



# TIGERTAIL foods



**Tigertail Foods** is a wholistic pet food and treat company. We use only human-grade ingredients that come from trusted sources. Your pet's health is our first concern and everything we make is motivated by the principle that healthy food helps make healthy pets.

## Sit, Stay, READ!

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June 5, 2010

We are thrilled to have two wonderfully talented women writers provide some Sit, Stay, READ! columns for us. Leslie Crane Rugg and Eva Saks have written professionally for several years. Together they have researched and co-written canine nutrition, health, and culture magazine articles for AKC Gazette, Animal Wellness, Fido Friendly, and The Bark. They also have several book projects in the works, including *The Dog Ate My Cookbook! Tasty Meals You and Your Dog Can Share*, *The Name Game: The 21st Century Guide To Naming Your Pet*, *Petiquette: A Manners Guide For The Discerning Dog Owner*, and *Men Are Dogs / Women Are Bitches: How to Find a Mate as Nice as Your Dog*.

Separately, Leslie published, edited, and wrote for two canine specialty magazines – *Rare Insight* (the rare dog breeds) and *The Collie Review*. She also wrote breed and health articles, special features, event and travel reports, departmental columns, and health sidebars for mass market/pet magazines and all-breed/show world magazines, including *AKC Gazette*, *AKC Family Dog*, *Dog & Kennel*, *Cat & Kitten*, and *Bird Times*. Her previous writing credits include co-authoring five novels all published by Pocket Books (Simon & Schuster). Beyond the printed page, Leslie appeared on the *Animal Planet/ Discovery special Hollywood's Top Dogs* as an expert on dogs and on the internet/radio program *Animal Talk Naturally*, speaking on the topic "What is the Right Food for our Pets." For several years, she managed public relations for "Laddie", the 9th generation Lassie, and his trainer, Bob Weatherwax. While appreciating all pets – from Siamese cats and hooded rats to a Dutch hare and various German dog breeds, her heart belongs to the dozen rough Collies who have enriched her life.

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Eva has a multitude of writing and directing credits for television including Disney, Nickelodeon, PBS, Discovery UK, Lincoln Center Theater Directors Lab, and Sesame Street where she created segments focusing on food, lifestyle, and nutrition. As a winner of a Student Academy Award, she is a writer and Sundance filmmaker specializing in storytelling with animals and children. She is a former editor-in-chief of *Casting Call*, and her articles have sold to publications ranging from *Playboy* to *The Riverdale Press* to *Raritan*. She has worked with dogs, ducks, zebras, rats, elephants, horses, chickens, raccoons, rabbits, monkeys, goats, and an insolent cow. Eva is deeply involved with dog rescue and owns three rescued Shetland Sheepdogs, with whom she shares many meals and all the great adventures in her life.

Leslie and Eva have graciously provided us with a summer reading list of pet-related books that will enlighten and amuse you. We are presenting it in two parts; this month the focus is on non-fiction books covering nutrition, training and health and next month will be devoted to fiction and fun.

If you have a story you'd like to tell us about, [write me](#). We love hearing about people or animals or groups that make the world a happier, better place to be, and if we use your story you'll get a free pound of cookies!

### SUMMER READING - PART 1

by Leslie Crane Rugg and Eva Saks

Whether you're on the beach, at a trendy coffee joint, or in your own backyard, you'll forget the rest of the world while reading these quintessential dog books. Part 1 deals with behavior, food, and health. Part 2 (coming next month) will feature fun and fiction. Enjoy the summer; soak up some rays (apply sunscreen!) and some knowledge.

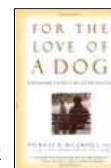
#### BEHAVIOR:



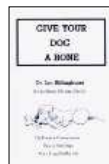
*At the Other End of the Leash: Why We Do What We Do Around Dogs* by Patricia B. McConnell, Ph.D. Ballantine Books. 2002. Humans are primates; dogs are canids. McConnell, an academic as well as a certified Applied Animal Behaviorist, helps dog owners overcome the communication gap between species, illuminating how dogs interpret our behavior. (L: For all that I thought I knew about dogs and humans and our bond, McConnell's approach, contrasting the human/ape nature with the canine/wolf nature, provided a personal breakthrough in translating behavior. I gained even more respect and astonishment for the lengths to which dogs will go to accommodate us limited humans. E: My favorite part is the photos; McConnell devotes a visual section to showing how unhappy some dogs are when their blissful owners are hugging them. You'll never look at your dog the same way again. Instead

of projecting your emotions onto him, you'll learn to read his feelings.)

