

Ferret Nutrition Roundtable

Ferret-specific food manufacturers answer nine key questions about ferret food.

By Sandy Meyer

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Ferret-specific food meets the requirements ferrets have for meat as a protein source, plus high fat and low carbohydrates.

Before being domesticated thousands of years ago, ferrets in the wild primarily ate rodents and other fresh meat. If you're like me, you want to give your pet the fresh meat it wants and needs, but the idea of managing live or recently live prey makes you squirm. Enter manufacturers who take the "ew" out of feeding our high-energy, carnivorous pets the nutritional diets they need by providing manmade, ferret-specific food. These companies provide several ferret food options as well as helpful information about feeding your ferret pet.

Ten representatives of ferret-food manufacturers answered our questions in this ferret nutrition roundtable dialogue. They were not paid for their time and input, and we appreciate their investment in educating pet owners and providing dietary choices for our ferret friends. Responses have been edited for space. Click on the link to each question to see the answers.

Ferret Nutrition Question #1 — [Click here>>](#)

Should ferret owners feed ferret-specific food, and why?

Ferret Nutrition Question #2 — [Click here>>](#)

What is the best way to transition ferrets from one food to another?

Ferret Nutrition Question #3 — [Click here>>](#)

Are there any signs that indicate when a ferret is doing well on a diet that's being fed? Are there any signs that something in the diet might not agree with the ferret?

Ferret Nutrition Question #4 — [Click here>>](#)

Do ferrets require different foods for different life stages?

Ferret Nutrition Question #5 — [Click here>>](#)

Should it be a concern if a food causes a ferret to defecate more or less?

Ferret Nutrition Question #6 — [Click here>>](#)

Should it be a concern if a food causes a ferret or its feces to be more stinky?

Ferret Nutrition Question #7 — [Click here>>](#)

Is the shape of kibble important?

Ferret Nutrition Question #8 — [Click here>>](#)

Should kibble be moistened before being offered?

Ferret Nutrition Question #9 — [Click here>>](#)

What would you like ferret owners to know about your food in light of the pet food recalls (mainly for dog and cat foods) of 2007?

Sandy Meyer is a freelance writer and editor in Southern California who has written and edited for pet publications for 10 years.

Meet The Panelists

Our 10 ferret-food manufacturer representatives are identified by their initials.



AP: April Pietroiacovo, ferret specialist at Totally Ferret in Broomfield, Colo.

GS: Gail Shepherd, senior marketing manager at ZuPreem, a division of Premium Nutritional Products Inc., in Shawnee, Kan.

JF: Jack Fallenstein, owner of Triple F Farms Inc. in Sayre, Pa.

KJ: Ken Johnson, national accounts manager at D & D Commodities Ltd. in Stephen, Minn.

KS: Kathy Schneider, technical services manager for Central Avian & Small Animal, a division of Kaytee Products Inc. in Chilton, Wis.

LG: Lucas Gillis, supervisor, office manager at Wysong Corp. in Midland, Mich.

MM: Michael Massey, president of Pretty Bird International Inc. in Stacy, Minn.

PR: Peter Reid, president of Marshall Pet Products Inc. in Wolcott, N.Y.

SW: Stefan Wawrzynski, operations director for Brisky Pet Products in Franklinville, N.Y.

TW: Tom Willard, Ph.D., president of Totally Ferret / Performance Foods Inc. in Broomfield, Colo.