High absorption capacity
- ✔ Liquid retention

### Non Clumping

- ✔ Natural moler grades
- ✔ High absorption capacity
- ✔ Active odor control
- ✔ Lightweight

### Deodorizers

•NEW•

- ✔ Natural zeolite grades
- ✔ Odor control
- ✔ Dust free
- ✔ Compatible with all cat litter types



Meet us at

 **Interzoo 2026**

**Hall 4  
Stand 227**

12 – 15 May 2026  
Nuremberg,  
Germany



***Industry players expect the deals to create excellent opportunities for the premium and specialized pet food segments in emerging countries.***

In 2023, Symrise opened a 10,000sq m production facility in southern Brazil to make liquid and powder palatants, aiming to triple its capacity for pet food palatants in preparation for rising demand in the region. The company's total sales in Latin America grew by 6.6% during 2025 to €654.6 million (\$754.5M).

### **Meeting standards to reap benefits**

Since the pet sector is highly regulated and the EU maintains strict standards for traceability, labeling and food safety, the effective impact of these agreements will depend on how well South American and Indian companies adapt to technical and certification requirements, says Venanzoni.

He therefore anticipates easier access to the EU market only in the medium to long term, both due to the gradual reduction in tariffs and to the necessary adaptation to sanitary and phytosanitary (SPS) requirements, which demand investment and preparation.

The EU did remove a large number of SPS barriers in 2024 and 2025. According to a report from the EC, this had a "direct positive impact on the European food sector". Of all the barriers faced in 2024, the largest share (48%) was related to the agriculture and fisheries sector, which includes pet food.

### **Harmonization and simplification**

Gagliardi is also cautious, saying: "Trade agreements represent an essential first step toward opening new markets and accelerating international development. However, the main challenge remains regulatory harmonization, along with the simplification and acceleration of product registration processes and export documentation."

He cites the example of Nasta Pet Food's SANYpet plant in Italy, which has been awaiting registration in markets such as Colombia, Mexico and Peru for over a year, despite having submitted all required documentation.

"Greater harmonization should be the next priority to unlock the full potential of these trade agreements," is his assessment.

For Bernardo Otero, Leader of Latin American Operations at the consulting firm Nexus Animal Health, this is also an opportunity, as the requirements will increase demand for innovative and veterinary-backed products in the Mercosur countries. "To remain competitive in EU-bound supply chains, producers in Mercosur will need stronger biosecurity protocols, improved disease surveillance, preventive vaccination strategies, responsible antimicrobial use and digital traceability systems," Otero says.

In this sense, the new agreement does establish SPS standards for products traded between the blocs, while the EC and Brazil have committed to establishing a joint SPS Committee that will be formed by the EU and Mercosur.

### **Pushing growth further**

Among the four Mercosur markets, it is Brazil that has the most significant share of the trade. In 2025, EU exports of dog and cat food for retail sale in the country increased by almost 16%, reaching €7.6 million (\$8.7M). The other Mercosur nations traded in smaller volumes with the EU.

Argentinian imports of dog and cat food fell by a quarter, totaling €1.8 million (\$2M) last year. Uruguay, meanwhile, registered a small 1.6% increase in dog and cat food imports, which meant they remained at around €2.6 million (\$3M). And despite representing the smallest quantity exported from Europe among the bloc, Paraguay accounted for the largest annual increases in 2025. Purchases of dog and cat food nearly doubled, reaching €869,627 (\$1M).

Compared to Mercosur, the EU exports significantly more dog and cat food to India. In 2025 this amounted to €31.5 million (\$36.2M), a 17.9% YoY increase. With trade already expanding between the major countries, these agreements have the potential to push growth further, strengthening premium offerings and improving access to technology in the medium to long term – with the proviso that companies act to comply with regulatory standards. ♦

# Bilateral agreements boost pet industry exports



**With simplified procedures and clear certification requirements, governments are creating pathways to meet increasing global demand.**



**Thaís Matos**  
Senior Business Reporter  
GlobalPETS

Food production is rising, with the UN's Food and Agriculture Organization projecting 6% growth in global per capita calorie intake from livestock and fish products over the next decade. To meet this need, countries are making bilateral agreements to encourage agri-food exports, including pet food and its ingredients.

## Canadian-Mexican accord

In October 2025, representatives of the agriculture ministries of Canada and Mexico met to outline strategies for bilateral relations and, at the same time, to strengthen cooperation and trade ties, following the 2025-2028 Action Plan launched by both countries in September.

According to the Canadian Ministry of Agriculture and Agri-Food, trade between the countries in the agri-food sector had already increased by 50% between 2018 and

2023, but there is still room for growth, especially in the grain, oilseed, horticulture and animal protein segments.

## New opening for pet food

Within the broader plan for trade, the two governments also specified pet food as a target segment. They agreed to create a certificate that will provide new access for Canadian pet food that contains bovine ingredients to the Mexican market.

Until now, pet food containing these ingredients could not be exported to Mexico due to Canada's previous risk status for BSE (bovine spongiform encephalopathy), a fatal brain disease in cows. Canada's status was updated in May 2021 by the World Organisation for Animal Health, which now considers the country to have negligible risk for the disease.

Four years later, in November 2025, the Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) published the 'Veterinary certificate for dog and cat food and treats exported from Canada to Mexico'. This document

[▶ SEE NEXT PAGE](#)

requires that products meet 12 phytosanitary criteria, including post-mortem inspection of raw material, in addition to establishing specific treatments for pork, beef, poultry and aquatic meats.

### Updated import and export rules

In 2025, the CFIA also updated 18 guidelines for the country's pet food imports and exports. On the import side, one of these was the simplification of documentation requirements for pet food products from the US, effective from April 2025. And on the export side, the country approved the removal of two requirements for shipments exported to the US.

### Brazilian ingredients go global

Between September and October 2025, Brazil signed three export agreements affecting pet food ingredients. The Brazilian government also announced last year that sanitary certificates for animal feed and pet food exports can now be issued three times faster after measures to reduce bureaucracy.

The Brazilian Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Food Supply concluded sanitary negotiations with the Japanese government for the export of products based on poultry, pork and beef fat used in the manufacture of both animal feed and pet food. The agreement will expand the agribusiness partnership between the two countries, as Brazil is already a "leading supplier of soybeans and corn" to Japan, the ministry says.

### Expanding markets

The Brazilian government has also finalized sanitary agreements for the export of powdered eggs for animal feed, raw pork materials and fresh pork to Argentina. "With over 45 million inhabitants, Argentina has an expanding pet product market, with growing demand for products geared towards the animal nutrition industry," it says. The aim was to expand an already strong partnership in agroforestry products, cocoa and coffee.

More recently, during a visit by representatives of the Brazilian government to India, Brazil obtained authorization to export new products of animal origin to the South Asian country. Among the products that received certification are derivatives of bovine bones, horns and hooves.

### *Between September and October 2025, Brazil signed three export agreements affecting pet food ingredients.*

According to the Brazilian Deputy Agricultural Minister, Marcel Moreira, the agreements will serve different segments of the food, chemical and pharmaceutical industries. This includes the production of gelatins and pet food. Moreira also says that the meeting advanced negotiations regarding the export of pet food itself, but an agreement has not yet been signed.

### Mexico agrees to Brazilian ISC

Earlier in 2025, the country had already celebrated other advances related to pet food. In July, Mexico approved Brazil's International Sanitary Certificate (ISC) model for pet food exports, opening its market to Brazilian pet products. The ISC is a document that proves compliance with international hygiene and health standards for exported products.

### Easing barriers

The role of agreements in maintaining and increasing exports of agri-food products is recognized by many institutions worldwide. Smooth global trade depends not only on the elimination or reduction of tariffs, but also on how sectors deal with barriers regarding quality and safety while always meeting the necessary standards. ♦



# Where plants and dogs agree

Plant-based dog food.  
Guaranteed nutrition, proven  
taste. No cross-contamination.  
Built for brands.

**Brandenburch is taking the next step in plant-based dog food and treats. As a private label, well substantiated, healthy, scalable and without cross-contamination of animal protein. Made in Holland.**

At the upcoming edition of Interzoo, Brandenburch will be presenting something new that goes beyond just a product launch. It is a strategic step based on years of development, research and manufacturing expertise: complete plant-based kibbles and snacks for dogs. Not a consumer brand but a carefully thought-through solution for brands that are ready for the future of pet nutrition.

Brandenburch normally operates behind the scenes, as a specialist manufacturer of plant-based pet food and as a partner for brands, retailers and concept developers. At Interzoo, however, the company will be stepping forward emphatically with a clear statement: plant-based dog food is no longer a trend but an evidence-based and industrially viable sustainable category.

## From discussion to evidence, nutrients over ingredients

The debate around plant-based dog food is shifting. Whereas previously the main focus was on ingredients, this

is increasingly shifting to nutritional composition. After all, dogs do not need specific ingredients like 'meat' in their diet; they need the right balance of specific nutrients.

Brandenburch is embracing that scientific approach. In collaboration with a recognized external team of specialists (nutritionists and veterinarians), a recipe has been developed based on one core principle. It is not the origin of the raw materials that is decisive but the correct nutritional value of the final product.

For Joyce Hofman, after whom Joyce Hofman Animal Clinics is named, and her team of 14 veterinarians, this approach is a logical step into the future of pet nutrition: "Not as a niche but as a full-fledged and flavorful food that brings together health, sustainability and practical experience. If the nutritional balance is right, a plant-based diet for dogs can be complete and healthy. In my practice, I see that for many pets it works very well and is a sustainable

nutritional model." That is exactly where Brandenburch stands out as a manufacturer.

## Developed in house, validated by experts

Instead of using a generic recipe, Brandenburch opted to undertake an intensive in-house development process. The plant-based kibbles and snacks are built from functional nutritional goals: protein quality, amino acid profile, digestibility, taste acceptance and stability in production.

According to an independent veterinarian and FEDIAF-qualified nutritionist specialized in dog nutrition, who is heavily involved in the development of the Brandenburch recipes: "For dogs, nutrition is not about the ingredient but about the nutrients. If all the essential nutrients are present in the right balance, this plant-based recipe can form a complete and healthy diet. So, with the right knowledge and formulation, it is a relevant and responsible [▶ SEE NEXT PAGE](#)

choice within the spectrum of modern dog foods. That is exactly how Brandenburch has approached it."

This is crucial for B2B parties because the market is becoming more critical. Claims need to be substantiated – toward retailers, consumers and in terms of regulation.

### **Taste and acceptance, a crucial factor**

One of the most prevalent misconceptions surrounding plant-based dog food is that acceptance by dogs poses a challenge. Brandenburch has therefore explicitly invested in professional palatability testing and recipe development by an independent, FEDIAF-qualified nutritionist highly respected by veterinarians. The test is carried out in a familiar home environment with specially trained dog owners, for reliable measurement.

The result: products that are not only nutritionally complete but also proven to be appealing in terms of smell, texture and taste experience for dogs. This makes them suitable for both complete foods and snacks and as functional supplements.

For brands, this means they do not have to choose between sustainability and performance – a tension that has often been a barrier in the past.

### **Unique benefits, no cross-contamination, smaller batches**

In addition to the substantive underpinning, Brandenburch has an important industrial advantage that is rarely highlighted and/or achievable within the sector: production without the risk of cross-contamination of animal protein.

