

theorists think that this is just plain too much."

The magazine said pets with allergies and itching seem to do much better on high-meat raw food diets. They cited the case of a test dog, Chops. "On raw food diets, her sebaceous cysts shrunk, and her itchiness was reduced. This was also the case when we tested Steve's Real Food. We saw a diminishing in the cysts on her back and her tail and a reduction in itchiness."

Of course, all this quality does not come cheaply. The suggested retail price of a 2.5-pound bag of the frozen dog food ranges from \$6.29 to \$7.29 depending on the flavor. That would feed a 12-pound dog for about six days, which would mean a monthly tab of about \$35. However, appreciable results can be seen on a partial diet of Steve's Real Food (see sidebar).

"I'm not going to lower the quality of it to make it cheaper," Brown states adamantly. "If you pay 25 cents a pound for dog food, the actual cost must be about 2 cents a pound, so what can be in there?"

Of course, not everyone agrees with his approach. In fact, Steve's Real Food has been under attack from the \$30 billion-a-year pet food industry and its allies, who are trying to discredit raw food. Brown says the American



Patience is rewarded in the Lewis-Walker household with cubes of Steve's Real Food

Veterinary Medical Association, the organization for traditional Western vets, also has come down hard against alternative medicine, including raw food.

One simple explanation might be ignorance. William D. Cusick, a longtime researcher and author of 1999's *Canine Nutrition*, writes: "A survey of the 26 schools of veterinary medicine in the U.S. showed the average amount of training on animal nutrition totals five classroom lecture hours. The majority of the five hours is spent on dairy and beef cattle, poultry or swine production and horses."

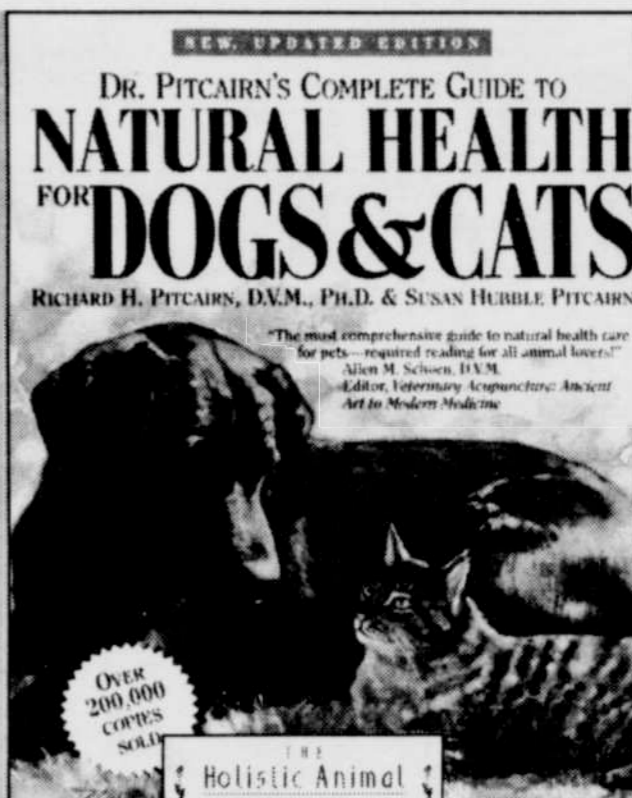
To be fair, other manufacturers offering similar products can be located online. The best advice I can offer any concerned pet guardian is to educate yourself.

The amount of information available is vast, but it ought to lead you to discover the optimal way to feed your best friends. *Bone appétit!* [C]

ORIANA GREEN is a Portland writer whose papoodle *Rose* eats better than she does.

RESOURCES

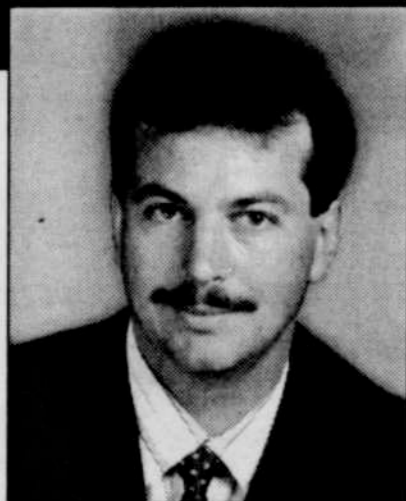
- **Jeff Judkins:** Hawthorne Veterinary Clinic (formerly Whole Pet Clinic), 1431 S.E. 23rd Ave. 503-233-2332.
- **www.stevesrealfood.com:** Everything you ever wanted to know about these products.
- **www.altvetmed.com:** A directory maintained by the American Holistic Veterinary Medical Association.
- **www.uk-pets.com/dogs/dogarticles/001.html:** Fascinating article by a British vet on raw food.
- **www.api4animals.org:** The Animal Protection Institute offers sample diets to fix at home.
- **home.att.net/~wdcusick:** Author and scientist William Cusick will formulate a recipe specifically for your dog.
- **www.felinefuture.com:** Learn more about cat nutrition and Instincts food supplement.
- **Holistic Guide for a Healthy Dog:** by Wendy Volhard and Kerry L. Brown, DVM. Hungry Minds, 2000; \$16.95 softcover.
- **Home-Prepared Dog & Cat Diets: The Healthful Alternative:** by Donald R. Strombeck. Iowa State University Press, 1999; \$37.95 softcover.



• **Natural Health for Dogs & Cats:** by Richard Pitcairn, DVM. Rodale Press, 1995; \$17.95 softcover.

• **The New Age Dog:** by Liz Palika. Renaissance Books, 2001; \$16.95 softcover. Includes a detailed section on communicating psychically with your dog—so you can let Spot tell you what he wants for supper!

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