



Feeding the Feline

Big Country Raw offers a full menu of raw food choices designed specifically to meet the dietary requirements of your dog or cat. All our feline diets are formulated using ONLY HORMONE & ANTIBIOTIC FREE, HUMAN GRADE MEATS sourced from CFIA inspected meat suppliers.

Why Raw Diets for Cats?

There are three main reasons why cats should be fed a raw food diet and they are:

1. Cats are obligate carnivores.
2. A cat's digestive tract contains only one enzyme capable of digesting carbohydrates.
3. Cats have a highly acidic and short digestive tract, which makes them naturally resistant to bacteria. Cats therefore can naturally digest a meat-based diet significantly better than a plant-based or carbohydrate-based dry food diet.

Big Country Raw Pure Formulas & Signature Blends

A cat's dietary requirements differ only slightly from those of a dog. This difference is primarily due to their increased requirement for muscle meat and organ meats. They also are obligate carnivores and therefore are not well suited to eating fruit and vegetables.

Below are our most recommended meal choices for cats:

Signature Blends

Farm Fest - Our most popular and original feline formula. A blend of turkey, beef and lamb, this is our #1 best-selling formula for cats.

Turkey Salmon Lamb - A blend of chicken, salmon and lamb for cats that enjoy the flavour of fish.

Game Bird Blend - The perfect choice for the domesticated hunter in your home. A blend of Pheasant, Cornish Hen and Duck this is also a good choice for cats with protein allergies to chicken or beef.



Pure Formulas

Pure formulas contain NO fruit and vegetables, and also contain a minimum of 10% organ meat. BCR Pure Formulas also contain the necessary amino acids essential to the feline diet including taurine, arginine, methionine and cysteine. These amino acids are found primarily in a meat-based diet.

Big Country Raw's **most recommended** Pure Formulas are the following:

Pure Beef
Pure Lamb

Pure Pork
Pure Kangaroo

Pure Buffalo

Also suitable, but recommended to be fed in rotation with our other menu items are:

Pure Duck

Pure Chicken

Pure Turkey

Pure Chicken, Turkey and Duck contains up to 25% ground bone and may cause constipation concerns more quickly than other proteins. Offer in moderation rotating with other red meat proteins, or adding a fibre agent such as Psyllium Husk Powder (Metamucil) to the raw meals.

Pure Rabbit

Rabbit contains less than 500mg of taurine per 100 grams of food. Supplementing with Thrive Taurine or additional novel protein organ meat is recommended.

Raw Meaty Bones

Cats benefit from chewing raw meaty bones as this helps strengthen neck and mouth muscles as well as keeps teeth clean and gums healthy. Good choices to try with your cat include; Chicken Necks, Duck Necks & Turkey Necks (cut into smaller manageable pieces).

Treats

HERO Dehydrated Chicken Tenders, Beef Liver, and Lamb Liver are the most popular treats for cats. Hero Rabbit Ears are also a great choice, especially for prey driven cats. We also carry Hero Haddock Pieces for cats that enjoy the taste of fish. Healthy K9 Beef Heart and Rabbit Treats dehydrated treats are also a feline favourite.



Food for pets, naturally.

bigcountryraw.ca



Supplements

Big Country Raw Feline Formulas do require the additional supplementation of an Omega 3 Fatty Acid. We recommend 1 ml of THRIVE Herring Oil per 5 lbs of body weight. This supplement can be added daily to reduce shedding and increase coat shine and luster.

Thrive Sea Kelp and Tri-mineral Boost, are both excellent sources of naturally occurring vitamins and minerals. We recommend supplementing your feline's meals with a green mineral supplement to help replace trace minerals and ensure a complete and balanced diet.

For fussy felines that are sensitive to the strong taste of the bitter greens, we suggest our Best in Show Supplements because they are flavourless and dissolve quickly into the moist raw food.

THRIVE Taurine is a synthetic amino acid supplement. Taurine is essential for cats as they cannot synthesize this naturally in their food. A fully-grown cat should receive 250–500 mg of taurine in its food daily. When not receiving adequate taurine through its diet, we recommend adding our THRIVE Taurine supplement. Taurine should always be mixed with water or moist raw or cooked food as un-dissolved taurine can overexcite your pet. Taurine can also be administered in fresh drinking water. A fresh, clean water source should be readily available to your cat at all times.