Because the production of these plant-based recipes takes place in a plant-based factory without animal proteins, a clean production chain is guaranteed. For brands seeking to ensure transparency and traceability, this is a strategic differentiator. Especially in a market where consumers and retailers are increasingly demanding provenance, sustainability and the integrity of production chains.

### **Private label, an accelerator of innovation**

Whereas many manufacturers opt for their own consumer brand to launch innovation, Brandenburch deliberately chooses private label. This is part of its DNA: to strengthen partners rather than compete.

The new plant-based line is therefore being presented as a white-label concept. Physical samples will be handed out at the Interzoo fair. This finished product significantly lowers the threshold for a market launch. Brands do not have to go through an R&D journey taking years but can enter the market with a proven, scalable and evidence-based solution.

Besides a finished product, Brandenburch also has all the space and knowledge for co-creation through tailor-made recipes. The product can also be introduced into existing product lines as a plant-based variant within the overall range.

### **Momentum in the market**

The timing of this introduction is anything but coincidental. The international pet food market is moving toward sustainable healthy sources of protein, transparent insights into ingredient provenance and more plant-based ingredients and nutrition.

Retailers are seeking distinction. Brands are seeking credible innovations. And consumers are becoming more critical of sustainable impact, product composition and promise. Within that force field, Brandenburch positions itself as a substantive partner and manufacturer that makes the delivery of quality and innovation practicable.

### **A clear vision**

Brandenburch's core message is clear: the future of dog food is about quality, health and sustainability. And is, therefore, plant-based. The focus is on nutrients, not dogma around ingredients. Plant-based is not a replacement out of necessity but a fully-fledged alternative from the point of view of innovation, sustainability and scientific evidence. And tastefully appreciated by the end customer, the dog.

Combining this vision with industrial scalability and private label flexibility, Brandenburch positions itself as a progressive manufacturer in the international pet food sector. With the unique advantage of no cross-contamination of animal proteins.

### **An invitation to progressive brands**

The message toward the market is therefore an invitation. Come and have a chat. Experience the product. Ask the critical questions. And discover how plant-based dog food, backed by expertise and produced without any cross-contamination risk, can become a reality within your own brand strategy today. ♦

**Interzoo: Hall 2, Booth 335**

**Brandenburch Asten**  
*brandenburch.com*

# Kids vs pets: a growing gap

As birth rates decline globally and families become smaller, dogs and cats are increasingly at the heart of the household.



**Thaís Matos**  
Senior Business Reporter  
GlobalPETS

Data collected by PETS International reveals that in several countries around the globe, populations of companion animals now outnumber those of young people – by a factor of up to four. What are the reasons behind this phenomenon and what are its implications for the pet industry?

## Contrasting global curves

Data provided by Euromonitor International helps to illustrate this global trend. With statistics from 47 countries in Europe, Asia, Oceania, the Middle East and North America, it shows two curves going in opposite directions: while birth rates tumbled from 2020 to 2025, the dog and cat population is continuously growing.

The market research firm's analysis projects that the gap will widen further over the next five years. The compound rate of these 47 countries dropped from 17 births per 1,000 population in 2020 to 16 per 1,000 in 2025. By 2030, Euromonitor projects it will fall to just over 15.

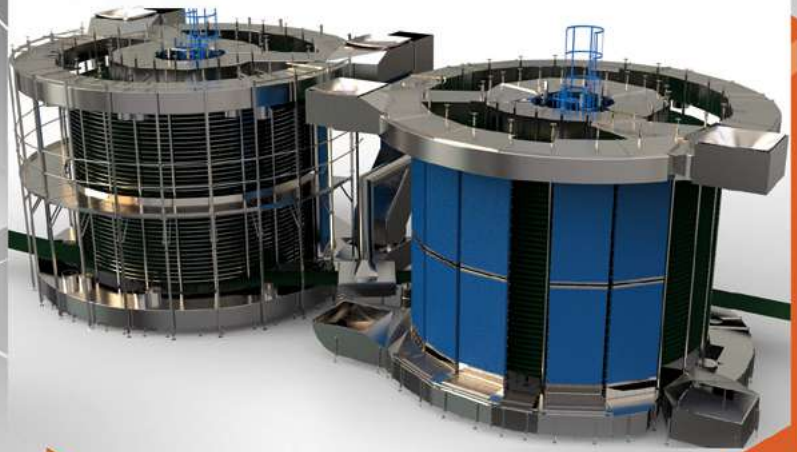
In comparison, the total number of dogs and cats, which was just over 900 million in 2020, passed the one billion mark in 2025, and is expected to reach more than 1.1 billion by 2030. While Euromonitor's data shows that the two trajectories were more pronounced during the pandemic, it indicates that these diverging trends may well continue.

## What the figures reveal

Looking at the number of births relative to the total population helps us to understand the pace of demographic change, which is growing more slowly in many countries. But for the pet sector it's particularly interesting to compare the effective population sizes of dogs and cats in different countries and regions to that of the numbers of children and young people that make up households.

In Australia, for instance, as of March 2025 there are more than 31.6 million pets living across 7.7 million households. According to this Animal Medicines Australia data, 13.1 million of these pets are dogs and cats – twice as many as the number of children and young people in the nation: 6.4 million in June 2024 (Australian Bureau of Statistics).

[▶ SEE NEXT PAGE](#)



# QDS<sup>®</sup> BAKE

## PET TREATS: DRY & COOK & BAKE SOLUTIONS

- **New All-in-One technology:**  
Dehydrating, cooking and baking by forced convection
- **Acceleration of Innovation:**  
Allows to develop new foods and treats for pets
- **Great Versatility:**  
Possibility to dry & cook & bake any type of product and format
- **Process Optimization:**  
Continuous system, with superior performance and lower energy consumption
- **Full Connectivity 5.0:**  
Full control of the process



*from tradition —  
to disruption*

Numbers of pets as well as young people and children have increased in the country in recent years, but at quite different rates. Between 2022 and 2025, the pet population grew by 10%, while the child and youth population increased by 2.5% from 2022 to 2024. Although this is a comparison between three- and four-year periods, the pet population is clearly growing at a faster pace.

### Zooming in on Europe

France has a relatively high number of pets in total: 75.1 million in 2024, according to FACCO, the country's Federation of Pet Food Manufacturers. The dog and cat population is smaller, at just over 26 million, but still enough to surpass the 15.8 million children and young people aged 0-19 living in the country in 2024, according to data from Eurostat.

In the UK, statistics from the industry association UK Pet Food put the number of cats and dogs in 2024 at 26 million – out of a total of 36 million pets in the country. This was more than double that of the Office of National Statistics data for UK youth aged 0-19, which was 15.9 million in the same year.

In Poland, both the numbers of dogs (8.5 million) and cats (7.5 million) are higher than the youth population registered in the country (7.3 million), according to data from Eurostat and FEDIAF, the trade body representing the European pet food industry. The most recent data for the total number of pets in the country, which

includes birds, fish, small mammals and terraria, was 19 million in 2023.

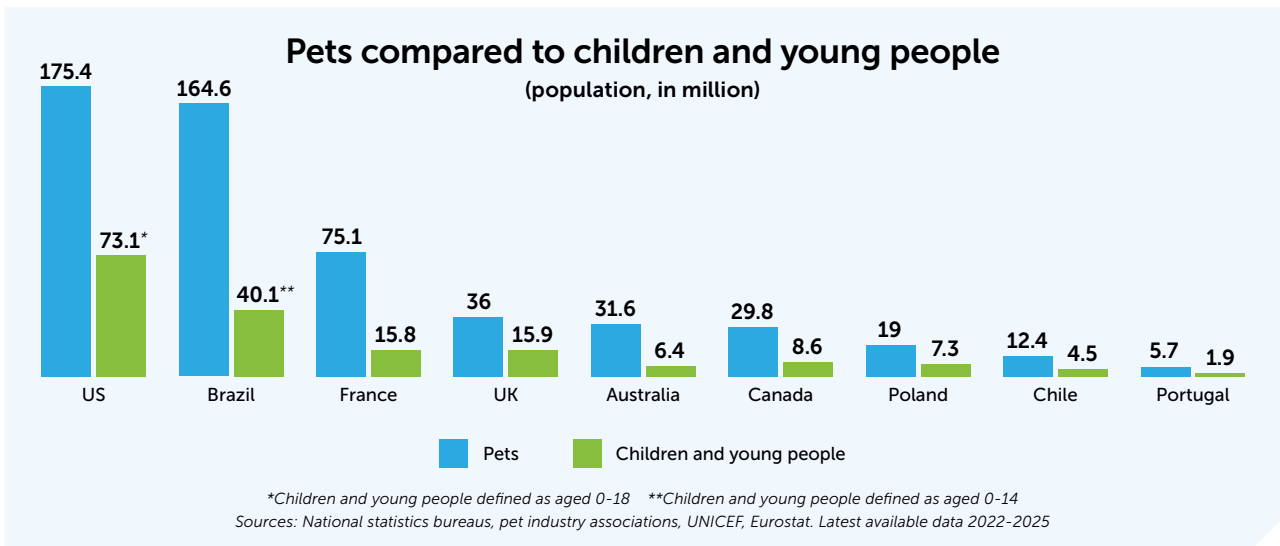
Even in Portugal – a much smaller country – the number of pets, at 5.7 million according to FEDIAF, is almost three times higher than that of children and young people aged 0-19 (1.9 million, according to Eurostat).

### Similar trends in the Americas

Brazil's pet population numbered 164.6 million in 2025, according to data from the Brazilian association of pet companies Abempet. That's four times the number of children and teenagers aged 0-14 counted in the country's most recent census. This age group has seen a significant decline since 2010: from 45.9 million in 2010 (24.1% of the total population) to 40.1 million in 2022 (19.8%).

Chile shows similar patterns to Brazil, with 12.4 million dogs and cats recorded in the country in 2022, the most recent data released by the government, and 4.5 million children and teenagers aged 0-19 in 2024, according to official data.

In the US, more than 175.4 million pets (of which almost 87.3 million are dogs and 76.3 million cats, according to the American Veterinary Medical Association's 2025 data) also outnumbered the 73.1 million young people under the age of 18 in 2024. The youth population in the US declined recently, by 1.7% from 2020 to 2024, according to the US's Census Bureau. [▶ SEE NEXT PAGE](#)



More northerly, Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada data for 2024 gives approximately 29.8 million pets in the country (which includes 8.9 million cats and 8.3 million dogs) versus Statistics Canada's 2025 figure of 8.6 million children aged 19 or under.

### Declining human populations

In a study for the International Monetary Fund (IMF), professors David E. Bloom, Michael Kuhn and Klaus Prettner say the declines in fertility rates and total populations "hold for much of the world" from 2000-2025 and "will most likely continue over the next 25 years", except for Africa and "low-income countries on other continents".

The IMF researchers also say that the "world's fertility rate stands at 2.24 and is projected to drop below 2.1 around 2050", with only Africa presenting a positive replacement rate. Other international and national organizations also regularly express their concern about this trend, such as intergovernmental agency the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD).

### Explanatory factors

In June 2025, the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) published *The Real Fertility Crisis*, a study in which it analyzes the causes of this phenomenon. Among them, the agency points to a lack of economic security and personal empowerment.

