FDA September Conference on DCM

Title: Missing Elements in the Discussion of DCM

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Historically, nutritional advancement has been validated through controlled study, peer-review and debate. Limited science and strong opinion should never be considered nutritional fact. In 2012, breeder groups demonized peas to reproductive issues in dogs. By 2017, breeder groups were widely reporting peas were involved with the onset of DCM in dogs and pharmacological doses of taurine were strongly advised. These hypotheses led to strong non-peer reviewed communiques suggesting legumes and grain-free products were nutritional, causative agents in the onset of DCM. These untested theories severely impacted many pet food brands and ingredients.

Three alternative views will be made in the presentation.

1) Legumes are a multi-faceted group of ingredients connected by nitrogen fixing bacteria at the root nodule. Different physical, chemical and processing conditions exist in the family Fabaceae. Grain-free products were equally as diverse. No common component nor lack thereof has been identified connected all legumes to DCM.
2) Pets are significantly overweight to obese due to the over-feeding of multiple edibles. Additional calories up to 50% leading to severe imbalances are common - unrelated to the ingestion of complete pet foods.
3) DCM has been widely documented as a strongly heritable trait in dogs. No direct connection has been made to common nutritional levels ability to stop or reduce the progression of DCM. Pharmacological levels of nutritionals have had mixed results in DCM cases. While communiques suggested that few dogs were at high-risk for DCM, over 25 breeds are documented as high-risk with an additional 30+ breeds described with DCM. Some breeds show similarities to humans with DCM while other breeds are more multi-faceted. Recent genetic mutations in dogs with DCM have been connected to glucose metabolism.

Nutritional science should be well documented prior to consumer communication while further testing of genetic/heritable traits connected to disease is warranted.