

# Never Feed Your Dog These Fruits and Veggies

Can lead to calamity including vomiting, diarrhea and kidney failure, which may not occur until a few days later. Some believe pesticides are responsible, but dogs have been sickened from organic varieties, so better safe than sorry. On the other hand, these 21 foods are healthful treats.

**Analysis by Dr. Karen Shaw Becker**

## STORY AT-A-GLANCE

- Wolves and coyotes, for instance, eat some grasses, berries, and wild fruits and vegetables, and your dog can too to mimic his ancestral diet
- Grapes, raisins and onions are examples of foods that are not safe for dogs
- Dogs can benefit from eating a wide range of fruits and vegetables, including apples, Brussels sprouts, green beans, watermelon, berries and much more
- Fermented vegetables are another option, which provide your pet with valuable beneficial bacteria to help balance his gut microbes

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Dogs, like people, can benefit greatly from the addition of fresh, whole foods to their diet. For dogs, fruits and vegetables should only make up a small percentage of a **nutritionally balanced, species-appropriate diet**, but including some can help to mimic their ancestral diet, similar to the one consumed by wolves, while providing valuable nutrients.

In fact, feeding your pets only meat, bone and organ (without any roughage coming from vegetables) has been documented to decrease the health of the gut **microbiome**, not to mention denying your pets the antioxidants, phytonutrients and flavonoids that only come from produce.

Wolves and coyotes and even wild cats have been documented to eat some grasses, berries, and wild fruits and vegetables, and your dog can too. However, not all foods that are safe for people are equally safe for pets, so it's important to be aware of this distinction. In a nutshell, the following are fresh foods that shouldn't be fed to dogs. Below that, I'll cover some of the best options to feed to your dog instead.

## Don't Feed Your Dog These Fruits and Vegetables

Vitis vinifera fruits, including grapes, raisins, sultanas and currants, are not safe for dogs. Ingestion of even a small amount may lead to vomiting, diarrhea and kidney failure, which may occur several days after consumption.<sup>1</sup> Not all dogs are affected by these fruits, and some believe that a fluoride-based pesticide called cryolite used on grape crops could be to blame.

However, some dogs have gotten sick even after eating organic or homegrown grapes, so it's best not to take a chance and avoid feeding these to your dog. Plants of the genus allium, which includes onions, chives, garlic and leeks, are another category that can make some dogs sick.

If large doses are consumed, it can lead to drooling, abdominal pain, vomiting and diarrhea, which may not occur for several days after ingestion. Oxidative damage to red blood cells, causing them to risk rupturing, can also occur,<sup>2</sup> as can weakness, rapid breathing, high heart rate, pale mucous membranes, reddish or brown urine and anemia.

That being said, in the case of garlic very large quantities are needed to be dangerous — much more than you would typically feed to your dog. Dogs can healthfully consume 1/4 teaspoon of freshly chopped garlic per 15 pounds of body weight and reap substantial health benefits, just don't overdo it.

## Top Fruits and Vegetables to Feed Your Dog

The following fruits and vegetables can add valuable nutrition to your dog's diet when fed in moderation.<sup>3</sup>

- **Apples** — Apples, with the seeds and core removed, provide vitamins A and C, plus fiber and additional antioxidants.
- **Avocados** — The flesh of avocados (the same part you eat) provides fiber, folate and vitamins K, B5 (pantothenic acid), B6 and C to your dog, **along with healthy fats**.
- **Bananas** — Bananas are a rich source of potassium, which is useful for controlling heart rate and blood pressure. They're also a good source of flavonoids, including lutein, zeaxanthin and beta-carotene — and most dogs love them.
- **Blueberries** — Bring on the phytochemicals, including anthocyanidins, which are powerful antioxidants, plus fiber in these nutritious little berries.
- **Broccoli** — Your dog can reap the benefits of broccoli just like you can, which includes detoxification, anti-inflammatory properties and nutrients like potassium, calcium, protein and vitamin C. Your dog may prefer steamed broccoli.
- **Brussels sprouts** — Similar to broccoli, Brussels sprouts provide anti-inflammatory, detoxification and even anticancer benefits, plus loads of nutrients and antioxidants.
- **Cantaloupe** — Cantaloupe is rich in vitamin A and carotenoids, plus provides water and fiber.
- **Carrots** — This is another carotenoid-rich food many dogs enjoy.
- **Celery** — Celery provides important vitamins A, B and C and may even freshen your dog's breath.
- **Cucumbers** — Crunchy and low in calories, but rich in vitamins like K, C and B1, **cucumbers** make an excellent doggy snack.
- **Green beans** — This dinnertime staple provides vitamins A, C and K, along with calcium, copper, fiber, folic acid, iron, niacin, manganese, potassium, riboflavin, thiamin and beta-carotene.
- **Mango** — Mango, without the pit, is a favorite for some dogs and provides vitamins A, B6, C and E, plus potassium.
- **Mushrooms** — Obviously avoid poisonous mushrooms (and don't let your dog eat wild mushrooms for this reason), but the medicinal mushrooms you eat (such as shiitake, reishi, maitake and button) are also good for your dog. They contain anticancer and immune-boosting properties.

- **Oranges** — You might not think of feeding your dog an orange slice, but they're an excellent source of vitamin C, potassium and fiber. Be sure to peel them first.
- **Peaches** — With the pit removed, peaches provide vitamin A and fiber for your dog.
- **Pears** — Pears are rich in copper, vitamins C and K, and fiber. Remove the seeds and pit before feeding to your dog.
- **Peas** — Fresh or frozen peas make excellent training treats (but avoid canned varieties, which are high in sodium).
- **Pineapple** — This tropical treat is a unique source of bromelain, an enzyme that's good for digestion.
- **Raspberries and strawberries** — Both of these berries are good for your dogs, with fiber, vitamin C and anti-inflammatory properties.
- **Spinach** — This green leafy vegetable has anti-inflammatory properties and can help support heart health.
- **Watermelon** — Watermelon is a hydrating treat on a hot summer day, providing vitamins A, B6 and C, plus plenty of beneficial lycopene. Be sure it contains no seeds and the rind is removed.

## Have You Given Your Dog Fermented Vegetables?

One of the best ways to feed vegetables to your dog is to ferment them first. The fermentation process is similar to what occurs in the wild, as it imitates the digestion of plant foods in the gastrointestinal tracts of the small prey animals that dogs would eat.

Not only does fermenting make vegetables easy for your dog to digest, but it also provides beneficial bacteria to balance your pet's gut microbes. Fermented vegetables are also wonderful detoxifiers and the lactic acid produced by fermentation is a chemical repressor that fights cancer cells without harming healthy cells.

It's easy to **make fermented veggies** at home, and when you do, start out feeding them slowly (with just a half a teaspoon or so, until your pet can tolerate more). Feeding too much right off the bat could lead to digestive upset. Fermented vegetables make an excellent addition to the fresh foods you feed your pet — but they needn't replace the healthy fruits and veggies listed above. For best results for your pet's health and taste buds, provide a wide variety of fresh produce on a rotating basis.

### Sources and References

<sup>1</sup> [Pet Poison Helpline, Are Grapes and Raisins Poisonous to Dogs?](#)

<sup>2</sup> [Pet Poison Helpline, Onions](#)

<sup>3</sup> [American Kennel Club December 3, 2015](#)

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