Together with YouGOV, UNFPA surveyed 14,000 adults in 14 countries between November and December 2024. Findings suggest that financial constraints are the biggest barrier to starting a family (39%), followed by unemployment or job insecurity (21%) and housing limitations (19%).

In addition to economic reasons, respondents also cited health and concerns about the future, but to a lesser extent. Reasons given include the lack of a suitable partner (14%), concerns about the political or social situation (14%), someone changing their mind (13%) or a partner who wants fewer children (13%).

### Changing lifestyles

Lower numbers of children open other opportunities, as the IMF study points out, one of them being "less need for spending on housing and childcare" and another

***While the number of children has been decreasing, the pet population continues to grow and occupy an increasingly central place within families.***

that these resources "could be reallocated". Population decline may also reduce pressures on the environment.

"People having fewer kids is contributing toward pets becoming the subject of human caregiving. Lifestyle choices such as 'DINKWADs' – double income, no kids, with a dog – are enabling more time, money and attention to flow towards pets," explains Sahiba Puri, Global Insight Manager, Pet Care at Euromonitor International.

"Factors like urban isolation, single person households and flexible work-from-home arrangements also contribute to pets finding their way into homes, as people look for companionship," she adds.

### Today's pet parents

The effects for the pet industry go beyond premiumization, as demand is becoming "more sophisticated", is Puri's analysis. The increased focus on functional health benefits and high-quality nutrition will push innovation in the field, as owners look for the next step.

This new consumer will likely boost the industry, leading to even more investment in the coming years. "Over the forecast period 2025-2030, the global pet care industry is expected to grow at a CAGR of 3%," Puri concludes.

The widespread global phenomenon of declining birth rates is becoming more pronounced every year. But while the number of children has been decreasing, the pet population continues to grow and occupy an increasingly central place in families of all shapes and sizes.

The shrinking youth population on the one hand, and increases in pet ownership on the other, point to a long-term shift in which companion animals will play an even more important role in households. It will be up to the industry to keep pace with the demand for human-grade pet products, services and care. ♦



**DANA Technology DENMARK**

## How DANA Technology helps pet food manufacturers get more from their raw materials

**DANA Technology helps wet pet food producers extract more value from lower-grade raw materials with two specialist processing technologies.**

The Danish company, based in Tommerup, designs and builds processing machinery for wet pet food manufacturers worldwide.

With a team of more than 150 years of combined experience, it handles every project from specification and engineering to commissioning, with each setup adapted to the customer's existing production environment.

### Texturizing lower-grade meat

The DANA Rotary Disc Texturizer (RDT), developed in-house by Lars Christian Nielsen and protected by a US patent (US Patent 12419325 B2), processes lower-grade meat raw materials and converts them into structured, meat-like premium chunks. This includes salmon trimmings, poultry offcuts and mechanically separated meat.

Through a combination of rotation and heat, it coagulates proteins into a

texture that looks, feels and performs like premium whole-muscle meat.

The practical outcome is that manufacturers can take raw materials that would otherwise produce a lower-value product and turn them into something that competes directly with prime-cut pet food on appearance, texture and shelf price. Six new RDT units have been shipped to manufacturers across multiple countries, with more finalized for shipment.

"One of our customers was recovering around 70% of usable product from their salmon raw material before the RDT," says CEO Vagn Hansen. "Now they are above 90%, and the finished chunk looks and performs like a premium product. That changes both what a production line costs to run and what it earns."

### Cooking and shaping at scale

DANA Technology also builds the Steam

and Cooling Tunnel, which handles the cooking and shaping of wet pet food at capacities between 500kg and 4,000kg per hour.

Delivering consistent results across batches, it includes an automated cleaning system that reduces downtime between production runs. Both machines are backed by a team with more than 150 years of combined experience in food and pet food processing.

"A lot of manufacturers we meet are leaving value on the table without realizing it," says Head of Sales Pedro Fossat. "They have the raw material, they just do not have the right machine to do something useful with it." ♦

**Interzoo: Hall 4A, Booth 419**

**DANA Technology**  
*dana-technology.dk*

# A new pathway for bringing animal feed ingredients to the US market



Thanks to the SRIS program, pet food manufacturers now have better and faster access to innovative ingredients, enhancing their competitiveness.



**Austin Therrell**  
*Executive Director*  
AAFCO

Since October 2025, a streamlined Scientific Review of Ingredient Submissions (SRIS) program has been accepting applications for new animal food ingredient definitions and modifications to existing definitions. The program was developed by the Association of American Feed Control Officials (AAFCO) in partnership with Kansas State University's Olathe Innovation Campus (K-State Olathe).

## Expediting the process

Without SRIS, the US animal food industry would face barriers to innovation and the standardization of feed ingredients, according to the developers.

It is a faster process for evaluating the safety and intended use of proposed new ingredient definitions, which form a key part of the AAFCO Official Publication that standardizes ingredient terminology, providing consistency in interstate commerce.

SRIS halves the time involved in assessing new animal food ingredients, while still ensuring safety and accuracy. Besides improving responsiveness, transparency, fairness and openness for ingredient

innovators, this accelerated process will help pet food businesses to act quickly on the international stage.

## Complementary to FAP and GRAS

SRIS is intended to complement the current Generally Recognized as Safe (GRAS) program by the US Food and Drug Administration (FDA), providing the animal food industry with an additional option for introducing new and innovative products to the market. In fact, the SRIS pathway is the only regulatory process that provides a formal review of animal food ingredient definitions that neither the FDA's Food Additive Petition (FAP) nor the GRAS pathways fulfill.

## Saving valuable time

The modernized regulatory pathway allows for ingredient reviews to be done in half the time it currently takes the FDA's Center for Veterinary Medicine. Despite this, the process ensures safety and accuracy by upholding rigorous scientific standards and transparency.

Through SRIS, prospective ingredients undergo scientific evaluation by independent consultants and subject matter experts (SMEs) from universities across the US. Because the leading experts are the individuals involved in the review, safety standards and scientific integrity remain intact.

*The modernized regulatory pathway allows for ingredient reviews to be done in half the time it currently takes the FDA's Center for Veterinary Medicine.*

### Scientific expertise

The SMEs who conduct expert panel reviews within the SRIS framework are selected based on their areas of expertise, screened for potential conflicts of interest and trained to review new and innovative ingredients that would benefit the US animal food industry in a manner that preserves scientific rigor.

The SRIS Program Manager is Dr. Garret Ashabranner. He previously served as an animal scientist at the FDA, where he reviewed animal food ingredients and advised on monogastric nutrition and environmental claims. He brings nearly a decade of experience in poultry production, regulatory science and agricultural education to the SRIS.

### Stop-the-clock flexibility

Thanks to the hard work of the collaborative steering committee that was set up at the start, the AAFCO and K-State Olathe teams developed the novel SRIS process within the space of a year. This has resulted in the process flow, conflict of interest requirements, timelines, submission guidance and training material for the SMEs.

The process flow includes the flexibility for submitters to 'stop the clock' for 60 to 90 days within the review process. This allows them to address any questions from reviewers or to gather additional data that may be needed to support a safety conclusion.

Unlike in the FDA's processes, the stop-the-clock period can start or halt when dialogue or answers are needed without resetting the review timeframe back to zero.

### A boost to innovation

With strong leadership on board, an expansive network of some of the most qualified animal nutritionists in the world and its unique flexibility, the SRIS process is poised to be a successful regulatory pathway for US animal food manufacturers.

Innovators in the ingredient space can expect responsiveness, transparency, a fair evaluation of ingredients and open dialogue.

Meanwhile, pet food manufacturers can expect to gain access to innovative ingredients that will allow them to remain competitive in the global market. ♦

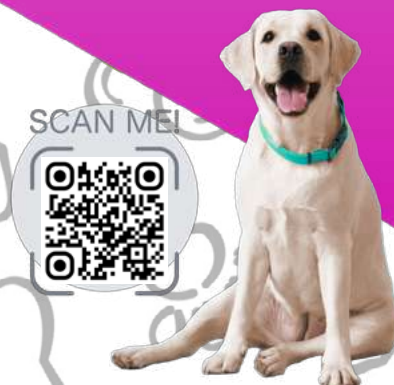


## Premium Nutrition for Happy Pets



- ✓ NATURAL SEED MIXES
- ✓ VITAMIN ENRICHED
- ✓ BALANCED NUTRITION
- ✓ HIGH QUALITY INGREDIENTS

  
**MEET US AT Interzoo 2026**  
Hall 9, Stand 450  
[www.farmafriends.com](http://www.farmafriends.com)





## MEAT SPECIALITIES FOR DOGS AND CATS

100 %

- CANNED MEAT
- FROZEN MEAT
- STERILIZED SAUSAGES
- DRIED MEAT



Interzoo HALL 3A, STAND 3A-333



[www.sokolfalco.com](http://www.sokolfalco.com)

SOKOLFALCO



### Zealandia NEW ZEALAND Brushtail possum for cats and dogs

This tree-dwelling marsupial is a novel protein, ideal for pets with food sensitivities or allergies. Rich in nutrients and omega fatty acids, it supports healthy skin and a glossy coat. By utilizing an invasive species from New Zealand, Zealandia also contributes to conservation while delivering a high-protein diet pets instinctively love. Available in 90g and 170g cans for cats, and 170g for dogs.

Interzoo: Hall 2, Booth 421

**Zealandia Limited**  
sales@zealandiapets.com  
zealandiapets.com



### Record ITALY Cream Shake: the functional wellness evolution

Record is raising the bar for feline nutrition at Interzoo with the exclusive launch of its expanded Cream Shake line.

The company is strengthening its expertise in targeted functional support for cats through grain-free, highly palatable recipes designed for specific wellness needs.

Record's feline range now offers specialized solutions: Hairball Control with psyllium and chicory root, Skin & Coat with brewer's yeast and biotin, and the calming Zen formula with green tea and casein. These sugar-free recipes are available in a practical seven-unit dispenser for a full week of wellness.

The evolution continues with the expansion of the Cream Shake line to the canine world, introducing a brand-new range dedicated specifically to dogs.

Discover the future of functional rewards at the Record booth.

Interzoo: Hall 4, Booth 210

**Rinaldo Franco Spa**  
record@recordit.com  
recordit.com



**Montego** SOUTH AFRICA  
**Karoo Wild functional treats**

Montego Pet Nutrition, a trusted South African household name, showcases super-premium innovation at Interzoo 2026 with Karoo Wild Functional Treats. Crafted with African antelope as a novel, high-quality protein, the range delivers both exceptional palatability and nutritional value.

The range addresses key areas of canine wellbeing, from immune, skin and joint support to digestive and calming needs, combining scientifically recognized functional ingredients with a clean, grain-free, no-added-soy recipe, enhanced with natural antioxidants from rooibos.

Positioned at the intersection of functional nutrition and premium indulgence, this range enables daily, benefit-driven supplementation in a convenient snack format. Available in 100g stand-up pouches.

Discover the range and more at Interzoo.

Interzoo: Hall 2, Booth 517

**Montego Pet Nutrition Pty. Ltd.**  
 montego.co.za  
 info@montego.co.za



**TATRAPET** SLOVAKIA  
**Complete nutrition for small animals**  
 – premium, natural, shelf-ready

PET EXPERT nature line – for little explorers with big standards.

