

Dog-Feeding Suggestions

IN feeding dogs, one should keep in mind the following points: the ration should be palatable; it should contain enough protein, minerals, and vitamins; it should be sufficiently concentrated to provide enough energy without overburdening the digestive system but at the same time it should have sufficient bulk to prevent constipation; and finally it should be economical to feed.

RECOMMENDED RATIONS

Miscellaneous Feeds

Where only one or two dogs are kept they may very well be fed by scraps from the kitchen, provided these consist of bread, meat, cooked vegetables, cereals, and some skim milk or buttermilk. Kitchen scraps usually contain an excess of vegetable and starchy foods and need supplementing with some meat and milk to provide protein, minerals, and vitamins.

If several dogs are kept it will be necessary to supply other feed in addition to the kitchen scraps. Perhaps the simplest thing to do in such cases is to feed the same mash mixture which is used for laying hens. Any high-quality laying mash should give fairly satisfactory results. The amounts and methods of feeding the laying mash should be the same as described later for the Auburn Dog Ration.

In response to a demand for a feed that would be better adapted to the needs of the dog than is the usual poultry laying mash, the following ration has been developed at this station:

The Auburn Home-Mixed Dog Ration

Yellow corn meal	350 lbs.
Wheat bran	100 lbs.
Wheat middlings	200 lbs.
Meat Scraps (55 to 60 per cent protein)	100 lbs.
Fish Meal (55 to 60 per cent protein)	100 lbs.
Skim milk powder or dried buttermilk	100 lbs.
Alfalfa meal or alfalfa leaf meal	20 lbs.
Bone meal	20 lbs.
Salt	10 lbs.

Smaller amounts may be mixed by taking the same proportion of each ingredient. This is desirable if only a few dogs are to be fed, in order that the ration may not become stale.

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Or better still, several dog owners may cooperate in the purchasing and mixing of the ingredients. Of course all the feeds must be fresh and free from staleness or rancidity when they are mixed and the ration must be kept dry. Rancid or musty rations are always unpalatable.

The wheat middlings should be flour middlings containing about 5 per cent of fiber. If standard middlings or shorts, which contain around 6 per cent of fiber are used, the middlings should be increased to 250 pounds and the wheat bran decreased to 50 pounds. The choice between skim milk powder and dried buttermilk will depend largely upon the relative cost of the two products. If plenty of skim milk or fresh buttermilk is available the dried milk may be omitted from the mixture. If this is done, one pint of skim milk or fresh buttermilk should be fed for each pound of the ration. For bitches in whelp or suckling and for growing puppies the feeding of some skim milk or buttermilk in addition to the regular formula (with the skim milk powder or dried buttermilk included) will give somewhat better results. If the fresh milk is not available, the skim milk powder or dried buttermilk may be increased to 200 pounds and the yellow corn meal decreased to 250 pounds.

How to Feed.—The home-mixed ration may be fed dry; it may be moistened with water, skim milk or buttermilk, and fed raw; or it may be moistened with water and boiled or baked. However, cooking is unnecessary and adds to the expense and trouble of feeding. In case the dog seems to tire of the feed the method of feeding may be changed occasionally.

How Much to Feed.—The amount to feed will depend upon the size and activity of the dog. Approximately one pound per day will be sufficient to keep a 40 to 50 pound dog in good condition, if the dog is not working. For a hard-working dog of this size about one and one-half to two pounds will be required. The amount should be determined by the appetite and condition of the animal. A dog that is properly fed should not be fat but should be strong and vigorous and should always be hungry at meal time. Dogs that are over-fed are apt to go "off feed" frequently.

How Often to Feed.—Dog owners follow various practices regarding frequency of feeding. As a rule, it is sufficient to feed once a day. This should be in the morning for dogs that hunt at night, and at night for those that hunt in the daytime. Dogs should never be fed just before starting on a hunt. This makes them sluggish and poor hunters and frequently causes nausea and vomiting, particularly if the dogs are hauled for some distance in a car or truck. Guard dogs should be fed in the morning rather than at night when they need to be alert

and watchful. In the case of dogs that are working very hard, such as hounds running as often as three nights a week, one feed a day may not be sufficient to keep them in the best condition. These dogs should be fed early in the morning and late in the afternoon on days when they are not hunted; on the days when they are to be hunted the following night they should be fed only in the morning, the afternoon feeding being omitted.

The behavior of the dog should be carefully watched and at the first indication of a failing appetite it is well to omit a feeding or two entirely.

Palatability.—Most dogs eat the ration readily but some require a few days before they eat it well. Dogs that have been “spoiled” by pampering sometimes refuse the ration at first but they may usually be trained to it by proper methods of feeding. Dogs that are confined and not working do not require a large amount of food and the owner should not worry if they do not eat the ration greedily. If they are not given other food they will eat enough of this ration to keep in good condition.

Completeness of Ration.—The Auburn Dog Ration was developed with the idea of furnishing an adequate supply of protein, vitamins, and minerals at a moderate cost. Its cost could be increased by the addition of liver, yeast, cod liver oil, eggs, fancy kinds of cereals, or enzymes of uncertain or questionable value. There is no convincing evidence that the ration would be improved by such additions. It has been given a rather thorough trial by numerous dog owners during the past two years, one of whom has fed an average of twenty dogs on it throughout this period. The results obtained seem to justify its recommendation as a satisfactory ration that can be mixed at home with an attendant economy in dog feeding.

If a dog does not eat well and thrive on this ration, an examination for worm infestation or other ailments should be made. If a dog is not diseased, this ration will keep him in good condition at much less cost than the usual prepared feeds.

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