

## **RMB Newsletter 9:3 Barfer Billinghurst**

May 2009

Hello

Welcome to this edition of the *RMB Newsletter*.

Back in the early 1990's the Raw Meaty Bones concept broke through the muddle and mystification of carnivore diets, and thus provided a firm three-cornered base for the RMB Campaign. In revulsion at the mass poisoning of the world's pet carnivores by the junk pet-food/veterinary/fake animal welfare alliance the RMB Campaign was born.

Cornerstone one:

Carnivores need the chemical ingredients (nutrients) in broadly the same quantity, quality and frequency as is found in the prey of free living carnivores. (For instance the progenitors of Dogs – Wolves, Cats – Wildcats, Ferrets – Polecats.)

Cornerstone two:

Carnivores need the physical texture of their food to closely match that of their free living carnivore progenitors. The simple reason being that it's the physical form of the food that governs the quantity, quality and frequency of teeth cleaning and the correct regulation of passage of foodstuffs down the intestinal tract.

Cornerstone three:

Carnivores, be they domestic or captive wild carnivores, need to be freed from the corrupt and disgraceful yoke of the junk pet-food/veterinary/fake animal welfare alliance.

At last a coherent scientific theory, set in its social and economic context, offered an illuminated path to a better future. The original RMB Lobby of Drs Breck Muir, Alan Bennet and I campaigned vigorously. And in the early days we met with some success.

Unfortunately, things started to go bad when Dr Ian Billinghurst joined the group.

If you are an old Raw Meaty Bones hand you are likely aware of Barfer Billinghurst's exploits and the effective sabotage of the Raw Meaty Bones Campaign through the establishment of Barfmania.

<http://www.rawmeatybones.com/petowners/whynotBARF.php>

This newsletter adds another chapter to the barf/vomit/spew saga and a couple of snippets on the venality and myopia of so-called veterinary researchers.

Unless we know and understand our problems, how can we hope to resolve them?

Until next time, keep on keeping on.

Best wishes,

Tom

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## BARFER BILLINGHURST

As a follower of **Juliette de Bairacli Levy** and Richard Pitcairn, Ian Billinghurst acknowledged the usefulness of raw meat and bones in a dog's diet. But otherwise followed his mentors up the garden path – literally and figuratively. Dr Billinghurst recommended that fruit and vegetables should comprise 30 to 60% of a dog's diet. His diet sheet recommended:

[quote]Midday: A Carbohydrate Meal

Rolled oats soaked in hot water until like porridge. Alternatively Weet Bix or muesli or vegetables. Add to this such things as dates, sultanas, prunes, raisins, grated apple or carrot. Add honey.[end quote]

After reading Raw Meaty Bones information, Billinghurst saw the elegant simplicity of nature's teachings and applied to join the RMB Lobby. We freely supplied him with our research findings and he availed himself of those findings. So much so that he used RMB information as foundation for his first book.

<http://www.rawmeatybones.com/pdf/93ab.pdf>

Nowadays, Billinghurst has three books in print and each contains false and misleading information and each contradicts the other. Central in the enterprise is the misleading notion that dogs are omnivores. And where once he found it useful to extol the benefits of raw meaty bones, he now tells pet owners that his 'Multi-mix' patties contain all the ingredients in a finely ground and thoroughly mixed state. They are the only items fed.'

You can check out the falsehoods employed to snare unsuspecting Hong Kong pet owners here: <http://www.barf.com.hk/en/index.html>

Dutch pet owners, believing that Barfer Billinghurst might have some useful information to impart, invited him to a discussion on their Natural Diet Forum. Please take a look at the Barfmeister pushing his junk pet-food offerings and making much of his mad notion that dogs are omnivores.

<http://www.voernatuurlijk.nl/forum/viewforum.php?f=59>

The Forum members were less than impressed by the Barfer's commercially inspired madness. Here's a couple of their questions (which the Barfer refused to answer):

[quote] RAW MEATY BONES VERSUS MINCED COMMERCIAL RAW FOOD.  
When You launched your first book "Give Your dog a bone" You declared in a letter, advocating your book: "the diets in this book all revolve around a central theme of raw meaty bones".