- ◆ Partner directly with an EU manufacturer for competitive pricing and reliable supply
- ◆ Clean ingredients, careful recipes and multiple variants in different pack sizes
- ◆ Built for clear shelf navigation and strong sell-through

Interzoo: Hall 4, Booth: 104

**TATRAPET s.r.o.**  
 sale@tatrapet.sk  
 tatrapet.com



**Solano Pet Care** ISRAEL  
**GoFlex – Glucosamine mobility collar**

Solano introduces GoFlex®, a patented glucosamine mobility collar designed to support joint health and mobility in dogs and cats. Using Solano's controlled release technology, the collar gradually releases active ingredients that help maintain joint flexibility and comfort for up to 30 days. GoFlex offers pet owners a simple wearable solution that replaces traditional joint supplements.

Interzoo: Hall 4, Booth 119

**Solano S.P Ltd.**  
 lior@solano.co.il  
 solano.co.il

# US cat owners lean into wellness

The most recent APPA report provides detailed insights into trends in feline care – with the data showing that consumers are more mindful than ever of their companion’s wellbeing.



**Diana Dominguez**  
Business Reporter  
GlobalPETS

Cat owners are increasingly prioritizing high-quality, health-focused and environmentally friendly food choices for their pets, with human grade options on the rise. At the same time, the use of vitamins and other supplements continues to grow in popularity.

## What’s in the bowl?

According to the American Pet Products Association’s (APPA) 2025 Dog & Cat Report, 38% of cat owners purchased premium cat food in 2024, up from 36% in 2023 and nearing the 2018 level of 40%. In contrast, basic food purchases fell to 38% in 2024, having peaked at 41% in 2023.

A cat food sub-segment that has shown significant growth in recent years is mixers and toppers. These were purchased by 19% of the respondents in 2024, up from 8% in 2018, as pet parents discover their benefits in helping to address issues with difficult eaters.

## Looking at the label

The shift toward cat wellness is also evident in the choice of functional foods. Half of the US cat owners (50%) reported buying food with at least one health or environmental attribute in the past 12 months, up from 47% in 2023. In 2018, just 35% of the respondents reported having done so.

When asked about the type of cat food they planned to purchase in the following 12 months, 14% of the respondents indicated an interest in buying clean-label foods, followed by human grade and eco-friendly packaging (both 13%).

US cat owners’ interest in pet food with attributes like these has been increasing since 2018. The biggest jump has been in human grade, up six percentage points over the six years.

***Nearly all pet owners believe their pets bring them health benefits, with happiness/emotional support being the top ranked.***

### Novel proteins and treat choices

Rabbit (45%) and venison (40%) were the top novel protein ingredient choices in 2024. Since 2022, both have led this category, which also includes quail, pheasant, wild boar, alligator and ostrich.

Purchases containing these protein sources have all remained reasonably stable over two years. An exception is insects, which dropped from 25% to 18% between 2022 and 2023 and remained at that level in 2024.

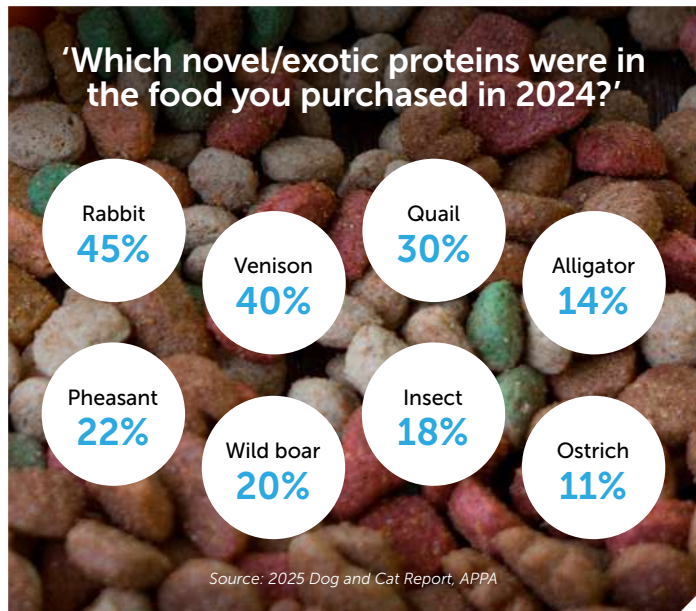
Treat preferences are evolving with a health-conscious emphasis. Dental and breath-freshening items were chosen by 24% of the APPA respondents in 2024, up from 22% in 2022. Wet treats grew to 25% from 18% in two years, and other categories also gained traction, such as liquid and air-dried treats, at 9% in 2024, followed by freeze-dried (8%).

The products in the cat treat category that were purchased less by consumers in 2024 were natural treats (20%, down from 22% in 2022), while gourmet treats stayed steady (19% from 18% in the same two-year period).

### Appetite for supplements

Vitamins and other supplements are increasingly popular among pet owners in the US in general, with a significant rise in the use for cats from 20% in 2018 to 34% in 2024. Multivitamins remain the most popular items, at 61%, almost matching 2022's peak of 62%.

▶ SEE NEXT PAGE



# HONKAJOKI®

## Innovative Ingredients

### for Premium Pet Food

Nordic Poultry Raw Materials



### Meatybind®

Natural functional protein for improved texture

### Hydropro®

Highly digestible hydrolysate for targeted nutrition

Visit our website for more detailed product information:

**Honkajoki Oy**

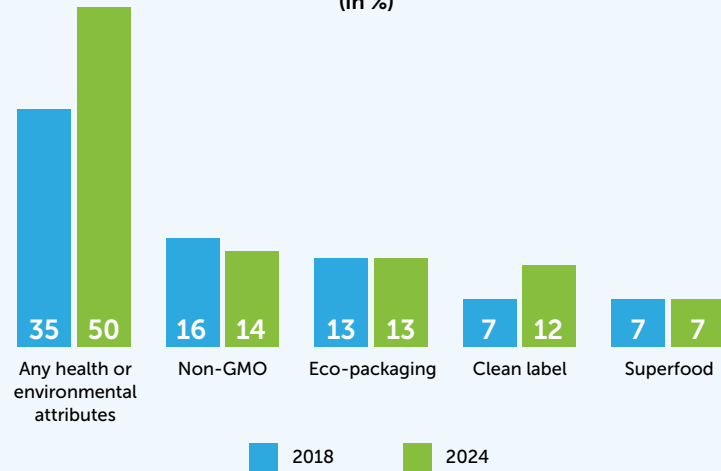
Santastentie 197,  
38950 Honkajoki,  
Finland

[www.honkajokioy.fi/en](http://www.honkajokioy.fi/en)  
[sales@honkajokioy.fi](mailto:sales@honkajokioy.fi)





### 'Have you purchased cat food with any of the following attributes in the past 12 months?' (in %)



Source: 2025 Dog and Cat Report, APPA

Prebiotics and probiotics held steady at 28% in 2024, maintaining their 2023 high after a steep rise from 21% in 2018, while digestion supplements reached a new peak of 26% in 2024. Other supplements, including those for immune support and joint health, as well as for skin, coat and nails, remain stable year over year.

#### Calming and grooming

The use of anxiety and calming supplements has declined steadily, falling by one percentage point per year to 17% in 2024. But purchases of other calming products have increased since the Covid pandemic, with toys, collars and sprays now also being used to keep a cat serene.

CBD is used by cat owners to help with different conditions. Although its use to treat anxiety is down since the peak of 30% in 2023 (25% in 2024) there was slightly increased use for treating pain in general (17% in 2024, up from 13% in 2018) and arthritis or joint pain (13% compared to 12% over the same period).

Professional grooming has experienced an uptick in recent years, with usage increasing by 10 percentage points over six years to 22% of the respondents in 2024. But many owners continue to groom their cats themselves, using an array of grooming tools.

Brush use is stable, used by three-quarters of pet parents (74%) in 2024, but less people are using combs (40% compared to 46% in 2018). Nail clipper and scissor ownership has increased substantially, from 41% in 2018 to 53% in 2024.

#### Protection from parasites

Another aspect of wellness is keeping cats free of fleas and ticks. Products are mostly purchased from a vet (35% in 2024), but this is down from 37% in 2020, while buying from pet superstores has increased to 22%, up from 10% in 2020.

Nearly all pet owners (96%) believe their pets bring them health benefits, with happiness/emotional support being the top ranked among the 13,910 respondents at 74%.

So it seems clear that these owners want the best for their pets too, and the increase in products promoting wellness for cats is an indication of that strong bond. ♦

***Purchases of calming products have increased since the Covid pandemic, with toys, collars and sprays now being used to keep a cat serene.***



**BRANDENBURCH**<sup>®</sup>

A VITAL PART OF PETFOOD

# Where **plants** and dogs agree

Plant-based dog food  
Guaranteed nutrition, proven taste  
No cross-contamination  
Built for brands

Brandenburg makes the next step possible. We produce plant-based dog food as a private label, evidence-based, scalable, without cross contamination of animal protein and ready for the market. Made in Holland and validated by experts;

## Nutritionist

The FEDIAF-qualified nutritionist and independent veterinarian who is involved in the development of the Brandenburg recipes: "If all the essential nutrients are present in the right balance, a plant-based recipe can form a complete and healthy diet. That is exactly how Brandenburg approached and produced the product."

## Veterinarians

Company owner at Joyce Hofman veterinary clinics: "If the nutritional balance is right, a plant-based diet for dogs can be complete and healthy. In my practice, I see that for many pets it works very well and is a sustainable nutritional model."

## Testpanel

Brandenburg has explicitly invested in professional palatability testing. That means it is carried out in a familiar home environment with specially trained dog owners, for reliable measurement.



### An invitation to progressive brands

The message toward the market is therefore an invitation. Come and have a chat. Experience the product. Ask the critical questions. And discover how plant-based dog food can become a reality within your own brand strategy today.

Visit us at Interzoo 2026, Hall 2, Stand 335.

[brandenburg.com](http://brandenburg.com) [info@brandenburg.com](mailto:info@brandenburg.com) +31 (0)493 69 37 84





## Sustainability quickens demand for pulses

Following a surge in relevance for grain-free formulations, legumes are now gaining extra momentum as environmentally friendly premium ingredients.



**Thaís Matos**  
Senior Business Reporter  
GlobalPETS

With sustainable alternative ingredients gaining importance in the pet food market, pulses stand out as a viable option to meet the growing demand. Eyeing this potential, pet industry players are investing to expand production capacity.

### Finger on the pulse

Pulses first started to gain ground in the pet food sector some years ago thanks to the rise of grain-free options. They are now once more attracting attention due to the increased demand for sustainability in the industry, as they have been associated with foods with a smaller carbon footprint.

The advantages are not only related to sustainability, according to representatives of national industry association Pulse Canada. “From a nutritional standpoint, pulses contribute high-quality plant

protein, complex carbohydrates, and both soluble and insoluble fiber, supporting digestive health and satiety,” Pulse Canada’s Vice President, Market Innovation, Julianne Curran, and Pet Consultant Alex Rankovic tell PETS International. They also highlight how the starch in pulses plays a role in “promoting a more gradual and steady blood glucose and insulin response for dogs and cats”.

