

K9 COP ISSUE 73 **MAGAZINE™**

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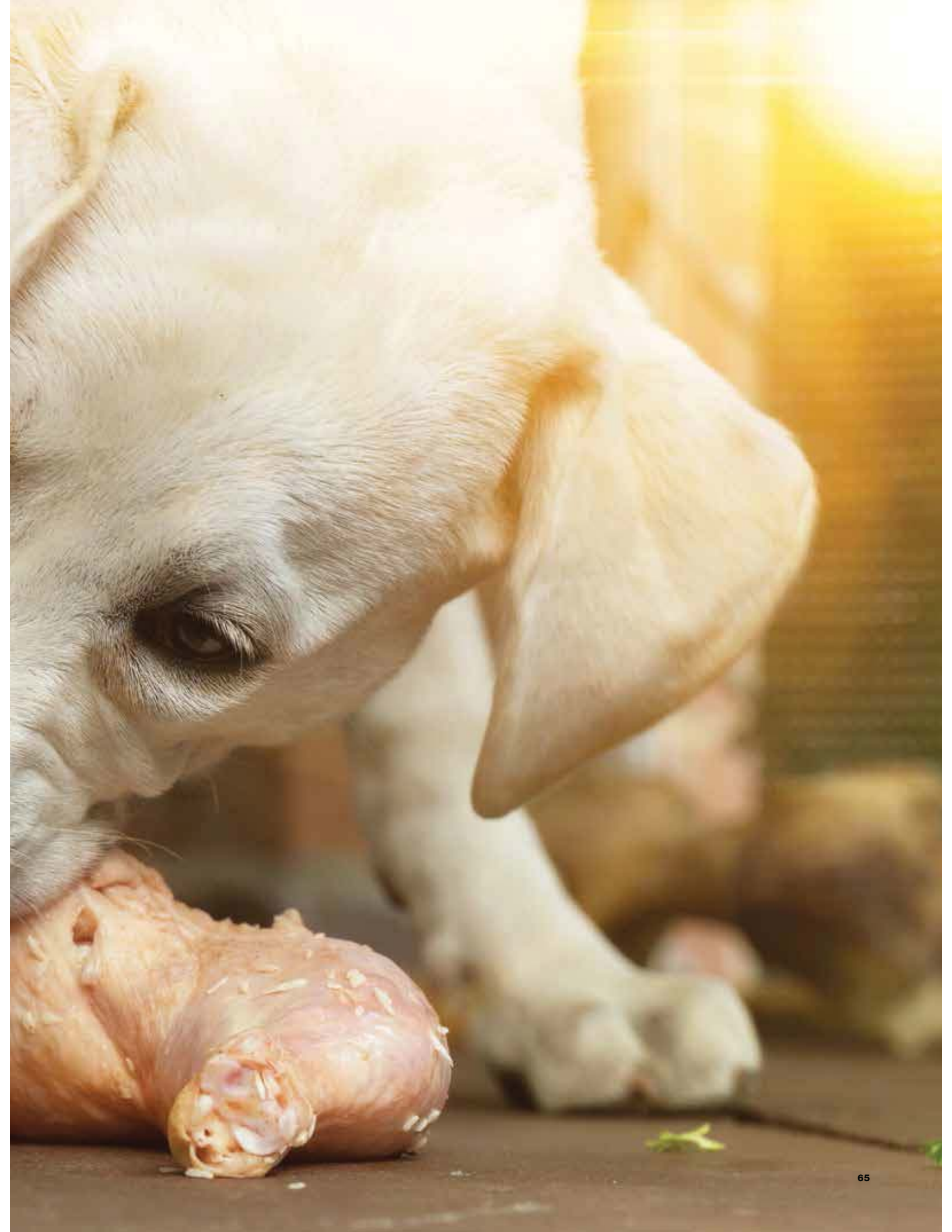


RAW MEATY BONES

RAW RESOURCES

*The following is an excerpt from the book
“Work Wonders: Feed Your Dog Raw Meaty Bones,”
written by Tom Lonsdale and reprinted with permission*

Animals shriek, grunt and growl, onlookers ooh and aah when it’s feeding time at the zoo. It’s the main event of the day. Responsible zoo managers ensure they do not disappoint the animals or the visitors—they plan ahead. With safety the first principle, they design and build facilities to meet or exceed requirements. Safe viewing areas need to be provided for visitors and safe working conditions for the animal keepers.





Zoos must ensure dependable year-round supplies of appropriate food items at affordable prices. Feeding animals cannot be left to chance. In your zoo without bars, home to a variable number of dogs and perhaps other carnivores, a little advance planning will help ensure the smooth, efficient feeding of your hungry companions.