Feeding Portions

Daily recommended feeding amounts for cats are:

Indoor Cat, Weight Loss Needed – 1.5% of body weight in raw food

Indoor House Cat – 2% of body weight in raw food

Outdoor Cat or Highly Active – 2.5% of body weight in raw food

Weight Gain – 3% of body weight in raw food

We recommend calculating your feeding portions using the following calculations:

1. Weight of your adult cat or anticipated adult weight of your kitten x recommended % from above = #
2. Multiply this # by 16 to determine the oz per day your cat requires. There are 16 oz in 1 lb.

These are estimates only. Dietary requirements depend primarily on each individual cat's activity level, metabolism, age, genetics and health. Adjust food intake to maintain an ideal body weight.

Getting Started

Raw diets should be fed in stainless or ceramic dishes. Plastic can harbor bacteria and therefore is not recommended. After serving, the bowls and utensils should be washed with hot, soapy water. Return all thawed food to your refrigerator after serving. Raw food is best used within 3 days of thawing.

During the transition period you can leave the raw food in a dish for 20–40 minutes at room temperature. If your cat has not eaten or only finished a partial meal cover the food with plastic wrap to maintain its moisture and return to your refrigerator until the next meal time.

Transitioning your cat to a raw food diet can take time and patience. Some cats will immediately take to their new diet as soon as it's offered, particularly kittens and younger cats. Cats that are accustomed to canned or moist food also transition quicker than cats eating dry kibble. Older cats especially can take some time and coaxing. Patience is required; so don't give up too quickly.

Raw diets tend to have very little smell. Fresh meat doesn't have a heavy odour whereas canned food and dry food have very strong aromas. Cats new to the taste of raw meat tend to be hesitant to try it particularly because it lacks this familiar aroma. Try adding some canned or dry food to the raw to encourage your cat with a familiar scent.

We recommend trying 2–3 different food choices when transitioning to the raw diet. Your cat may prefer the taste of one of our formulas to another, so it's important to try more than one kind. It's also good to establish variety as the more proteins your cat eats, the wider the spectrum of nutrients.

Don't offer the raw food too cold. Cats are very sensitive to temperature. We recommend sitting the food in some warm water for 10 -20 minutes prior to feeding to bring to room temperature.

Frequently Asked Questions

Q: My cat seems to be constipated on the raw food diet. What can I do to help?

A: Many cats' bowels lose elasticity from eating dry food diets, and for some cats, constipation can be a concern when initially starting on a raw food diet. We recommend adding Psyllium Husk Powder as a source of fibre to your cat's meals. Psyllium Husks contain minimal carbohydrates and may benefit your cat. You likely can stop using this supplement once your cat has been on a raw diet for 6–8 weeks.

Q: What benefits will I see when switching my cat to a raw diet?

A: The benefits of choosing a raw pet food diet for your cat include:

- Improved digestion resulting in small stools, with little odour
- Healthy skin and coat with reduced shedding and fewer hairballs
- Increased energy and activity with better weight management
- Better dental health with fresher breath
- Improved urinary health

Q: How will a raw diet help my cat lose weight?

A: Cats overeat when fed a carbohydrate-based diet as they consume additional food to make up for the nutritional deficiencies in their diet.

Cats have a unique demand for a high protein, meat-based diet, as their bodies require meat-based amino acids to make energy. These amino acids are burned or expended through a process called gluconeogenesis, which in dogs or humans can be turned on or off depending on how much protein is available. For cats this process cannot be turned off. When fed a raw food diet that contains excellent digestible meat proteins, your cat naturally has increased energy. The end result is more activity due to increased energy and ultimately weight loss.

Resources

An amazing website devoted to raw feeding for cats! A must read for all raw fed cat owners. - <http://feline-nutrition.org>

Dr. Karen Becker is an excellent resource for all information relating to raw food diets and natural health care. We highly recommend her articles relating to cat health – <http://healthypets.mercola.com>