*For the Love of a Dog: Understanding Emotion in You and Your Best Friend* by Patricia B. McConnell, Ph.D. Ballantine Books. 2005. McConnell manages to be at once entertaining, rigorous, and personal in her guide to relating to your pooch. She draws extensively on stories about her own dogs, working Border Collies and a Great Pyrenees. (E: This book is for anyone who wants scientific evidence that dogs really do possess emotions like ours. McConnell is well aware that it is fashionable among scientists to assume any human emotion people perceive in their dogs – fear, anger, happiness, love – is merely a projection, an anthropomorphizing of canine behavior. Her book is a retort to those who dismiss the validity of canine emotion. With concrete examples, she challenges the objectivity of those who say dogs do not experience and express emotion. L: Every book by McConnell is worth reading!)



#### FOOD:



*Give Your Dog A Bone: The Practical Commonsense Way to Feed Dogs for a Healthy Life* by Ian Billinghurst. Self-published. 1993. A highly readable, seminal work on raw feeding by an Australian veterinarian who was a pioneer in recognizing health problems caused by processed pet food. Somewhat dated but a classic. (E: Billinghurst makes a witty and persuasive case for feeding raw bones; however, note that Dr. Pitcairn – whose book we include below in the Health section – has since pointed out that bones from food animals raised on U.S. feedlots today are repositories of various contaminants, including mercury. Such contamination was not a concern for Billinghurst, from a country where bones were sourced from cleaner sources. For us in 2010 America, the source of our dog's raw bones is important!)

*Food Pets Die For: Shocking Facts about Pet Food* by Ann N. Martin. NewSage Press; 3rd edition. 2008. Martin helped kick off the pet food revolution with this expose of commercial pet food and its unhealthy – even toxic – contents. Note that since its publication, the pet food industry has consolidated further, *i.e.* Proctor & Gamble's purchase in May 2010 of Natura (including Evo, California Natural, Karma). It's also only fair to point out that there are now some commercial pet foods that are distinctly healthier than others; Martin mentions some of the better companies by name. (L: The first edition of this book was published in 1997; it summarized for me what I had learned from my veterinarian, who was ahead of the curve on the issue of carcinogenic preservatives such as Ethoxyquin, and had already formulated a dog food preserved with natural tocopherols, not to mention protein-sourced from New Zealand. Martin's book confirmed my belief that raw meat and bones provided better nutrition for my dogs, especially those that were immune-compromised. E: Just don't read this book while you're eating.)



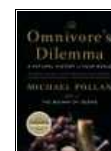
*Pet Food Politics: The Chihuahua in the Coal Mine* by Marion Nestle. University of California Press. 2008. Eminent nutritionist and consumer advocate Marion Nestle analyzes the 2007 pet food recall and its implications for pet owners' feeding. You'll be glad you're feeding raw. (L: One eye-opening revelation of this book for me was the unraveling of the various tangled threads that make up the pet food industry and governing agencies. I may applaud the concept of the global community, but international outsourcing without U.S. government inspection and quality control cannot continue. It's also time for some anti-trust laws to be enforced; I reject the economic justifications for the virtual monopolies in Big Pet Food, an industry where the Big 5 control hundreds of brands sold under different names. Give me a small regional company meeting nutritional standards any day. E: This book is a case study of the pet food recall with implications for globalization of human food as well. Don't let its focus on problematic Chinese imports make you overlook the problems with U.S. produced food, which is also over-politicized and under-regulated.)