### Pea protein use has doubled

Spurred on by these benefits, the use of pea protein in pet food has doubled in just eight years, Pulse Canada’s experts explain. And peas in all their forms have become the pet food industry’s most dominant legume ingredient.

For instance, pet food giant Nestlé Purina uses pea protein powder for grain-free formulations, pea starch as an alternative source of carbohydrates and pea hulls as a fiber source. Meanwhile, Hill’s Pet Nutrition incorporates pea protein in its formulations, as well as beans, peas and pea fiber as carbohydrate sources.

The market also has a strong appetite for other legume types, such as chickpeas – which are the second most used pulse in pet food globally – and lentils, which are currently more niche but offer potential. “While lentil use in the US pet food market has been limited, we anticipate more growth for lentils in premium pet food products in regions such as the European Union, Asia and North America,” say Pulse Canada’s representatives.

### Growing markets for Canadian pulses

For now, the US remains Canada’s biggest export destination for peas and pea protein, and that market continues to grow. “Between 2020 and 2024, peas appeared in 18% of all new pet food launches in the US. About 7% of all new pet food launches in that period included pea protein,” state the two experts.

Recognizing the growth potential for peas and other pulses in pet food, Pulse Canada has recently hired a dedicated pet food innovation specialist to engage in conversations and develop agreements with other markets.

***The US remains Canada’s biggest export destination of peas and pea protein, and that market continues to grow.***

Due to market familiarity with pulses, existing trade agreements between the countries and the projected growth of the pet food industry in each region, the initial focus is on Mexico, South America and the Indo-Pacific representatives, the association explains.

### Exploring export opportunities

Mexico, for example, has increased its imports of dried legumes in the past 15 years. And last September, international purchases reached \$44,900 (€38,300), according to government data.

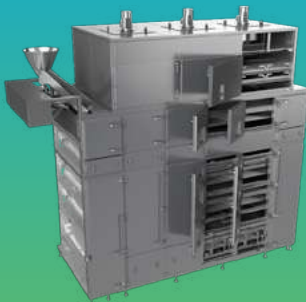
Pet food is also on the rise in the country. Analysis by the National Council of Balanced Food Manufacturers and Animal Nutrition showed that 2024 was a “year with significant growth in exports and imports of over 20%”. Pet food imports were forecast to grow from 116.8 thousand tonnes in 2024 to 134.3 thousand tonnes in 2025.

[▶ SEE NEXT PAGE](#)

# PET FOOD DRYING

EFFICIENT, EXHAUST-FREE & ENERGY-SAVING THANKS TO HEAT PUMP TECHNOLOGY

**HARTER**  
drying solutions



Belt dryer



Tray dryer



Drum dryer



Tunnel dryer

UP TO 75% ENERGY SAVINGS · RELIABLE PROCESS CONTROL  
· TURNKEY SOLUTIONS · GOVERNMENT-FUNDED



SAVE THE DATE!  
INTERZOO NUREMBERG 2026  
12 - 15 MAY | HALL 7 | BOOTH 424



Pulse Canada partnered with the Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) to support the negotiations of a new phytosanitary agreement for Canadian faba beans entering Mexico, which has opened up an export opportunity for the crop in that country.

Meanwhile, in the Indo-Pacific region, Pulse Canada is working with local animal nutrition consultants to conduct feed trials. Data from Euromonitor International shows that Asia-Pacific's pet market was forecast to hit an all-time high in 2025, surging nearly 5%.

### Demand creates investment

The outlook looks positive for pulse-based pet food in Europe, too. In a factsheet published in 2025, the European Pet Food Industry Federation (FEDIAF) says that grain-free options have "become a popular feeding choice among owners", leading to increased usage of pulses as ingredients. Additionally, the European Commission's EU Agricultural Outlook for 2025-2035 states that pulses will "benefit from higher demand", which will boost the total cultivated area in the bloc.

One of the European companies investing in pulses is ingredients manufacturer Beneo. The aim is to tap into the growing demand for "plant-based, sustainable and clean-label pet food", according to Maygane Ronsmans, Beneo's Product Manager of Animal Nutrition. In April 2025, the company inaugurated its first pulse-processing plant south of Cologne, in Germany's Rhineland-Palatinate region, after investing around €50 million (\$57.5M).

"We have now extended our existing portfolio of plant-based proteins from wheat and rice with an alternative that is suitable for no-grain pet food applications," Ronsmans states. The investment is also intended to tackle uncertainty in the availability of conventional ingredients and price volatility, which became an "additional challenge", she says.

"From an industry perspective, the coming three to five years will require significant creativity. With global food security concerns rising, many raw materials traditionally used in pet food may be redirected to human diets. Ultimately, the pet food sector is evolving into a more resource-efficient, innovative and resilient industry," she adds.

### Faba beans: 'natural' and 'sustainable'

Instead of peas or chickpeas, Beneo is producing faba beans. When the company conducted consumer research among 2,500 pet owners in the US, UK, Germany, Brazil and China, it found that "49% of pet owners strongly associate faba beans with being natural and 45% with being sustainable".

Beneo produces protein concentrate and starch-rich flour for dry food and uses faba bean hulls for pet food recipe formulations. According to Ronsmans, recent trials have pointed to the successful use of the protein concentrate as "an alternative to spray-dried animal blood plasma (ABP) in wet pet food".

Without providing specific figures, she indicates that the company's faba bean ingredient portfolio has been generating interest among producers, particularly in the EU.

### Pulse processing innovation

In June 2025, Swiss plant equipment manufacturer Bühler opened a puffing application center for grains and pulses in Uzwil, about 50km west of Zurich in Switzerland. Puffing is a hydrothermal process that uses heat and pressure to significantly expand the volume of raw materials.

***Peas in all their forms have become the pet food industry's most dominant legume ingredient.***

*Pulses first started to gain ground in the pet food sector thanks to the rise of grain-free options.*

The new center is equipped to produce snacks, kibbles and treats. "With this center, we are ready to support customers worldwide – not only in food, but also in pet food and feed, where demand for crispy, nutritious products is on the rise," says Christoph Vogel, Head of Business Unit for Human Nutrition at Bühler.

The company offers various processing solutions to pet food companies, from raw ingredient intake to packaging for dog and cat food and feed for ornamental fish. Pulses are used mainly in premium and functional formulations within the company, according to Carsten Petry, Bühler Group's Head of Market Segment Pet Food.

**Aligning with wider trends**

Petry explains that Bühler perceived the increasing demand from customer meetings, trials and enquiries at its application centers, and feedback loops from key accounts and industry workshops. "Interest is especially strong in Europe and North America, where premium, sustainable and plant-based pet food is a priority," he says.

"This aligns with the 'humanization' trend, where pet food mirrors human nutrition preferences for clean-label and high-protein options," he says. However, he adds the caveat that the "usage of higher amounts of pulse proteins is not recommended for cat food".

**Strong interest set to continue**

Petry notes that the initial feedback has been positive, as manufacturers are able to "test recipes without investing in full-scale equipment" and are "particularly interested in puffed inclusions for kibble and treats". Several trials have already been scheduled for 2026, which highlights "strong interest in energy-efficient processes and sustainability credentials", he adds.

Thanks to increased investment across the value chain – from crop producers' associations to pet food manufacturers and machine builders – pulses look set to meet the rising demand for premium, sustainable and nutritional pet food in the future. ♦

 **CIPS**  
The 30<sup>th</sup>  
China International  
Pet Show

<b>120,000m<sup>2</sup></b> Displaying Area	<b>1,400+</b> Exhibitors	<b>80,000+</b> Visitors	<b>120+</b> Countries
--	-----------------------------	----------------------------	--------------------------

Global Trade Platform for Pet & Aquatics  
**NOV.12-15, 2026**  
China Import & Export Fair Complex Guangzhou, China

[en.cipscom.com](http://en.cipscom.com)

 @ChinaInternationalPetShow  
 @China International Pet Show (CIPS)  
 @ChinaPetShow



Scan for Registration



**Naturediet** UK  
**Steam cooked, natural and no nasties**

Naturediet delivers natural wet dog food steam cooked to lock in freshness, with simple recipes and no artificial preservatives or additives. For 50+ years, Naturediet has provided fresh, natural, delicious recipes that even fussy eaters love. Its range includes FeelGood, a dog's forever food that balances vegetables and meat, and Purely, a market-leading complete food with 92% meat content.

All products are kind to dogs with sensitivities and tailored to all lifestyles. Packaged in eco-friendly Tetra cartons, the food stays fresh without refrigeration until opened, and is reclosable for easy, mess-free fridge storage. Naturediet helps retailers unlock natural pet food that attracts health-conscious dog lovers, while maximizing shelf efficiency.

Also available as full-service contract manufacturing.  
 Email [yourbrand@naturediet.co.uk](mailto:yourbrand@naturediet.co.uk) for enquiries.

Contact us to book a meeting at Interzoo.

**Interzoo: Hall 3C, Booth 224**

**NATUREDIET PET FOODS LIMITED**

[trade@naturediet.co.uk](mailto:trade@naturediet.co.uk)  
[naturediet.co.uk](http://naturediet.co.uk)



**IPV Pack** ITALY  
**Creating excellence in pet food**

For IPV PACK, packaging is more than protection. It's an experience.

Their high-performance flexible packaging solutions for pet food combine vibrant print quality with strong barrier properties, preserving freshness and flavor from production all the way to the pet's bowl.

With deep respect for traditional know-how and the innovative spirit of tomorrow, IPV PACK takes care of every detail to meet brand requirements and sustainability goals.

With their high-quality printing, their expertise ensures that your products stand out on shelves worldwide.

Because every meal deserves the perfect pack.

**Interzoo: Hall 4A, Booth 230**

**IPV Pack**  
[info@ipvpack.com](mailto:info@ipvpack.com)  
[ipvpack.com](http://ipvpack.com)

FAM STUMABO BELGIUM

# Precision cutting for premium pet food production

FAM STUMABO provides advanced cutting solutions to ensure quality and efficiency in pet food manufacturing.



As the pet food market continues to premiumize, processors face a clear challenge: combining high production efficiency with consistent product appearance, texture and safety. Whether for wet food, freeze-dried snacks or treats, cutting quality has become a decisive factor.

## A long-term technology partner

This is where FAM STUMABO positions itself as a long-term technology partner to the pet food industry. With more than 40 years of experience in industrial food cutting, FAM STUMABO develops and manufactures high-capacity cutting machines and precision blades for pet food applications worldwide.

The company supports both startups and established producers, delivering solutions that handle a wide range of raw materials, formats and processing conditions.

Pet food cutting is never generic. Product temperature, texture, shape and condition all influence the final result. FAM STUMABO designs its machines

around these variables, enabling precise slicing, dicing and shredding of raw, cooked, chilled or frozen ingredients.

Typical applications include organ meats such as liver, lung and heart, plus poultry, fish, extruded proteins and jerky-style treats. The result is clean, uniform cuts with minimal waste and strong visual appeal, even at high throughputs.

## Proven cutting technologies

A key differentiator lies in the company's deep application knowledge. FAM STUMABO combines produce expertise, machine design and in-house blade manufacturing to tailor each solution to the customer's product and process. Blade geometry and cutting strength are carefully selected to preserve structure, reduce fines and maximize yield: an essential advantage in premium pet food, where appearance directly influences perceived quality.

