

### From simple beginnings

The wild dog or cat would have had to catch his own meal; his exercise would have come before his meal rather than after. His meal would have been wet rather than dry as fresh animal protein has a high percentage of water. With this protein, he would have obtained a large variety of seeds, grains, herbs and barks. After catching or stealing his food he would have taken or dragged it to a private place and consumed the entire carcass - hair, skin, bone, stomach contents, in fact all parts of the animal.

With this meal, he also would have consumed a fair amount of crude fibre, grasses and roots from the surrounding land. Crude fibre, grasses and roots are a very necessary part of the whole plan of health, keeping the digestive tract clean and free of mucus, thus depriving the internal parasites of their home. All parts of this meal added something towards his health and vitality; the vitamins and minerals, proteins and carbohydrates so needed to keep him fit and able to continue to fend and defend.

He did not know that he had to eat a bit of this and a bit of that to keep healthy, he knew he had to eat to survive, his chosen prey will provide most of his needs. To him moving from place to place was keeping up with the browsing prey. It meant nothing to him that in so doing he moved away from parasites and disease allowing the land to cleanse itself before he returned.

Our modern life is far removed from the plains or hills of the natural place of the wild dog or cat. We can however try to give him some of his natural needs. First of all - respect his species - and endeavour to keep him well and full of vitality and a zest for life. He can no longer fend for himself. This is a task that we as owners take on as his companion, it is our duty to keep him well and happy in his modern and unnatural environment, to give him a little of what is his right.

There are many good books on dog and cat nutrition many of these books are exceptional in the information and techniques, but are often too complicated and many owners who would have followed, have simply decided that there is too much to do or that it is too complicated to get the correct balance. It does not have to be complicated however, as in the human diet balance comes with variety, in the wild it would have been a rabbit today, or maybe a bird or even a wild goat or pig tomorrow. Each grazing animal eating a slightly different diet and so giving the dog a balance over time.