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Vets call for compulsory pet food standards and compliance

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The Australian Veterinary Association (AVA) is advising pet owners who have concerns about their pet's health and nutritional needs to seek veterinary advice.

AVA President, Dr Paula Parker, said that veterinarians are best placed to assess the optimal nutritional requirements for any individual pet and can keep pet owners informed of the importance of optimum body conditioning for pet health and wellbeing.

"When formulating a nutritional program, deficiencies or excesses in calories, vitamins and minerals and an awareness of potential toxicities of the many nutritional sources must be considered – on a case by case basis. Veterinarians make decisions about nutrition for each individual pet based on its needs and the latest scientific evidence," she said.

Currently, the Australian Standard Manufacturing and marketing of pet food includes standards for manufacturing, labelling, marketing and nutrition as well as guidelines on purchasing pet food ingredients.

"These standards are good, and many pet food companies comply with these standards, however, compliance is encouraged rather than mandatory. In Australia, we would like to see pet food become regulated and the standards made compulsory. This would ensure that pet food available in Australia adheres to these standards, which is in the best interests of the health and welfare of Australian animals.

"We were pleased with Minister Littleproud's announcement of the pet food manufacturing review, and we look forward to the Minister providing further details of his action plan.

"In the meantime, if an owner suspects that their pet has become ill due to a particular pet food, they should seek advice from their veterinarian as soon as possible," Dr Parker said.

For further information and requests for interviews contact the AVA media office on (02) 9431 5062, 0439 628 898 or media@ava.com.au.



The Australian Veterinary Association (AVA) is the only national association representing veterinarians in Australia. Founded in 1921, the AVA today represents 9000 members working in all areas of animal science, health and welfare.