

20 TREND 17 INSIGHT



Pet Food Gets Personal: **A look at the human flavor trends translating to Petcare**

To some, having a pet is like having another child, and that means they want nothing but the best for their four-legged best friends. This trend of humanizing pets has greatly expanded the market for pet care products. According to Acosta, a market research firm, Americans spent around \$30 billion on pet products in 2016, more than alcohol, bottled water and coffee¹. Pet care is clearly getting personal, as we see the distinct goals and interests of individual pet owners being translated into the products they buy for their pets.

From seasonal cravings to health and wellness, let's take a look at how pet owners translate their own favorite flavor choices to their pet food purchases.

Seasonal Cravings

There's nothing like the anticipation for a pumpkin spice latte in the fall, or a spiked eggnog cocktail in the winter. Consumers crave these traditional treats and they are not in short supply. In fact, 18% of all new products launched in 2016 were seasonal or limited-time offers, according to Mintel². This love for the seasons has also transferred its way through to pet care with many seasonal-inspired products to feed our furry friends. From pink, heart-shaped dog cookies for Valentine's Day to turkey, chicken liver and cranberry treats at Christmas time, it seems consumers are looking for abundant ways to ensure pets will enjoy the seasons too.

Seasonal Flavor Offerings

- Gingerbread
- Cinnamon & Oatmeal
- Pumpkin
- Egg Nog
- Dates
- Raspberry



Simply Nourish Merry Meals Pumpkin Puree Tasty Topper Dog Food Supplement is an easy product is made with 100% pumpkin puree and is said to be a natural source of fiber to help support healthy digestion.



Blue Dog Bakery Santa Paws Gingerbread Flavored Healthy Treats for Dogs are described as all-natural and low fat with 10 calories each. This seasonal product is fresh baked with an extra crunch to promote clean teeth, healthy gum and fresh breath.



Whimzees Spooky Natural XXS Dog Toothbrush Treats are a vegetarian product especially shaped to help remove tartar and plaque for dogs up to 5 pounds. Said to provide better breath, be low in fat and free from gluten.



Blue Buffalo Red, White & Blue Stew Summertime Feast is said to be made with the finest natural ingredients and enhanced with added vitamins and minerals. It is specially made with real beef as the first ingredient, and is for dogs to enjoy real beef BBQ with garden vegetables and potatoes during the Memorial Day parade or before the 4th of July fireworks.

“Paws” for Celebration

According to *Pet Age*, pet treats are the fastest growing retail category.³ With pets treated as a family member more than ever, it’s no surprise that they are also included in family celebrations. About 60% of pet parents celebrate their pets’ birthdays and an additional 60% report buying indulgent pet treats, according to Acosta¹. Even with the dramatic rise to the health and wellness market, consumers are still interested in indulgence and celebratory treats — a reflection of human flavor trends as well. With pet owners seeking this balance of healthy and indulgent, their pets are bound to get a piece of the pie.



Celebratory Flavor Offerings

- Birthday Cake
- Blueberry Mint
- Gingersnap Cookie
- Vanilla Ice Cream
- Carrot Cake
- Blueberry Lemonade
- Pumpkin Spice



Gourmet Tails Celebration Cupcake Dog Treats are perfect for celebrations. Also, available in the following varieties: pumpkin cupcakes, vanilla cupcakes, peanut butter cupcakes and carob mint cupcakes.



The Original Pup-PIE Happy Adoption Day topped with exclusive dairy-free vanilla coating & multi-color nonpareils. Said to use only simple, beneficial ingredients that are viciously delicious and naturally nutritious. Pup-pie says their products “lick” the competition.



Claudia's Canine Cuisine Birthday Celebration Cookies have a large beautifully scripted hand-cut cookie that takes center stage and is surrounded by smaller cookies in shapes that all dogs love i.e., fire hydrants, paws, bowls, balls and bones.



Purina Frosty Paws Ice Cream Treats are cool treats for your favorite canine pal. They are fortified with protein, vitamins and minerals that dogs need with no added sugar, artificial flavors or colors.