*Feed Your Pet Right: The Authoritative Guide to Feeding Your Dog and Cat* by Marion Nestle and Malden C. Nesheim. Free Press/Simon & Schuster. 2010. Nestle and Nesheim help pet owners make sense of current pet food choices and continue Nestle's critique of the corporate pet food industry. An invaluable overview of production, marketing and distribution practices, the book actually names names about specific pet foods, treats, and supplements. (L: If you're new to owning a pet and now face the daunting task of deciphering the semiotics of pet food, you'll love this book; the authors translate the vocabulary used on labels and ads for commercial brands. They also cover the relative value of feeding raw and home-prepared diets. A more experienced pet owner may find some issues are ignored here, but the book is still a worthy read, increasing our understanding of how pet food is made and marketed. E: This book contains a lot of information that you simply can't find anywhere else, such as who sets standards for pet food and what those standards are. Overall I appreciate the authors' commonsensical and iconoclastic approach, but do feel they underrate the benefits of whole foods when it comes to feeding your pet. This is particularly surprising in light of Nestle's emphasis elsewhere on the benefits of clean whole foods for people (see her *What to Eat*). This book is a must-read for raising all the right questions; however, I don't agree with all of its answers.)



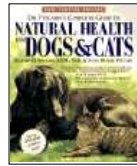
*See Spot Live Longer: How to help your dog live a longer and healthier life!* by Steve Brown & Beth Taylor. Creekobear Press. 2004. Written by an early proponent of commercial raw food production, this book includes case studies as well as insightful information about canine diets based on a natural balance of raw meat, bones, and vegetables. Excellent for pet owners interested in buying prepared frozen raw or creating their own recipes. (L: As a raw feeder of fifteen years, I was eager to read this book because Steve Brown's frozen raw food was one of the first diets on which my dogs consistently flourished. I called Steve a few times with questions, and he was extremely helpful, sharing his understanding of canine nutrition. This book is extraordinarily practical with charts and formulas that explain about nutrition, including how to do it yourself if you're so inclined.)

*The Omnivore's Dilemma: A Natural History of Four Meals* by Michael Pollan. Penguin Books. 2006. A must-read bestseller about the human food chain today, with tremendous implications for what pets should eat. As well as questioning our fast food nation, Pollan explains how the composition of food itself has deteriorated, as corn in various forms has become the mainstay of human and animal diets. Beef, fish, and eggs aren't what they used to be: today they have a much higher ratio of Omega 6 to Omega 3 than nature ever intended, with severe negative consequences



– unless they are sourced from health-conscious suppliers who understand the greater value of Omega 3. (L: This book is one of those life-changers that totally alters how you perceive food sources and production. For me, the lessons really hit home since one of my dogs cannot tolerate high levels of Omega 6. The grass-fed, Omega-3 rich meat that used to be at the heart of our protein supply has been taken over by corn-fed, Omega-6 rich, corporate livestock, dosed with growth hormones and antibiotics to counteract illnesses brought on by the corn-based diet. Even farm-raised fish receive a diet based on corn! The health benefits of fresh/local/sustainably farmed/seasonal food are undeniable for ourselves and our pets. E: The notion that the way our food is produced can actually change its composition remains staggering to me. What Pollan calls his “cornography” is utterly original and important. He also warns of genetically modified products, the politics of soy, and food processing generally. His conclusion? Don’t eat anything your grandma wouldn’t recognize as food...because it ain’t. It’s merely foodish! I like to apply this to my dogs’ food, too.)

#### HEALTH:



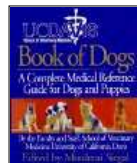
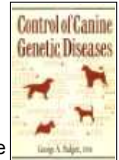
*Dr. Pitcairn's Complete Guide to Natural Health For Dogs & Cats* by Richard H. Pitcairn, DVM Ph.D. and Susan Hubble Pitcairn. 3rd Edition revised and updated. Rodale. 2005. Along with outlining holistic and natural health principles for pets, this canonical guide includes an extensive collection of easy-to-make recipes that are balanced and palatable. Addressing a wide range of pet owners' concerns – from diet and exercise to environment and behavior – this tome is encyclopedic in scope yet extremely easy to read – and reasonably portable in paperback. (E: This is the book to buy if you want to cook your dog's own food. The style is lucid, the tone is sensible, and the index makes it easy to find the answer to many questions, some quite complex.)