Chapter 7 - of the same book You wrote: "the central message is that if a dog is to become and remain healthy, its diet must be based on raw meaty bones."

So, for everyone, at that time, it was very clear that the key factor for a healthy carnivorous food was/is: raw meaty bones.

What was making You changing your idea about this very important part and made You concluding that minced commercial prepared raw food was as good as the raw meaty bones?

Did You do research in one way or another about this matter?

Do You know about the study of a few Dutch veterinarian researchers at the Leiden (the Netherlands) University, study which is published in the US National Library of Medicine - NCBI Pub Med - that food particles smaller than 3 centimeters probably are trigger factors for bloat or GDV?

More than 40, 50 years ago, the kibble factory's came out with one big lie, namely that wolves eat the stomach contents of their prey, to justify that they could mix left overs from the grain mill factories and the leftovers from the canned vegetables industries into dog food.

Nowadays we know, from respectable wolf-researchers like Dave Mech, his books and his lecturing, that wolves don't eat stomach contents of their prey at all.

Did You do research or what was the reason for Your conclusion by saying that vegetables are not an optional but an essential part of a dogs diet? [end quote]

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[quote]IS THE BARF DIET A COMPROMISE?

I have noticed on all the "BARF" product websites that raw meaty bones are mentioned and encouraged, however, the emphasis is placed on the marketing of meat/veggie and fruit pulp.

As a veterinarian, isn't it best to set an example by promoting a diet which is wholly appropriate for our carnivorous pets? I understand that the vast majority of veterinarians have been hoodwinked by the likes of Hill's and Mars, but I cannot see how meeting them somewhere in the middle, effectively compromising, is the best thing for pets in general.

I understand also, the theory of providing a ready to feed, mince product in order to possibly entice more owners to feed "raw;" essentially using the product as a stepping stone. However, I would venture to speculate that perhaps these same owners who are willing to feed uncooked meats to their animals, may also be willing to feed a proper, whole foods diet if provided with sufficient information about raw meaty bones and whole prey. Why not give them the benefit of the doubt? Why not arm them instead with information and resources which will enable them to feed their carnivores as nature has truly intended?

As a respected veterinary professional, you have the platform already

established in order to persuade pet owners to follow your advice. If anything, promoting a mince product sets 'us' back, and further instils the belief into the public that they lack the ability to properly feed their own animals. It also gives further credence to processed pet food products in general, IMO.

With all that we know to be true about the natural feeding of carnivores such as dogs, cats and ferrets, why is ground up meat, veggies and fruits being marketed as a proper, NATURAL diet?

I further wonder what it is that makes BARF mince products any different than the multitude of other pulverized meat and veggie pet foods?

Speaking of veggies, this also brings me to another question. I understand that you have been quoted as saying that veggies and fruits are a necessary part of the canine diet. Without seeing this paper, I cannot say if this was taken out of context, but is this really your view on the canine dietary requirements?

"Fruit and vegetables are an essential part of a dog's diet. An essential part, not an optional part. Meat is optional, fruit and vegetables are not." (Canine Nutrition—A Point of View 1988)

<http://www.rawmeatybones.com/petowners/whynotBARF.php>

I truly hope that I have not offended you with this inquiry. I would hope to come to a better understanding of how you have arrived at your feeding philosophy which you currently promote. I think that we all share similar concerns about the health and welfare of pet carnivores. At the least, I would certainly love to foster that belief and give it justification.

Best,  
Michelle Rossi[end quote]

With his past words and actions under scrutiny what did the Barfer do? He fled. Yes, that's right. Instead of attempting to justify the validity of his professional utterances and commercial output he disappeared back to the Barfer lair.

In his absence the Forum owners posted a rebuttal of the Barfer omnivore nonsense:  
<http://www.voernatuurlijk.nl/forum/viewtopic.php?t=23564> (English appears below the Dutch)

Nowadays Barfmania spews across the planet. Two essential cornerstones of the Raw Meaty Bones Campaign, appropriate nutrients and appropriate texture, are obscured by barf vegetable concoctions and sloppy textures. Regarding the vital third cornerstone, the need to combat the junk pet-food/vet/fake animal welfare alliance, barf manufacturers and retailers say and do nothing. They are a major part of the problem; they are dollar hungry junk food merchants too.