Health & Wellness

Health & wellness, like clean label, is no longer just a trend. It's a movement. The ever-increasing health and wellness interest affecting human products is finding its way into pet food now more than ever. Pet parents want to make sure their pets are getting the same high-quality nutritious benefits they seek for themselves. About 46% of pet owners report they purchase products that they think will provide a wellness benefit for their pets, according to Acosta¹. Among these rising wellness trends, the most prevalent in pet food are grain-free, high in protein and "all-natural" or organic.

Healthy Flavor Offerings

- Chicken
- Beef
- Salmon
- Turkey
- Chicken & Rice
- Duck



Nutrience Super Sprouts Smokehouse Chicken with sprouted quinoa moist tender dog treats. Sprouted quinoa is said to be full of antioxidants, rich in protein and fiber, is more digestible. Seeds are described as sealed nutrient-rich storage packages



Heritage Ranch by H-E-B Baked Chia Pomegranate Flavored Dog Snacks are oven baked in the shape of hearts and contain chia seeds to suit a dog's taste buds and make them crave them even more. This dog snack is said to be made with only the best ingredients and is free from artificial colors, artificial flavors, corn and soy.



Wellness Trufood Living Nutrition Traditional Turkey Dinner Grain Free Raw Food for Adult Dogs are a small-batch made product comprises freeze-dried raw turkey, which is made via a proprietary process, which makes the turkey safe to feed without cooking away vital nutrients and flavor, and fresh dehydrated fruits and vegetables, which are stripped of water, full of color and bursting with antioxidants and natural fiber.

Meal Occasions

More and more, meal time is a culinary event for humans, with savory taking center stage. From fresh, bright, healthful fare to the exotic, with Pacific, African and Asian influences, ethnic and international foods seem to be everywhere. According to Mintel, 57% of all international eaters seek out savory flavors⁴. We're seeing culinary and ethnic influences carried over into the pet food market, as reflected in a large number of product releases.



Simply Nourish Merry Meals Salmon Recipe in a Savory Broth features grain-free chunks in gravy and is said to be made from all natural ingredients with added vitamins, minerals and taurine.



Meal Occasions Flavor Offerings

- Carnitas
- Teriyaki Chicken
- Pad Thai
- Shrimp Fried Rice
- Carne Asada
- Chicken a la King



Nutro Max Grain Free Pasture Fed Lamb dog food is an all-natural dog food and contains added vitamins, minerals and other nutrients. It is free from GMOs, chicken-by-products, corn, wheat, soy protein and added artificial flavors.



Ruffin' It Chomp'ems Duck Tenders dog treats are said to be a real meat treat with no artificial colors, flavors, fillers or grains. Made from premium duck fillets, these all natural treats are 97% fat free and provide the extra protein the dog may not be getting in its regular diet.



Doctors Foster + Smith Lamb Meal and Pea Recipe Adult Dog Food is made using limited ingredients including lamb meal, antioxidant formula, vitamin E, selenium, zinc, probiotics and omega 3 fatty acids for healthy skin and coat.

FONA CAN HELP!

Let FONA's market insight and research experts translate these trends into product category ideas for your brand. They can help you with concept and flavor pipeline development, ideation, consumer studies and white space analysis to pinpoint opportunities in the market.

Our flavor and product development experts are also at your service to help meet the labeling and flavor profile needs for your products to capitalize on this consumer trend. We understand how to mesh the complexities of flavor with your brand development, technical requirements and regulatory needs to deliver a complete taste solution.

CONTACT OUR SALES SERVICE DEPARTMENT

at 630.578.8600 to request a flavor sample or visit www.fona.com.

SOURCES

1. The Pet Parenting Boom, Acosta - October 2016
2. Mintel GNPD
3. <https://www.petage.com/2016-2017-pet-age-retailer-report-trends-old-and-new/>
4. International Food Trends: Spotlight on Flavor, US- March 2017
5. FONA Friends & Family Pet Parents Survey

