

## LET'S MAKE DOG FOOD!

The recipe I describe here makes about 32 pounds of dog food, which I freeze in daily portions. One 8-ounce cup (1/2 pound) of this recipe is about the right daily amount for dinner for a 10 pound dog. This is in addition to a small breakfast snack. The recipe will feed one 10 pound dog for 60 days, or 50 pounds of dogs for 12 days. Please weigh your dog regularly to make sure you are providing the right amount of food for your dog.

This recipe is easily scaled up, I usually make 100 pounds of dog food at a time using a 40 quart stock pot that I bought at Stater Brothers for under \$30. This feeds our 60 pounds of dogs (two Eskies and three Papillons) for 33 days!

All ingredients are cooked to 165 degrees which is the minimum safe cooking temperature for humans according to <http://www.foodsafety.gov> (I have been known to sneak a snack of this food myself!) Because of the order in which the grain, veggies, and meat are combined and cooled, the dog food can be quickly and safely frozen without defrosting everything in your freezer.

## INGREDIENTS

### Chef Tip: What's In It?

*I use a ratio of 50% protein to grains/veggies. Much has been written about this, and you will want to adjust the ingredients based on your dog's age and temperament and your veterinarian's recommendations. See, for example, the book "Four Paws Five Directions" by Cheryl Schwartz, DVM to get a feel for how to adjust the recipe for your dog.*

### 8 POUNDS GRAIN TOTAL

- > 4 pounds white rice (about 3 cups uncooked rice plus 6 cups water) and....
- > 4 pounds slower acting grain (I have used various combinations of brown rice, oats, barley, and occasionally corn or quinoa)

### 8 POUNDS VEGGIES TOTAL

I use about one third root veggies and two thirds hearty/leafy veggies (partially influenced by what's on sale, and how the garden grows!):

- > Root veggies such as daikon radish, parsnip, carrots and....
- > Hearty/leafy vegetables such as broccoli, bok choy, chinese cabbage, spinach, kale, collards, romaine



### 16 POUNDS PROTEIN TOTAL

- > your mix of turkey, pork, beef, chicken, some egg, a little fish, etc

*(also somewhat influenced by what's on sale, and how the fishing goes!)*

### **Chef's Tip: BE CAREFUL WHAT YOU ADD!**

*I don't use any onion, garlic, or potato because of reports that they can be dangerous for dogs. Check all your additions to make sure they are dog safe before adding. Egg shells ground up in a coffee grinder are a great cost saving addition to store bought calcium powder. It's also possible to cook and grind up bones as a substitute for some of the calcium.*

## **DIRECTIONS**

### **MAKE THE GRAINS:**

Make the grains, let them set out to cool or cool with a fan, then freeze in daily portions in your final containers. As mentioned, I use the ratio (by weight) 1/4 grains, 1/4 veggies, and 1/2 proteins. So for my 3-pound daily portions, that's 3/4 pound of grains per container, to which will be added 3/4 pounds of veggie mix and 1 1/2 pounds of protein.

I put all 12 cups of water in a pot along with the 3 cups of slower cooking grains, then simmer it for about 20 minutes before adding the 3 cups white rice and cooking for another 25 minutes. Another way is to make the white rice separately in a rice cooker and put the other grains in a crock pot for a longer cooking time (4 or 5 hours).

I use a little fan to cool the grain mix to room temperature before loading the freezer containers, stirring occasionally. It cools pretty quickly.

### **Chef's Tip: SPREAD OUT YOUR FREEZING**

*When making really big batches, I like to spread the cooking and freezing out over a few days so I don't end up defrosting everything else in the freezer. Of course if you have the equivalent of an Iron Chef blast chiller you can do it all in a day! Also it helps to have one of those garage freezers when storing large amounts of food. For convenience, I use a Plexiglas divider to partition out a separate compartment for the doggie food.*

I use biopak #3 containers ( [www.fold-pak.com](http://www.fold-pak.com) ) rated to contain 66 fl ounces, which is perfect for my 48-oz daily portion of dog food with a little room to spare. They are microwavable, biodegradable, space efficient (roughly square), and available at Smart and Final. They seem to get less sippy than the other cardboard containers and avoid the hassle of cleaning up reusable containers. They come in various sizes (see website).

### **Chef's Tip: FREEZE IN DAILY PORTIONS**

*It's most convenient to freeze the dog food as you go in weighed-out daily portions in your final freezer container. Freeze the grains first, later the veggies and proteins will be added on top of the frozen grain mix which will make for less handling and a fast freezing time.*

## MAKE THE VEGGIES:

Next grind the veggies, heat them up in your stock pot, and cool them well with a fan (stirring occasionally). A 20-quart stock pot is perfect for this size recipe. I start with the root vegetables since they take longer to cook, with the heat on medium low. By the time I'm done grinding and adding, the mix is almost up to temperature.

Add the right amount of veggies on top of your cooled or frozen rice mix and put the containers back into the freezer.

## MAKE THE PROTEINS:

If you bought ground turkey, pork, beef, etc just throw it into the stock pot and heat, stirring occasionally. Add a little olive oil to the pot first to help prevent sticking.

If you bought slabs of beef, pork etc which are sometimes cheaper and lower fat, slice them up into cubes and use a food processor or meat grinder to grind before adding to the pot.



I bring the protein mix up to over 160 degrees and stir and test until I am sure that all the meat is at safe temperature. Make sure to thoroughly clean up the counter and appliances while heating to avoid any contamination.

## FINAL STEPS:

After bringing the proteins up to temperature, I let them cool a little (to about 140 degrees). Then spoon the right amount onto the frozen veggie/grain mix, back into the freezer, and you're done!

For really big batches, to minimize the load on your freezer, you can fill the sink half full of ice and plop the stock pot on top to cool the protein even more before freezing.



## SUPPLEMENTS ADDED AT FEEDING TIME:

Please consult your veterinarian to insure the right amounts and balance of supplements for your mix. These are very rough approximate guidelines per pound of food.

- > half scoop of calcium powder
- > liquid from a capsule of fish oil, or some sardines or salmon
- > half a vitamin tablet
- > occasional use only - small amount of chopped up beef or turkey gizzards.

To serve I like to nuke until defrosted, put the food into a pot, mix by hand and add heat if necessary to make sure everything's at room temperature, then add the supplements.

You will have to keep this food well out of reach until served because your dog will do just about anything to get to it. Remember to add supplements at feeding time. Enjoy!

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