

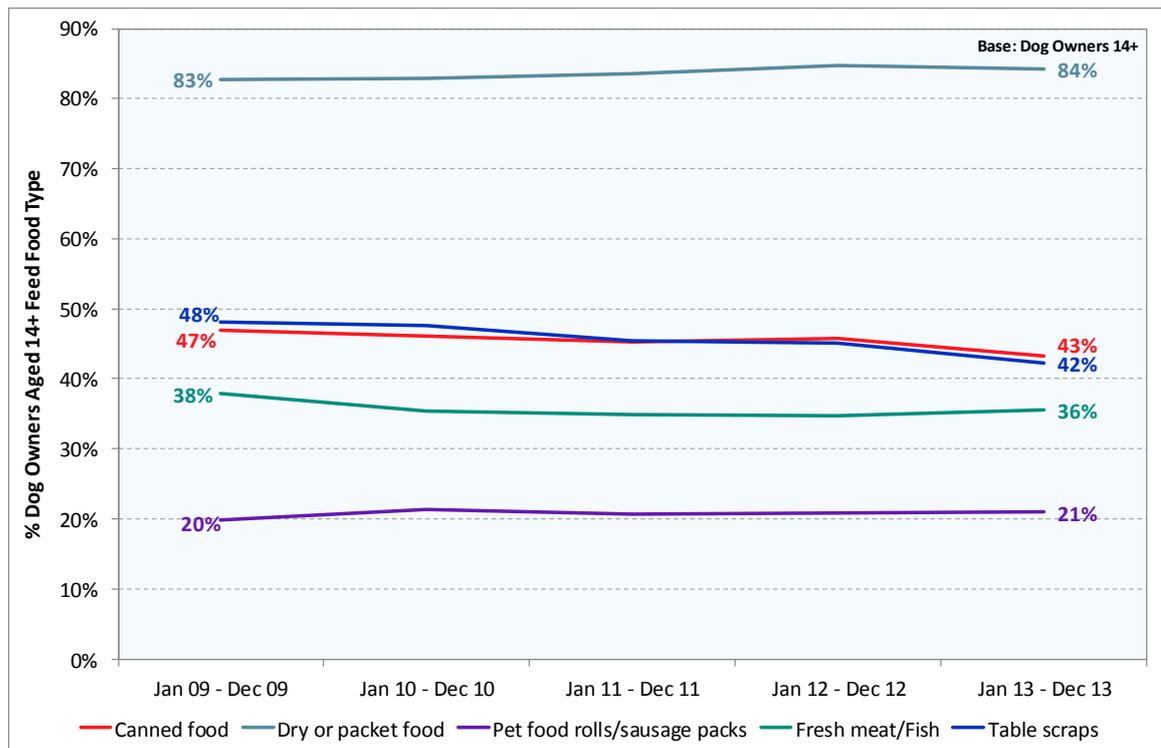
Friday, 11 April 2014

## New tricks in dogs' (and cats') diets

While we've all got the message about the virtues of healthy eating, it seems we're gradually becoming aware of what we feed our four-legged friends too. Roy Morgan Research looks at changes in our pets' diets since 2009.

In 2009, 48% of Australian dog owners fed their dogs table scraps, but by 2013 this figure had dropped to 42%. Over the same period, the proportion of dog owners who fed their canine companion dry or packet food increased fractionally from 83% to 84%, as did the proportion feeding their dog chilled food in the form of pet food rolls/sausage packs, from 20% in 2009 to 21% in 2013.

### No more table scraps for Fido: dog food trends since 2009



Source: Roy Morgan Single Source, Australians14+ (January 2009 – December 2013), average annual n=7,191

While there is no way to quantify the nutritional content of table scraps, it could potentially be argued that the scraps which humans can't, or choose not to, eat won't always be as nutritionally balanced as specially prepared, pre-packaged dog food. Furthermore, 81% of owners who claim their dogs are 'fussy eaters' feed them dry or packet food — suggesting that 'healthier' doesn't necessarily mean 'less tasty'.