*The Holistic Guide For A Healthy Dog* by Wendy Volhard & Kerry Brown, DVM. Howell Book House/Simon & Schuster MacMillan. 1995. Invaluable for its explanations of laboratory tests (Chapter 12) as well as its assorted tables, charts, and lists that cover nutrition, herbs, alternative modalities, supplements, etc. At the end of each chapter is a simple summary with practical suggestions for holistic canine care. (L: I almost majored in pre-med...so part of me demands to take charge of any medical or nutritional issue in my family. In particular, I utilize the authors' descriptions of each component of a CBC (complete blood count) whenever my dogs get a blood panel. The book gave me the tools to discuss the panels' Highs and Lows with my veterinarian.)



*The Nature of Animal Healing* by Martin Goldstein, DVM. Borzoi/Knopf. 1999. An inside look at the way a holistic veterinarian uses alternative modalities to treat a range of canine diseases, disorders, dysfunctions. Humanistic as well as holistic in its approach, the book also addresses the role and needs of the pet owner and the human/animal bond. (L: Although holistic veterinarians still find themselves on the periphery of medical practices, more and more veterinary offices are beginning to offer some holistic modalities to their clients. Goldstein's book, published 11 years ago, provided a window into the kind of treatments that alternative veterinary medicine offers without invasiveness or typical side effects. Welcome to the inside world, thoughts, and treatment processes of a well-known if controversial veterinarian.)

*Control of Canine Genetic Diseases* by George A. Padgett, DVM. Howell Book House/ Simon & Schuster MacMillan. 1998. Useful for breeders seeking to improve their breeding programs and for dog owners who want to research breed-specific diseases. The Appendices (I and II) at the end of the book (the last 61 pages) list all the pure breeds and their corresponding genetic diseases. (L: When I was writing breed profiles for various dog magazines, one of my goals was to arm my readers with questions to take to breeders. This book was invaluable for the extensive lists linking specific breeds to genetic diseases. Some are mild and treatable; others are serious and fatal. While the purpose of this book is to help breeders minimize or eliminate family predispositions for these diseases, it is alarming to see the extent of the illnesses. At the same time, a potential pure breed buyer now knows exactly what to ask a breeder about health issues. Too many pet owners end up with heartaches and a depleted wallet after the fact. I may be preaching to the choir, but do your research before falling in love with a bundle of fur. E: Worth reading even if, like me, you adopt your dogs from rescues and can't interrogate the breeder. Moreover, Padgett indirectly reminds us that getting a Heinz 57 pooch has its benefits; mixed breed dogs are generally healthier precisely because they don't suffer from inbreeding/reiteration of genetic diseases.)



*UC Davis School of Veterinary Medicine Book of Dogs: A Complete Medical Reference Guide for Dogs and Puppies* by the Faculty and Staff, School of Veterinary Medicine University of California, Davis. Editor: Mordecai Siegal. Harper Collins. 1995. The equivalent of a pet owner's textbook covering reproduction, body systems, and diseases. Also included are traditional approaches to nutrition, home care, vaccines that offer some classic but also dated information. (L: I firmly believe that we must advocate for patients, and that the only way to do so effectively is to ask educated questions. We need to understand canine physiology to talk intelligently with our vets. You may also be amazed at the parallels with our own anatomy and diseases.)

*K-9 Structure & Terminology* by Edward M. Gilbert, Jr. & Thelma R. Brown. Howell Book House/Simon & Schuster MacMillan. 1995. Fascinating examination of the dog from tip of the nose to tip of the tail. Comparative species physiology is included along with every detail of how and why dogs move as they do. Useful for show dog exhibitors and breeders but also for pet owners who wonder about what makes Spot sit, stand, run, leap, etc. (L: I've taken obedience, herding, and agility classes with my dogs. I've watched Olympic events and the occasional horse race. Structure – the interplay of the skeleton and muscles – is at the heart of all these activities. It proves to be a wondrous phenomenon, particularly when looking at dog breeds designed to perform specific functions in hunting, herding, etc. And for those of us who love to stare at dogs in the conformation ring, looking for the tiniest difference from one specimen to another, the details of how the body works reveals a marvel of engineering!)

Food for Thought: These books present a four-star buffet of ideas and insights. They don't necessarily agree with each other but they do complement each other. Read them and make up your own mind about what's best for you and your dog. When you've had your fill of facts, move on to our Summer Reading – Part 2, where we cover pet-related fiction.