In practice, this approach translates into a focused portfolio of proven cutting technologies. The Yuran Hytec 300, a belt-fed dicer, is widely used

for producing pulled-look shreds, chunks and extruded protein pieces with a natural appearance. For frozen organ meats and high-capacity dicing, processors rely on the CMD.2 drum dicer, designed for continuous operation and clean, uniform cuts. The Volantis V-belt slicer delivers precise portioning of elongated products such as sticks and treats, with minimal waste.

## Built for food safety

Hygiene and food safety are embedded in every design. All equipment adheres to uncompromising sanitary design principles, with open construction that allows for fast, thorough cleaning and safe access for operators and maintenance teams.

Robust components and simplified mechanics ensure long service life, low maintenance costs and minimal downtime in high-volume operations. ◆

## FAM STUMABO

[fam-stumabo.com/petfood](http://fam-stumabo.com/petfood)

# How can palatants influence the texture of wet cat food?



**As wet cat food gains popularity, pet owners increasingly value the eating experience, viewing palatability as a multi-sensory journey beyond just taste.**



**Yolandi van der Vyver**  
*Wet Technical Application Specialist*  
AFB International  
[afbinternational.com](http://afbinternational.com)

Taste and aroma are important, but texture is also crucial in how cats perceive and accept wet food. Besides processing conditions and formulation, the choice of palatant can affect the final texture of wet cat food.

## Texture and eating experience

From the initial bite to swallowing, the eating experience is influenced by texture. Features like cohesiveness, firmness and chewability influence how easy and pleasurable it is for cats to consume their meal. Even minor formulation adjustments can result in discernible texture variations in formats like chunks-in-gravy.

During processing, palatants may participate in physicochemical interactions with moisture and macronutrients in wet cat food. For example, hydrocolloids (such as gums or carrageenan) can bind water and modify viscosity, while functional proteins (e.g. hydrolyzed proteins) or starch fractions may contribute to the structural network that develops during retorting. Through these mechanisms, palatants can influence both the final product's texture and the delivery and perception of flavor.

## Assessing palatant impact

To understand this, six wet cat food palatants were

evaluated within a chunks-in-gravy format. The palatants were chicken- or fish-based with equal inclusion levels, and the samples were processed under the same retort conditions.

Instrumental techniques were utilized to evaluate texture based on a simulated cat eating experience. Firmness upon the first bite (penetration test), ease of breaking down the chunks-in-gravy (perforation tests), and food elasticity (double compression test) were evaluated during chewing.

Although the palatants were included in identical base formulations and processing, differences in texture were evident. Some palatants produced a chunk that was firmer, requiring more force to chew at first bite, while others produced a softer, less chewy texture.

Differences in cohesiveness were also observed, affecting how well the chunk held together during eating. These findings show that palatants can contribute to the texture of wet cat food, potentially influencing eating ease and enjoyment.

## Holistic approach

As innovation within wet cat food continues, palatability should be considered from a holistic point of view, taking into account not just flavor, but aroma, appearance and texture. The use of palatants represents an opportunity to influence not just flavor, but these other aspects as well. ♦

# The implications of insect meal for pet food texture

As alternative proteins gain traction, manufacturers are adapting formulations and processing methods to maintain kibble quality.



**Emma Penrod**  
Contributor  
*PETS International*

Insect meal is emerging as a popular alternative protein, both as a way of making pet diets more sustainable and of catering to dogs and cats with allergies or other food sensitivities. But, according to recent studies, consumers may notice differences in the color and texture of insect-based kibble, suggesting some buyers may need persuasion before they are willing to adopt these novel diets.

## Researching differences

A study from Kansas State University (KSU), published in *Processes* in 2025, suggests insect meals may require careful formulation and handling to avoid textural and structural issues.

According to the study, replacing poultry or fish meal with black soldier fly larvae (BSFL) meal produced a more compact kibble with a hard, fragile texture and darker color. The difference was significant enough for consumers to notice the darker color and more irregular pellets, according to Tucker Graff, who worked on the study.

“If you expect to throw [BSFL] in a random bag of dog food... I think you will be a little disappointed,” Graff said. He added that consumers might think the

kibble was burnt or damaged if the difference was not addressed through labeling or marketing.

Even so, Graff believes working with insect meals is a worthwhile endeavor, noting that “it’s a very good product – it’s good nutritionally, it’s good for sustainability. It’s just a little more challenging to process”.

## Insect meal comparisons

Cricket flour produced a more attractive color in the KSU trial. But the flour’s higher fat content reduced flow throughout the manufacturing process and caused slippage in the extruder, Graff said.

Separate studies have reported similar results with other insect meals. Researchers in Poland, for example, published a study in *Animals* in 2025 which found that the inclusion of yellow mealworm meal in dog food resulted in a softer, more flexible texture. They also found that the meal stabilized the kibble’s protein levels and increased fatty acid content.

## Adapting production

Bill Reed, Head of Operations at Jiminy’s, a pet food company that makes pet diets and treats using cricket protein, says he hasn’t run into any textural or processing problems while working with insect ingredients. He attributes this to working with skilled manufacturers.

[▶ SEE NEXT PAGE](#)

### ***Targeting a smaller particle size or sticking with a gentler production chain might improve kibble characteristics.***

Jiminy's did reformulate its soft training treats two or three years ago; the treats initially came out too hard when the company reduced its use of glycerin, but further reformulation resolved the problem.

Conversely, BSFL texture was found by the company to have some advantage: Jiminy's recently launched a line of dental chews after realizing the crunchy texture, paired with the peptides and amino acids the BSFL contains, fights dental plaque.

Yora Pet Foods, a company which makes a range of insect-based dog and cat foods, has had similar success with BSFL in its lineup of pet foods and treats. Texture hasn't been a significant issue according to Co-CEO James Milbourne, but they do find that the BSFL produces a darker-colored kibble than conventional proteins such as chicken.

Yora Pet Foods Brand Ambassador George Gardner says the darker hue of the insect-based kibbles hasn't turned consumers off their products. Buyers seem willing to accept that different proteins result in different colored kibbles, according to Milbourne.

### **Science meets marketing**

These positive experiences working with insect meals don't surprise Graff, who notes that the KSU study may have inadvertently exaggerated the potential negative effects of insect meals. Because the study was designed to test how BSFL meal and cricket flour behave in the manufacturing process, it didn't fully reflect how pet food is formulated in actual production.

For example, the study relied on cornflour as a sole source of starch in all its experimental diets. Using other starches, such as wheat, rice or potato starch, could mitigate the textural issues introduced by the BSFL, Graff says. Targeting a smaller particle size or sticking with a gentler production chain – smaller drops from belts, for example – might also improve kibble quality.

Ingredient quality could also play a key role in textural outcomes. The BSFL meal used in the study was high in chitin, which Graff's team found affected the meal's water absorption. Buyers should consider attributes like protein solubility when selecting an insect meal supplier, according to Graff.

### **Taking quality into account**

Gardner seconds the importance of selecting high-quality insect proteins. While Yora Pets has not experienced significant issues with the texture of its products, Gardner says the company has encountered problems when testing BSFL meals from producers outside its core suppliers.

"When we used other sources, which may have been cheaper or more available, in trial runs, we found that the color was much more variable, we found that palatability was much more variable, and we found the nutritional levels would vary more," he says.

"Insects are very, very influenced by whatever they are fed. They are nature's upcyclers, composters, so you have to make sure what they are being fed is spot on and consistent."

### **Growth and popularity**

Advances in defatting and drying techniques have improved the quality of many insect meals in recent years, leading to increased use across industries, according to a March 2026 report by market research and consulting firm DataM Intelligence. The report estimated that sales of insect-based pet foods and livestock feeds will reach \$3.8 billion (€3.3B) by 2032.

Insect-based pet foods have also proved popular with consumers, and Reed says Jiminy's sales growth exceeds 10% per year – though the company did see a dip around 2023 amid a cultural backlash against insect farming.

Reed is optimistic about future growth but acknowledges that consumer mindsets can be hard to sway. "Most people are happy with what they have, so we have to convince them to switch. It's a big undertaking, but I wouldn't be here if I didn't believe it made sense long-term." ♦



## Precision coating and aroma control take center stage

A heightened focus on specialized, high-quality pet nutrition is prompting development of innovative techniques for enhancing flavor and smell.



**Adam England**  
Contributor  
PETS International

With the pet food palatants market expected to grow by 5.2% by 2035, manufacturers are looking for new ways to meet pet owners' expectations of taste and palatability. Palatant composition, fat compatibility, uniform spraying and coating, and even AI can all play a role.

### Pets drive sector growth

Transparency Market Research identifies pet food as the largest segment and one of the strongest drivers of the palatant market's continued growth. Meanwhile, a Future Market Insights report put the value of the pet food palatant market at \$2.4 billion (€2.1B) in 2025, projected to expand to \$4 billion (€3.5B) by 2035, which reflects a compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of 5.2% over the forecast period. India is expected to be the fastest-growing market for pet food palatants in the coming years.

### Realistic flavor profiles

Animal-based palatants are dominant, accounting for around 71.6% of the global market. This is fueled by consumer preferences for high-protein diets that mimic natural feeding patterns.

"We're seeing a clear shift toward more realistic, ingredient-driven flavor profiles rather than overly strong or artificial aroma cues," says Ava Wang of

Profypet, a supplier of pet food palatability enhancers based in Jiangsu Province, China. She adds that aroma authenticity and top-note release are important for cats, while dogs show greater acceptance of savory, roasted and umami-forward profiles.

This trend is reflected in recent feeding trials, too. Ohly, a supplier of yeast-based palatability enhancers, which is headquartered in Germany and has two sites in the US, reports that dogs show higher first-bite preference and greater overall consumption when offered yeast-coated kibble. According to the company, this reflects a broader shift to natural umami sources that enhance palatability and mask off-notes in functional diets.

Dr. Dina Krüger, Innovation and Health Technical Expert at Ohly, says that yeast-based ingredients enhance palatability, support consistent nutrient intake and improve overall diet adherence.

### Supporting clean-label pet food

Yeast also fits in with the greater demand for clean-label pet food. Overall, plant-based coatings are forecast to grow at 10.6% CAGR globally, according to Mordor Intelligence. Besides yeast extracts, other natural palatants derived from liver, poultry fat and hydrolyzed proteins are becoming more popular.

Liver hydrolysates and Maillard-reaction flavors support premium positioning while offering good solubility and aroma persistence in modern spraying systems.

[▶ SEE NEXT PAGE](#)

## Meeting dietary demands

In addition to the premiumization trend and a focus on high-quality ingredients, another key driver of palatant growth is the rising demand for therapeutic and functional pet diets. Palatants play an important role in boosting feed intake, particularly for pets who are on therapeutic diets or are selective eaters.

Highly tailored palatability enhancers are increasingly being developed to support functional and therapeutic diets, such as grain-free formulations, according to Morgane Piriou, Global Palatability Marketing Manager at Symrise Pet Food.

## Tackling application challenges

Specialized formulations can present new challenges. In the case of dry kibble, which remains the dominant form of pet food with 83% of owners opting for it, Piriou explains that “the characteristics of the kibble composition play a critical role, directly influencing palatant selection and application levels”.