HOME FACILITIES

Raw Meaty Bones Passed for Human Consumption

If your dogs are small or few in number, then feeding raw meaty bones fit for human consump-

tion is an economical, efficient way to proceed. Your existing refrigerator/freezer probably has sufficient capacity to store a few extra pounds/kilos of food. Try estimating the weekly consumption of your dog. As a guide allow 20% of an animal's body weight in food per week.

A 10-pound dog requires about two pounds of food (a 5 kg dog requires 1 kg). If your dog weighs 40 pounds, then he will need around eight pounds of food per week (a 20 kg dog will need around 4kg). Do you have sufficient storage space?

It's a good idea to divide the supplies into daily meals. Plas-

tic bags from the grocery store can be reused. Alternatively, you might like to acquire plastic containers which can be stacked in the freezer and then washed after use.

Since the food you are using is 'human-grade,' then normal household hygiene provisions should suffice. Make sure seepage from raw meat does not contaminate other foods. Bench tops, food preparation surfaces and utensils should be thoroughly cleaned. Hot water and household detergents work well. Automatic dishwashers take the hard work out of cleaning containers and knives. After handling raw



food, wash hands well and ensure small children don't explore with their fingers.

Carcasses, Roadkill and Bulk Supplies

The equations change if you buy in bulk, feed whole carcasses (rats, mice, rabbits, etc), green tripe, roadkill or food not passed for human consumption. Nutritional benefits and ongoing cost savings make this a worthwhile venture, but some initial planning and investment may be necessary.

First, it's a good idea to set aside an area of your laundry, garage or outbuilding for housing



refrigerators and freezers. Separate cleaning areas equipped with drainage, hot and cold water are advisable too.

Refrigerators and cool rooms are okay for keeping meat for up to two weeks. But generally, it's best to invest in a separate freezer or maybe a couple of extra freezers. Upright freezers allow easier access to the stored food and rotation of stock.

If you pack individual daily rations in your freezer, then thawing the food is unnecessary. Dogs will eat their food frozen. If you prefer to feed thawed food, then it's best to thaw food overnight in the refrigerator or place the frozen item in a bowl of cold water. Microwave thawing creates 'warm' spots through the meat and is not recommended.

Potential Problems with Freezing

Small prey animals, for instance day-old chicks, rats and rabbits, can be snap-frozen complete with entrails feathers

and fur. However, if freshly killed animals are placed in the freezer, ensure plenty of air space to permit rapid freezing.

Freshly killed chickens that are snap-frozen with entrails intact should be safe to feed to dogs. But beware, busy poultry plants process thousands of carcasses an hour. Rejected carcasses may be tossed in a bin, and by the end of the day, the warm carcasses are already decomposing. Do not freeze decomposing chicken carcasses.

If you are fortunate to have access to whole carcasses of larger animals — deer, sheep, goats, etc. — then you will need to butcher and store the meat. Large carcasses should not be frozen with the entrails still intact. Whilst it's possible the entrails will freeze before decomposition takes place, the main problem arises when the carcass thaws. A long, slow thaw permits further decomposition and the potential for the growth of bacterial toxins.



Keep in mind that large pieces of meat and bone provide the best canine jaw exercise and teeth cleaning. So, whether you do your own butchering or have a professional do it for you, ensure that the pieces are kept large.

You will most likely want to store the meaty bones in plastic bags which, in turn, can be placed in cardboard boxes or on plastic trays. Allow space for air circulation and keep the plastic bags dry. Removal of packages from the freezer should be a simple matter. You don't need to be head first, crowbar in hand, prizing packages from a frozen lake at the bottom of your freezer — your time is too valuable and the plastic lining of your freezer too fragile.

Table Scraps and Vegetable Peel

Table scraps can be fed straight from the plate. Vegetable peelings can be made more appetizing and more digestible by lightly cooking or processing in the kitchen mixer. Ripe fruit can be fed whole, although take care

not to feed pits/stones from peaches, apricots, etc.

Except in rare instances (such as feeding toothless pets or those with unusual digestive diseases) you will not need a meat and bone grinder. If you need ground meat and bone, then ask your butcher to put some chicken necks through his grinder.

Feeding Areas

Where is the best place to feed your pets? With the safety of pets and people in mind, wherever it's most convenient for you. Some people are deterred from feeding natural food for fear of damaging their deep-pile carpets. This need not be so. Even the smallest living accommodation has a shower recess or tiled laundry area where dogs can consume raw food. Confining your dog in a crate at meal-times creates a happy association between crate and food. It also permits you to observe the feeding process and ensure that choking, whilst a negligible risk, does not occur.

