

Generally, pet food and treat label requirements are:

1. Name (& purpose) of the brand/product -

[These rules address the use of ingredient names in the product name. How ingredients may be included in the product name depends on the percentage of that ingredient in the product, and the use of certain descriptors. For example, there are different rules for "Beef Dog Food", "Beef Recipe Dog Food", "Dog Food with Beef" and "Beef Flavor Dog Food". You should also specify the purpose of the product (nutrition, supplement, treat)]

2. Name of the animal species the product is for -

[This must be conspicuously designated in words on the principal display panel, but may be included in the product name, such as "Beef Dog Food" or "Salmon Treats for Cats"]

3. Net Quantity Statement -

[The net quantity statement tells the consumer how much product is in the container. It is the net weight or net volume, and it must be expressed in the correct units and placed on the lower third of the principal display panel. For net weight or volume, both avoirdupois ("pound/ounce") and metric units must be used.]

4. The Guaranteed Analysis (on an "as fed" basis) -

[This lists the percentage of each of the nutrients in the food. The minimum percent of crude protein and crude fat, and the maximum percent of crude fiber and moisture are always required. Note that "crude" refers to the analysis method, rather than the quality of the nutrient. Guarantees for other nutrients may be required to support claims made in labeling (such as "High in calcium and vitamin A"), and you may include voluntary guarantees for other nutrients. The guarantees must be given in a particular order, in specified units and as a minimum or maximum, depending on the nutrient.]

5. Ingredient Statement -

[Ingredients must be listed in order of predominance by weight, on an "as formulated basis". The ingredient that makes up the highest percentage of the total weight as it goes into the product is listed first. The ingredients used must be GRAS ("Generally Recognized As Safe"), approved food additives, or otherwise sanctioned for use in animal feeds (for example, defined by AAFCO). Ingredients must be declared by the correct AAFCO-defined name, where one exists, or the "common or usual" name.]

6. Nutritional Adequacy Statement, if required -

[If you call your product a complete and balanced food, the claim must be substantiated. The Nutritional Adequacy Statement will also state for which life stage(s) the product is suitable for, such as for maintenance or for growth. This is a statement that indicates the food is complete and balanced for a particular life stage, such as growth, reproduction, adult maintenance or a combination of these, or intended for intermittent or supplemental feeding only. Products conspicuously identified on the principal display panel as a snack, treat, or supplement are exempt.]

7. Feeding directions, if required -

[All pet foods labeled as complete and balanced for any or all life stages must include feeding directions that, at a minimum, state "Feed (amount of product) per (weight) of dog/cat". Feeding frequency must also be stated. Feeding directions are optional for treats, as long as they are not complete and balanced and labeled as snacks or treats.]

8. Manufacturer's Name and Address -

[This names you or your company as guarantor of the product, and gives your or your company's location. The street address may be omitted the named entity is listed in the local telephone directory, but the city, state and zip code must be shown. If someone else makes the product for you, you must show that relationship by using the words "manufactured for:" or "distributed by:" in front of your address.

In addition to the required items, other aspects of the label may be conditionally required. For example, a "lite" or "low calorie" claim requires a calorie content statement following specified methods and format. The product must not exceed maximum calorie limits depending on the moisture content of the food and intended species.]