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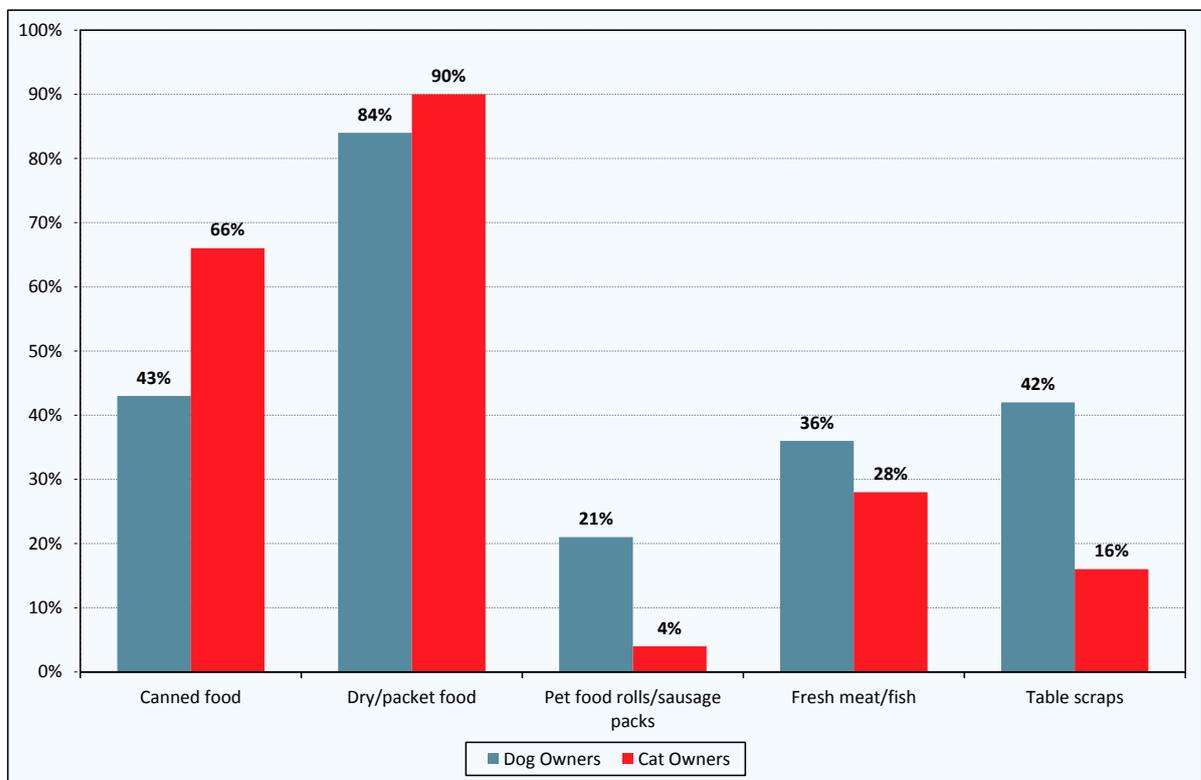
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*Kitty cuisine*

As with dog food, the most noteworthy trend in cat food is the gradually declining proportion of Aussie cat owners feeding table scraps to their feline family member, from 20% in 2009 to 16% in 2013. Also similar is the slight increase in popularity of dry/packet food among cat owners, up from 89% to 90%.

A far greater proportion of cat owners (66%) feed their furry friend canned food than dog owners (43%), while far fewer (4% vs 21%) opt for chilled pet food rolls/sausage packs — not especially surprising, considering that this type of pet food is geared more to dogs.

**Famished felines and hungry hounds: what dog owners and cat owners feed their pets**



**Source:** Roy Morgan Single Source, (January 2013 – December 2013), n=8,856. Base: Australian dog owners aged 14+ and Australian cat owners aged 14+

**Angela Smith, Group Account Director - Consumer Products, Roy Morgan Research, says:**

*“In what must be good news for dog food manufacturers, the last five years have seen a decrease in dog owners feeding table scraps to their dogs, and a gradual shift towards manufactured food, particularly dry/packet food and pet food rolls. Manufacturers appear to be fuelling the trend, with brands such as My Dog extending their range with ‘My Dog Light’, and Pedigree using the slogan ‘every dog deserves leading nutrition’.*

*“Curiously, fewer cat owners are feeding their cats table scraps than they were in 2009, too. However, trends in cat food have otherwise remained fairly stable. More interesting*

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*are the differences between cat owners' choices and those of dog owners, with the former generally more likely to opt for manufactured food (canned or dry) than the latter.*

*"With Roy Morgan's revolutionary new profiling tool, Helix Personas, marketers can now refine their search for target buyers with unparalleled accuracy.*

*"For example, over the last two years, 66% of dog owners in the 'Country Comforts' Persona fed their dog table scraps, compared to 44% of total Aussies. Country Comforts comprise mid-life country families, usually educated, with moderate personal and household incomes. Financially cautious, they would probably view table scraps as an economical alternative to buying pre-packaged pet food.*

*"On the other hand, 30% of dog owners from the 'Successful Immigrants' persona fed their dog pet food rolls over the same period. This group tends to be ethnically diverse, hard-working and high-achieving, with a fondness for the trappings of success — which might very well include fancy food for Fido!"*

**For comments or more information please contact:**

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### **Related research reports**

View our [Pet Food Profiles](#), including our [Dry Dog Food Buyer Profile](#) or our [Canned Cat Food Buyer Profile](#). These profiles provide a broad understanding of the target audience, in terms of demographics, attitudes, activities and media usage in Australia.

Learn more about Helix Personas [here](#).

### **About Roy Morgan Research**

Roy Morgan Research is the largest independent Australian research company, with offices in each state of Australia, as well as in New Zealand, the United States and the United Kingdom. A full service research organisation specialising in omnibus and syndicated data, Roy Morgan Research has over 70 years' experience in collecting objective, independent information on consumers.

In Australia, Roy Morgan Research is considered to be the authoritative source of information on financial behaviour, readership, voting intentions and consumer confidence. Roy Morgan Research is a specialist in recontact customised surveys which provide invaluable and effective qualitative and quantitative information regarding customers and target markets.

### **Margin of Error**

The margin of error to be allowed for in any estimate depends mainly on the number of interviews on which it is based. Margin of error gives indications of the likely range within which estimates would be 95% likely to fall, expressed as the number of percentage points above or below the

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actual estimate. Allowance for design effects (such as stratification and weighting) should be made as appropriate.

Sample Size	Percentage Estimate			
	40%-60%	25% or 75%	10% or 90%	5% or 95%
5,000	±1.4	±1.2	±0.8	±0.6
7,500	±1.1	±1.0	±0.7	±0.5
10,000	±1.0	±0.9	±0.6	±0.4
20,000	±0.7	±0.6	±0.4	±0.3
50,000	±0.4	±0.4	±0.3	±0.2

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