Similarly, Profypet’s Wang says that high-protein and grain-free diets offer challenges due to “changes in surface porosity, fat absorption and kibble hardness”, while functional ingredients can suppress aroma release. For this reason, manufacturers are increasingly tailoring palatant systems to specific base formulations instead of relying on one-size-fits-all solutions.

The growing need for formulation-specific, precision coating is prompting manufacturers to adopt advanced uniform spraying and aroma-controlled coatings. However, Wang points out that “shelf-life performance is determined as much by formulation as by the coating process”.

## Enabling greater flexibility

Despite the popularity of kibble, Symrise reports high growth in alternative formats including freeze-dried, fresh, baked and soup-style products. These all require different approaches to palatability.

In the case of fresh and wet food, liquid palatants help to overcome formulation challenges by allowing for more precise flavor layering and controlled release of aromas. According to Piriou, frozen and refrigerated products “require aroma systems that perform in

*Palatants play an important role in boosting feed intake, particularly for pets who are on therapeutic diets or are selective eaters.*

low-temperature or fresh matrices while maintaining indulgent sensory cues”.

## Technology boosts predictability

Innovation in coating technology is accelerating as manufacturers strive for more predictable palatability outcomes. Continuous drum coating systems, for example, can improve flavor distribution by up to 20% compared with powder systems, reducing overspray and enabling more uniform coverage. Coating homogeneity is vital to ensure consistent sensory perception, but the overall approach must combine formulation, processing, storage and handling.

Internet of Things-enabled quality control systems are further improving consistency and reducing variability across batches. AI-guided optimization also holds potential. Machine-learning tools are being used to predict palatability responses and tailor flavor profiles to specific pet demographics.

Wenger and Extru-Tech’s EXPRO AI platform uses predictive modeling to analyze processing data and set ideal extrusion parameters. Optimizing the extrusion parameters enables manufacturers to control kibble texture and surface characteristics as the basis for further improving adhesion and palatant-coating uniformity.

## The direction of growth

As pet ownership and the humanization trend accelerate, demand for premium sensory experiences is likely to grow further. In anticipation of this growth, Symrise recently expanded its palatant manufacturing capacity in São Paulo, Brazil.

The company expects the most successful solutions to combine strong palatability performance with greater operational value. Indeed, by moving toward natural, species-specific and formulation-specific palatants while also continuing to invest in R&D and capacity expansion, manufacturers will be well positioned to capitalize on the ever-rising demand for palatability enhancers in pet food. ♦

APC

# Can plasma be the key to dog microbiome health?

New research reveals how plasma proteins interact directly with the gut and influence the microbiome.



The understanding of canine health is evolving toward a more integrated perspective. The intestine is recognized not only as a digestive organ, but as a central hub of immune regulation and systemic communication.

Research on plasma functional proteins contributes to this shift. Beyond their nutritional value, these proteins interact directly with the gut environment, influencing microbiota composition, metabolic activity and immune responses.

## Translating research into strategies

Under the leadership of Dr. Joy Campbell, Senior Director of Global Pet Food Technical Service at APC, recent research initiatives have focused on translating these mechanisms into practical formulation strategies for companion animals.

Plasma is a highly digestible protein with a balanced amino acid profile, but its differentiation lies in its composition as a complex mixture of bioactive proteins.

When included in the diet, plasma interacts with gut-associated immune tissue, supporting intestinal integrity

and contributing to immune balance. Its emulsifying properties and high palatability also make it a well-established ingredient in wet pet food and increasingly relevant in dry applications, treats and supplements.

## Evaluating digestive markers

In collaboration with the University of Illinois, a study in healthy adult dogs evaluated the effects of dietary plasma on digestive and metabolic markers, including stability after extrusion. A key finding was the presence of inclusion level dependent responses across several parameters.

Increasing inclusion levels were associated with reductions in fecal compounds linked to undesirable protein fermentation.

This was seen alongside higher production of short-chain fatty acids, which are important metabolites for gut health. Beneficial bacterial populations such as *Lactobacillus* also showed positive trends.

Metabolic markers reflected similar patterns. Blood urea nitrogen, an indicator of protein utilization efficiency, decreased while remaining within

physiological ranges. Fecal IgA, a marker of mucosal immune activity, increased.

Both parameters were associated with inclusion level, reinforcing the consistency of the response. Importantly, these effects were maintained after extrusion, confirming the ingredient's stability under industrial processing conditions.

## Science-backed differentiation

As the market increasingly relies on science-backed differentiation, understanding how plasma-based ingredients influence measurable biological outcomes becomes essential. Gut-centered nutritional strategies offer formulators a framework for developing solutions focused on digestive health and healthy aging, supported by reproducible data and aligned with evolving consumer expectations.

Within this context, plasma represents much more than just a simple protein for pets. It is a scientifically studied ingredient platform that enables targeted formulation backed by measurable and consistent responses. ♦

**APC**  
[APCpet.com](http://APCpet.com)

# Improve pets' lives with every meal they eat



Meet our experts  
at Petfood Forum & Interzoo  
11 - 15 May.

Petfood products deserve the very best, that is exactly what we supply. Our unique range of Nutritional, Bio-functional and Techno-functional natural animal based ingredients will enhance your value propositions by delivering pet enjoyment, well-being and vitality.

## Sonac functional proteins

Our sustainable proteins are the building blocks for your petfood products!



### Bio-functional

Ingredients which support good health

Health



### Techno-functional

Products that add texture (e.g. binding & gelling)  
Ingredients that add flavor and increase palatability

Palatability

Texture



### Nutritional

These are the basic, essential ingredients for nutritious petfood

Nutrition

Our unique size and scale allow us to help make entire industries less wasteful and more sustainable.

[sonac.biz](http://sonac.biz)

**sonac**  
by Darling Ingredients

# The specialty diets reshaping the premium landscape



After years of 'natural', grain-free and human-grade claims dominating innovation, market growth in the US is now increasingly driven by precision health positioning.



**Shannon Landry**  
*Research Director*  
*Packaged Facts*

Pet food premiumization has entered a new chapter. Specialty diets respond to two powerful and sometimes overlapping consumer motivations: the desire to proactively manage food sensitivities through simplified formulations, and the wish to rely on clinically validated nutrition to address specific health conditions.

## Entering the mainstream

Limited Ingredient Diets (LIDs) have evolved far beyond their niche origins. Diets like these were initially designed to help veterinarians and pet owners identify and manage food allergies, but LIDs are now widely adopted as both reactive and preventive solutions.

In a survey held by Packaged Facts in September 2025, 11% of dog owners and 7% of cat owners in the US report that their pets have food allergies or sensitivities. These reactions often center on specific proteins – commonly chicken – or grains such as wheat. Even among owners whose pet has not had an allergy or sensitivity diagnosis from a vet, concern over intolerances has become part of the purchasing mindset.

## Keeping it simple

LIDs address concerns about allergies and intolerances by reducing ingredient complexity. Formulations are built around a single or limited number of protein sources, a minimal number of carbohydrates and carefully selected functional inclusions. The premise is that fewer variables make it easier to pinpoint potential triggers and reduce the likelihood of adverse reactions.

▶ [SEE NEXT PAGE](#)

**As pet owners become more health literate and more willing to invest in evidence-based care, the balance of power in premium pet food is shifting.**

That said, the appeal of LIDs is no longer confined to medically necessary use. In a retail environment saturated with a wide range of product claims, ingredient simplicity itself has now become a mark of quality and transparency.

Pet owners are increasingly drawn to products with simpler ingredients. When asked about their own food priorities in the Packaged Facts survey, 42% of them ranked 'clean label' (no preservatives/artificial ingredients) as a top priority and 29% said the same about non-GMO foods. And nearly three-quarters of pet owners agree that pet foods without artificial ingredients are healthier for their pets, with a similar percentage screening ingredient lists of the pet foods they purchase.

### Generational and income differences

While 11% of dog and cat owners are currently keeping their pets on LIDs, usage by generation and income level does vary. Millennials are the most likely to feed their pets with these diets, at 15%, but Gen X, baby boomers and older seniors are much less likely to do so.

Usage of these diets is also impacted by household income, with households earning \$100,000 (€86,000) and up being the most likely to buy and feed them, at 15%, while those earning under \$60,000 (€52,000) are much less inclined to do so.

### Clinical credibility drives growth

With LIDs representing simplification in pet foods, it is veterinary diets that represent scientific complexity. In a marketplace where natural claims have become mainstream, science-backed positioning is emerging as a key differentiator. Packaged Facts reports that 73% of US pet owners like the idea of pet food backed by scientific research, suggesting that there is robust consumer receptivity to clinically grounded nutrition.

More specifically, 10% of the dog and cat owners in the survey report that their pet is currently on a

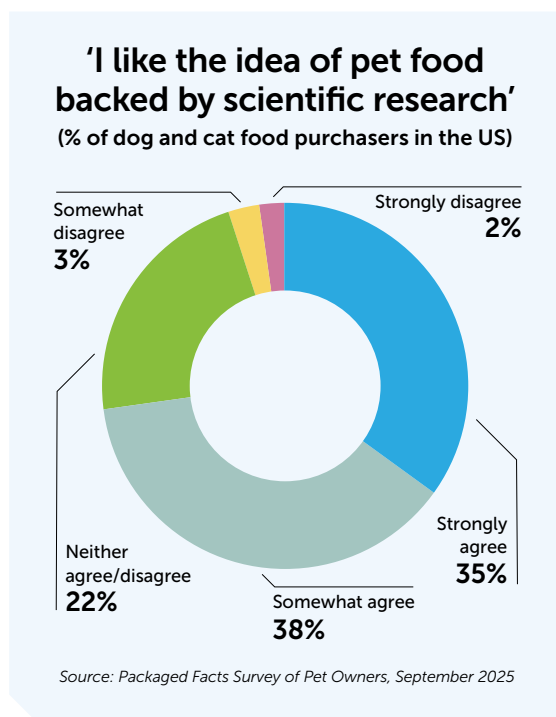
prescription or therapeutic diet. But as is the case with the diets with limited ingredients, usage is still skewed towards specific demographics.

### Complementing vet care

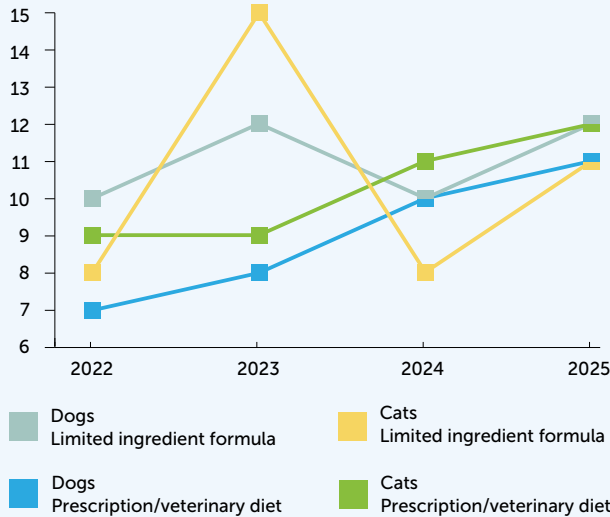
Millennial pet owners are more likely than average to have their pets on a prescription diet, at 13%, with baby boomers significantly less disposed to do so. Households with higher incomes are also much more likely to feed prescription diets, at 15%, which is unsurprising given that use of these diets requires a veterinary visit and this demographic skews high for veterinary usage.

