

History of pet food manufacturing



Prepared pet foods are available today in most countries of the world and can be found in many places including specialty

pet shops, veterinary practices or clinics, grocery stores, wholesale stores, and on-line retailers. Pet foods today are considered to be important within the fast-moving consumer goods category. They are typically manufactured in countries where there is an economically attractive demand, and factories are usually located where there is an availability of suitable ingredients including meats, fish and cereals.

The specific nutritional needs of dogs have been recognised for over 2000 years yet, by comparison, the history of pet food manufacturing is relatively short. The earliest reports of purpose made “dog biscuits” stem from the mid 1800’s. Since this time the industry has grown into a hugely diverse category with many forms of products available to meet the needs of different life stages and life styles. Today pet foods can also play an important role in providing nutritional support during disease management and recovery.

A chance happening on an English quayside late in the 19th century changed the lives of pets throughout the world. That single moment has been followed by more than 100 years of constant progress and improvement for the prepared pet food industry’s purchasers and consumers.

Today’s pets owe a great deal to Mr. James Spratt, accredited as the founder of pet food as we know it today. Originating from Cincinnati, Ohio, Spratt travelled to England with the aim of selling lightning conductors to the British.

On arrival at Liverpool docks Spratt observed dogs around the port scavenging for discarded ship biscuits. In that moment Spratt saw the need for specially prepared food for animals and turned his efforts to the production of dog biscuits. Following success of this product in England, Spratt returned home and in the 1870’s introduced his product to wealthy American dog owners.

And so, the prepared pet food industry was born. Over the ensuing years, as food science, food safety technology and understanding of pets’ unique nutritional needs continued to evolve, pet food makers introduced additional forms to meet the needs of pets and their owners. These forms include “wet” food in cans, tubs and pouches, extruded dry diets, semi-moist products, and more. Regardless of the form, pet food makers work hard to ensure the quality, safety and nutritional completeness of every pet food product.

Today, the majority of dog and cat owners around the globe choose prepared pet foods for their nutritional completeness, convenience, variety, affordability and great taste.

