

Red Flag Ingredients in Pet Food

What you feed your dog or cat is extremely important to their overall health. There are hundreds of brands available and trying to determine which ones are truly healthy — and not just marketing hype — can be mind boggling.

Read your labels and be wary of any brand that includes these low-quality ingredients.

Ingredient	What is it?	Why is it used?	Why is it bad?
Animal or meat by-products	The waste parts of slaughtered animals. May include beaks, hooves, tails, hair, bone, gills, eyes, teeth, as well as things like diseased tissue and tumors.	A cheap way for manufacturers to increase the protein level without using actual meat.	May be sourced from “4D” animals (dead, dying, diseased, disabled) roadkill, euthanized pets, or restaurant waste.
Animal digest	A mixed meat broth that is treated with heat, enzymes, or acids to form concentrated flavor.	To add smell and flavor. Often sprayed on dog food to make up for lack of actual meat flavor.	Like by-products, it is often sourced from “4D” animals.
Artificial colors	Dyes used to color foods including caramel coloring.	To make food look more appealing to pet owners. It’s completely unnecessary for people and pets.	Can cause allergic reactions and have been linked with many adverse health conditions, including cancer.
Chemical preservatives (BHA, BHT, Ethoxyquin, Propylene glycol)	Chemical substances used to preserve fats and oils in dry pet food.	Less expensive than natural preservatives.	BHA and BHT are banned in many countries. All are known or suspected carcinogens and may cause digestive issues.
Corn and/or wheat	Whole grain found in many forms, considered an incomplete protein.	Generally used as “filler” because it is a cheap way to increase the protein level.	Often a source of allergies, can be difficult for dogs to digest so the protein is largely unavailable.
Soy	A plant based inexpensive source of protein.	To boost protein content.	Another common allergen, frequent cause of itching, may be difficult to digest.
Sweeteners	Listed in many forms including corn syrup, sucrose, fructose, molasses, sorbitol etc.	Dogs like sugar — just like humans!	Can lead to health problems such as diabetes, weight gain, and tooth decay.
Vegetable Oils	Pets need vegetables and fat, but not in the form of vegetable oils such as canola, soy, or corn.	A cheap source of fat.	Usually contains high levels of omega-6 fatty acids and can cause inflammation and other medical problems.
Animal fat	A nondescript term for low-quality fat from unidentified sources.	Dog food needs added fat, but there is a huge difference in the quality of this fat.	When the source is not identified, it could come from anything. Fats should be from named sources like salmon oil, flaxseed oil, chicken fat, beef fat, etc.
Un-named meat or meat meal	Most likely the leftovers from bad sources.	To boost the protein percentage.	Like meat by-products, may come from “4D” animals, roadkill, euthanized pets, or restaurant waste. Always look for <u>named</u> meat sources like turkey or turkey meal, lamb or lamb meal, beef or beef-meal etc.
Brewer's rice	Fragments of rice left over after rice has been processed.	As a carbohydrate source.	It contains few nutrients and only serves as a source of quick energy.
Pea protein	A byproduct of pea processing.	As a cheap protein source.	Hard to digest, usually used to make up for a lack of meat-based protein.

You'll never find any low-quality ingredients in the food and treats at Nilla's Tub. Located at 211 Landmark Dr., Ste B-1 in Normal, we also have everything you need to bathe and groom your furry friend in a fun, relaxing environment. No appointment necessary. For more information, call 309-451-9274, e-mail NillasTub@gmail.com, or visit us online at www.NillasTub.com