The veterinary diet segment is benefiting from heightened awareness of chronic pet health conditions. As pets live longer, conditions such as digestive disorders, kidney disease, cognitive decline, obesity and mobility challenges become more prevalent. Therapeutic diets offer targeted nutritional interventions that complement veterinary care.

Importantly, science-based positioning is not limited to prescription products. Brands across the super-premium spectrum emphasize research, feeding



## Use of pet food formulations based on ingredient claims (% of dog and cat food purchasers in the US)



Source: Packaged Facts Surveys of Pet Owners

trials and professional endorsement. This shift reflects a broader reframing of premium value: from ingredient storytelling alone to measurable, evidence-based outcomes.

Understanding and modulating the gut microbiome is increasingly viewed as foundational to overall health – influencing digestion, immune function, skin condition and even cognitive wellbeing.

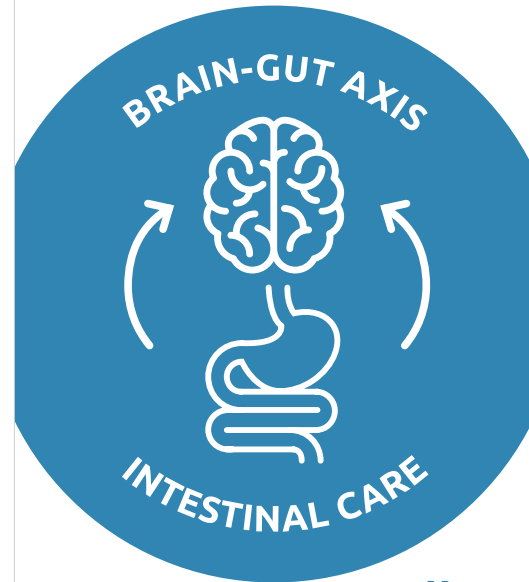
Veterinary and science-forward brands are integrating prebiotics, targeted fibers and functional ingredients designed to ‘activate’ or support beneficial gut bacteria.

The expansion of therapeutic portfolios also reflects growing complexity in pet health management. Multi-condition diets, therapeutic products for different life stages and formulations addressing overlapping nutritional needs are gaining prominence.

This mirrors trends in human nutrition, where personalization and condition-specific solutions are reshaping product development.

### A competitive ecosystem

Specialty diets operate within a crowded functional landscape that includes complete foods, treats and supplements. Packaged Facts data shows that 21% of dog and cat owners purchase [▶ SEE NEXT PAGE](#)



**Blend specially designed to promote the gastrointestinal health of our animals.**

With high-quality ingredients, it helps maintain digestive balance and promotes intestinal well-being by supporting the microbiota.



foods targeting general or overall health. Other popular condition-specific claims include hip/joint/mobility (particularly among dog owners), allergy/skin and coat, digestive health/probiotic, heart health and omega fatty acids. Among cat owners, indoor (18%) and hairball (12%) formulations remain strong.

Functional treats and supplements compete for similar territory. General health claims lead across functional food (31%), treat (28%) and supplement (25%) purchasers. Dental and immune health treats are particularly popular, while omega fatty acid and immune support supplements draw strong interest.

For manufacturers, this overlap underscores the importance of clear differentiation. Veterinary diets rely on clinical validation and professional endorsement. LIDs emphasize ingredient transparency and allergen management. Both must articulate distinct value propositions to stand out in a market where functional claims are ubiquitous.

### Precision nutrition

The growth of LIDs and veterinary diets reflects a larger transformation in pet food: the rise of precision nutrition. Rather than broad claims about naturalness or wholesomeness, today's specialty diets focus on targeted solutions grounded in either ingredient

***In a retail environment saturated with a wide range of product claims, ingredient simplicity itself has now become a mark of quality and transparency.***

control or scientific research. For retailers, these segments offer opportunities for trade-up and education. For manufacturers, they provide defensible differentiation in an increasingly competitive premium environment.

### Specialty diets no longer niche

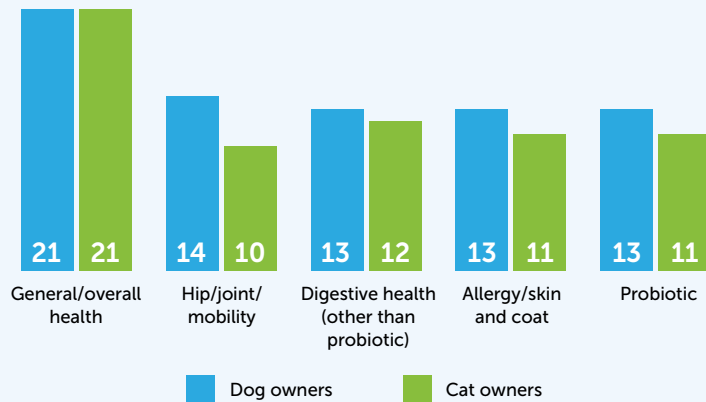
Looking ahead, the convergence of simplified, recognizable ingredient lists, alternative protein innovation, microbiome science and professional engagement will likely shape the trajectory of specialty diets. As pet owners become more health literate and more willing to invest in evidence-based care, the balance of power in premium pet food is shifting.

In this environment, limited ingredient and veterinary diets are not peripheral niches. They are central expressions of how the industry is redefining quality, credibility and long-term sustainability in pet nutrition. These specialty segments reflect a broader recalibration of premium pet food, from lifestyle positioning toward measurable health outcomes. ♦



## Use of pet food formulations based on health condition claims

(% of dog and cat food purchasers in the US)



Source: Packaged Facts Survey of Pet Owners, September 2025



Pooch & Mutt UK

## Pooch & Mutt rewrites the rules of functional dog food

A brand refresh, new product ranges and a focus on gut health signal Pooch & Mutt’s shift toward personalized pet nutrition while retaining its functional roots.

Pooch & Mutt has built its reputation as a functional pet food brand on a simple starting point: solving joint and gut health issues in one dog. Guy Blaskey, founder of Pooch & Mutt, started this journey by creating a solution for his family dog.

At the time, the business operated in horse feed, and Blaskey applied this expertise to develop targeted supplements for dogs.

These early formulations became the foundation of what is now one of the UK’s most sought-after functional pet food brands.

Since 2007, the British company has expanded its portfolio to include a wide range of dog nutrition products, including supplements and treats, before evolving its core focus toward functional foods.

### A track record of growth

In 2025, Pooch & Mutt recorded 38% sales growth, building on growth of 61% in 2024 and 74% in 2023. For CEO Paul Dennison, this sustained performance is underpinned by continued innovation, particularly across its product ranges.

“We have increased our ranges, and some of that growth has come through product expansion. One area that worked really well – slightly to our surprise – was our dental stick range. We introduced a peanut butter dental stick as an interesting twist and thought we’d see what would happen. It sold out in hours – I mean, hours,” says Dennison.

“And it wasn’t because we didn’t do a large production run – VAFO made loads of them, tons and tons – and it still sold out so quickly,” he adds, underscoring how innovative product development continues to drive demand.

### A VAFO partner

Following a multi-million-pound acquisition by Czech pet player VAFO Group, Pooch & Mutt has continued to operate with a distinct brand identity.

Dennison notes that while it is common for smaller brands acquired by larger corporations to retain their identity, VAFO has taken a notably supportive approach.

► SEE NEXT PAGE



"They knew they needed a company in the UK that understood the market and knew what it needed to do. And they've stepped back and let us get on with it. They've been really good at being hands-on when we need help, but also hands-off and letting us run the business," he adds.

For Pooch & Mutt, the acquisition was not merely a transaction but a partnership that has created value for both sides.

"We've helped them with expertise in a mature market like the UK, particularly in e-commerce and Amazon, and we've started to support other brands in the VAFO Group in strengthening those channels as well," the CEO says.

### A brand "For All Breeds & Needs"

Pooch & Mutt recently launched a brand refresh focused on a new positioning: "For All Breeds & Needs".

Beyond new packaging and branding, the rebrand also introduced changes to product ingredients and range categories, including a new "wellbeing range" that sits alongside its functional offering.

Despite the repositioning, functionality remains central to the brand. "We don't want to preach to customers. We want to be a trusted guide in what can be a very confusing market. Every dog is different, and needs change over time, so we want to help customers make the right decisions for their pets," says Dennison.

Looking ahead, the brand is expanding into gut health and fresh food as demand for personalized nutrition grows.

"What we can do, which is quite unique, is test a dog's microbiome and then provide a personalized plan. That could

mean recommending more fiber or specific ingredients depending on what the dog needs."

Last year, the company acquired BIOME9, a pet health firm specializing in gut health analysis and science-backed supplement plans. The deal is central to its gut health strategy and expected to support future growth.

### UK and beyond

Pooch & Mutt remains concentrated in the UK, where it was founded nearly 20 years ago. This established base supports strong partnerships with Sainsbury's, Pets at Home, Tesco and Ocado.

"Our business is split in terms of channel: 50% direct-to-consumer through our own website, and 50% split between retail and Amazon," Dennison says.

A planned expansion into Germany a few years ago was ultimately halted due to regulatory changes following Brexit, which has since shaped the company's international strategy.

"The launch did well – we set up a website, we were on Amazon. And it was only really after Brexit when legislation changes meant that it really didn't work. Because in the UK the rules changed so everything on every packet of dog food or treats needed to say 'not for resale in the EU.'"

He explains that this created a major operational barrier, as EU expansion would have required separate packaging systems. "That meant we would have needed a whole other stock of EU packaging, which was just such a huge barrier."

Despite this, international expansion remains a priority. VAFO Group continues



to identify potential growth markets, with Pooch & Mutt now exploring opportunities in the US and Asia.

### Future plans

Future expansion may also require local manufacturing depending on market constraints.

"We would definitely need to look at the right way to expand into these markets. It's easier to export into the likes of India, for example, now from the UK than it has been previously," he says.

"But there are barriers into the US market that need to be looked at, including whether manufacturing needs to happen locally rather than shipping it there, because it can get very, very expensive."

For Pooch & Mutt, expansion remains a long-term opportunity, with Dennison concluding: "It's never say never in any of those markets – you've got to do it right." ♦

**Interzoo: Hall 7, Booth 364**

**Pooch & Mutt Ltd.**  
[poochandmutt.co.uk](http://poochandmutt.co.uk)



WE FEED  
WE CARE  
WE LOVE

 **Interzoo 2026**

12-15th May, Hall 9 / Booth 649

**NEW**  
**PRODUCTS**  
**FORMULAS**  
**SOLUTIONS**

Let's meet!

**TropiDog**<sup>®</sup>

**TropiCat**<sup>®</sup>

**TropiFit**<sup>®</sup>





NEW

READY TO SERVE

# FROM DAY ONE!

The **only liquid goat's milk** that is nutritionally **complete**. An exclusive low-lactose, grain-free formula enriched with **DHA, taurine, prebiotics, and postbiotics**, designed to fully replace **mother's milk**.



**schesir**   
RESPECT MY NATURE 

DISCOVER ALL WITH US  
 **Interzoo 2026**  
HALL. 7A / BOOTH 336