Barfer Billinghurst's legacy will likely take a long time to remedy.

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## UC DAVIS VET SCHOOL BALONEY

Michelle Rossi, long-time raw meaty bones feeder and campaigner, attempted to engage Jennifer A. Larsen, DVM, Ph.D., Dipl. ACVN Assistant Professor Clinical Nutrition at UC Davis in a discussion about natural diets for companion carnivores. Have a look at the nonsensical reply from Dr Larsen. See how instead of talking about natural diets, Dr Larsen switches discussion to 'home cooked diets'.

[quote]Date: Friday, March 20, 2009, 11:16 AM

Dear Michelle,

Thank you for sharing your concerns. Actually, we don't vilify home cooked diets; in fact, our service may very well formulate more home cooked diets than any other service in the world. We have a lot of experience with doing so, and are very comfortable with this way of feeding under controlled circumstances. I encourage you to visit our website to learn more about our activities:

[http://www.vetmed.ucdavis.edu/vmth/small\\_animal/nutrition/default.cfm](http://www.vetmed.ucdavis.edu/vmth/small_animal/nutrition/default.cfm)

Our approach is a bit less simplistic than you describe. We prefer to approach our cases more holistically; that is, we consider all aspects of an animal's underlying disease processes (including co concurrent issues and specific clinical signs), owner preferences and concerns, and the home lifestyle of the client and the patient in order to develop a comprehensive nutritional management plan. Sometimes the plan will involve strategies that can be satisfied using commercially available diets; other cases require or prefer home cooked diets. There is not a single best way to feed all animals.

However, it is critically important to properly formulate and prepare home cooked diets to ensure their safety and nutritional adequacy. We frequently manage cases that have problems as the result of improper and inappropriate home cooked diets. The pain and suffering of these animals is tragic, especially since it is completely preventable. It would be irresponsible to widely endorse home cooked diets as a feeding option without providing prudent cautions with regard to potential adverse outcomes.

I can assure you that our approaches are based, as much as is possible, on evidence based medicine, as well as our clinical experience and that of our colleagues at other institutions. Although we maintain mutually beneficial professional relationships with our colleagues employed by companies (which ultimately benefits our patients), our philosophies are not dictated or influenced by the marketing and preferences of pet food manufacturers.

Again, thank you for sharing your perspectives.

Sincerely,

Jennifer Larsen[end quote]

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## SMOKESCREENS AND LIES

**News to hand indicates that vets with ties to the Hill's pet food monster have received a grant to report on (distorted) aspects of raw diets. See their research proposal. See how it's designed to mislead and deceive.**  
<http://www.winnfelinehealth.org/Pages/WinnGrants2009p2.html>

**[quote]09-002: Nutritional adequacy and performance of raw food diets in kittens**

*Beth Hamper, DVM; Claudia Kirk, DVM, PhD, DACVN, DACVIM; Joseph Bartges, DVM, PhD, DACVN, DACVIM; University of Tennessee; \$14,878*

There are many benefits claimed for feeding raw food diets to cats, including improved immune function. Although 4% of U.S. cat owners feed raw diets as all or part of their cat's diet, there are no published studies examining whether these diets are complete and balanced for feeding cats or whether immune function is improved in cats on a raw food diet. The goal of this study is to determine whether a commercially produced raw food diet and a homemade raw diet are nutritionally adequate for feedings kittens and whether these diets enhance immune function and improve digestibility. The outcomes to be measured include growth rate, feed efficiency, digestibility, and various blood and immune status parameters. The long term goal is to evaluate ways of improving feline immune function through diet.[end quote]

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Our primary target must always be the cooked junk pet food/vet/fake animal welfare alliance that does the greatest harm to the greatest number. Unfortunately, with barf opportunists and other charlatans constantly on the make, we need to be vigilant and active on several fronts.

Wishing you fortitude and much success in your efforts.

Best wishes,

Tom