Dogs can be trained to eat on spread newspaper. But in general, carnivores like to drag their food to a secluded spot to enjoy the meal, undisturbed. Accordingly, I consider that dogs are best fed outside; no food bowls necessary. Just throw the carcasses/raw meaty bones on the ground and your pet's natural instincts will take care of the rest. At your discretion, and depending on the weather and fly population, part-eaten bones can be left for further gnawing over ensuing days.

Potential drawbacks to feeding outside are that your pet may dig holes in the flowerbeds to bury the bones. Your neighbors also, at first, may not be used to seeing animal parts scattered across your lawn.

SOURCES OF SUPPLY

*Old Mother Hubbard went to the cupboard,
To fetch her poor dog a bone;
When she got there, the cupboard
was bare,
And so the poor dog had none.*



We should be grateful to Mother Hubbard. Learning from mistakes, especially if those mistakes are made by others, is one of the easiest ways to learn. By planning ahead, we can ensure our refrigerator/freezer is never bare. The question remains: Where to find a regular, dependable source of supplies?

Human Food Outlets

If you buy meat for the family, you will already have a fair idea where to pick up raw meaty bones for your dogs. Supermarkets, butcher shops, chicken shops, fish shops and farmers' markets are the most common sources. You may need to make

enquiries if you are looking for larger, meaty bones, pigs' heads and 'unusual' items. Unleash your ingenuity and you may be surprised by what you can find. 'Ethnic' butchers may have sheep's heads, quail, rabbit and other less common delicacies.

The secret to obtaining regular supplies depends on a good relationship with your meat supplier. If your butcher knows you are a regular customer for whole oxen tails, he can order stocks to suit. If your chicken shop knows you will call in regularly for chicken backs and frames, then these can be saved specially for you.

It's a good idea to exchange information with other raw feed-

ers. By increasing the trade in raw food and developing the market, raw food outlets gain an incentive to order in bulk and keep prices affordable.

Bulk Supplies

When you get serious and want to buy in bulk, then you may need to travel further afield. There are various possibilities. Abattoirs and meat packing plants are good sources of raw meaty bones and offal from beef, pig, sheep and deer. In some districts, ostrich, emu and buffalo parts can be obtained from the meat processors. Chicken processors are an excellent source of backs and frames, wings and necks and sometimes you can obtain 'seconds' stock too.

Informal buyers' co-ops sprang up in North America and now the idea is catching on in the UK and Europe too. Members place telephone or email orders with a volunteer coordinator. Bulk supplies are delivered to a central location for collection by the co-op members. Besides the usual chicken backs and frames and other raw meaty bones, co-ops deal in whole rabbits, game hens, goats and emu. Mostly, the products are frozen and some items may be packed in dry ice and air freighted great distances.

Specialty Suppliers, Pet Shops

Specialty pet food outlets, whether wholesale or retail, advertise their range of raw meaty bones, offal and whole carcasses. You can find contact details by doing an internet search or posting an enquiry on the Carnivore Suppliers internet list. Internet raw feeding discussion lists are also good sources of information: www.rawmeaty-bones.com

Some wholesalers and pet shops supply frozen mice, rats and day-old chicks for feeding to reptiles and birds of prey. Increasingly dog, cat and fer-



ret owners are using the same outlets. Home delivery is often part of the service provided by specialty pet food suppliers.

Ingenuity, Innovation and Entrepreneurial Flair

Hunters, fishermen and farmers frequently have access to good supplies of carcasses and raw meaty bones. In North America, during the deer hunting season, many dog owners stock up on raw, meaty deer bones and heads at bargain prices.

Zoos obtain injured and old farm animals unsuitable for human consumption. That's an option for dog owners with large kennels and plenty of freezer space. I know of one zoo that places newspaper advertisements seeking supplies of wild pigeons, squirrels and rabbits. It's stipulated that the animals must either be trapped or killed with steel shot as opposed to the



more common lead shot. With a little ingenuity and innovation, you are sure to be

able to source good food for your dogs. Here's wishing you every success. 🐾

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 Tom Lonsdale graduated from the Royal Veterinary College, University of London in 1972. After a period as a volunteer in Kenya and work in farm, zoo and small animal veterinary practices, he opened his own group of clinics in Sidney, Australia. He admits he was slow to recognize the diet and dental disease connection affecting his patients. In 1991, he gained recognition as the Whistleblower Vet, championing a raw meaty bones diet for dogs and cats. In 1993, the University of Sidney commissioned him to write the definitive article, "Preventative Dentistry" and in 2018, he was commissioned to write the paper, "Raw Meaty Bones Essentials." His three books in the Raw Meaty Bones Trilogy are available at Amazon in paperback, e-Book and audiobook. For more information visit: www.ThePetFoodCon.com