

Care of the Racing & Retired Greyhound



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ties given as food intake will decrease in the warmer conditions of the northern latitudes.

Variations

It is customary to vary the diet once weekly by altering the evening meal to one of stew (cooked meat and vegetable), tripe, fish or similar alternatives. Such measures do tend to add interest to the diet, reduce the boredom of a fixed feeding program, and avert possible subclinical deficiencies.

American Methods of Feeding Greyhounds to Win Races.

Meat and commercial meal/kibble/biscuit mixture is the basic diet as in Australia. Since the trend in the United States is large racing kennels, food is prepared in large batches and fed once a day. Trainers vary in preference for morning versus evening feeding.

Commercial Meal/Kibble/Biscuit Preparations

In a recent survey of trainers in America, Purina Hi Pro was the choice of most trainers for their racing kennels. Commercial dog food companies such as Iams, Purina, and Hills are now starting to market performance diets especially for the working and sport dog population. These products are calorie dense and contain 7% to 17% fat. However, often price is the limiting factor to their use.

In a mixture, approximately 30% to 50% of the wet weight of the diet is made up of some aforementioned commercial dog foods. Care again must be taken to accustom a kennel or individual Greyhounds to one type of commercial product and keep consistent with that product during a racing season. If a change must be made, it should be done gradually over a period of 1 to 2 weeks to allow the bacteria in the digestive tract time to adjust. The consequence of rapid changes in feed is often diarrhea commonly called a "blowout" (see below).

Meat

Raw beef is the most common meat fed to Greyhounds, followed by chicken, horse meat, lamb, and fish. Quantities of meat vary from 570 to 700 grams (1¼ to 1½ pounds) per Greyhound per day with females and small males getting the lesser amount. This amount of meat is approximately one-half of the daily diet. Tripe (part of the bovine stomach) at approximately one-half cup is suggested by some trainers. The source of the meat in the United States for the majority of racing kennels comes from abattoirs that have commercial products of 4-D meat for

Greyhounds (in some cases, 3-D). The "D" stands for dying, diseased, disabled, and dead livestock (Figure 8-9 on Plate XIV). These sources of meat are those that have been rejected for human use but are of better quality than that which would be rendered for other uses. The United States Department of Agriculture requires the addition of denatured charcoal to 4-D meat to make it unfit for human consumption. This meat is used since it is the most economically feasible for the Greyhound industry at this time. Two general fat levels in the meat are available for use: the 7% fat for the racing kennel and the 15% fat for the breeding and training farms.

There are two problems with the use of 4-D meat in the Greyhound industry. The first is drug residues that the Greyhound ingests with the food and passes into the urine. Animals (cattle and horses) that are the source of this meat have often been treated with antibiotics such as procaine penicillin and sulfonamides which then show up as positives in the racing Greyhound's urine. Actual testing of 4-D meats by one of the authors (Craig) and others throughout the United States have found procaine in 60% to 85% of the meat samples tested. In addition, if an animal is euthanized by means of a concentrated barbiturate solution, these can also show up as a drug positive in urine. Chapter 23, pages 405 to 406 and Chapter 26, pages 432 to 434 discuss the dilemma that this poses to the regulators and the people in the Greyhound racing industry.

The second problem that can arise from 4-D meat is due to the fact that some of the meat is contaminated with pathogenic (disease producing) bacteria such as *Salmonella* (Chengappa, 1993). Studies at Kansas State University looked at the significance of *Salmonella* in the meat to the Greyhounds and to the handlers. It was found that *Salmonella* from Greyhounds with gastroenteritis and diarrhea was linked to diets contaminated with this bacteria (Stone, 1993). With the information available at this point, it is advised to 1) wear gloves when handling this meat, 2) thaw meat and feed within a short period of time, 3) keep strict hygiene of the kennel and the workers after feeding, 4) do not feed meat or meat mixtures that have not been eaten when first offered, and 5) isolate Greyhounds that have "blowouts" from the rest of the kennel during the turnouts, i.e., turn out the healthy Greyhounds first, then the affected ones. Care should be taken to clean and disinfect the kennels and remove the manure from these Greyhounds quickly from the turnout pens. Cooking would destroy the bacteria that contaminate meat, but Greyhound trainers are hesitant to do this as

it is not known what changes in performance might result due to loss of other essential ingredients in raw meat. It is readily evident that more research is needed in the area of Greyhound nutrition.

Fruits and Vegetables

Canned or fresh fruits are often added to the diet once a week as a treat. Vegetables similar to those used in Australia are often cooked and added as part of a stew to the basic diet. Celery, carrots, beets, and canned green vegetables such as spinach or collard greens are examples of vegetables often used.

Other Nutrients

Milk, buttermilk, or oil may be added to increase the fat content in thin Greyhounds. Honey is occasionally added for increasing palatability.

Vitamin and Mineral Supplements

Vitamin and mineral supplements are available, but care should be taken to use those manufactured for Greyhounds. These vitamins and minerals can be "top dressed" to the individual Greyhound's dish as seen in Figure 8-10 on Plate XIV. A common one used is Stress Dex® and others are seen in Figure 8-11 on Plate XIV). Some vitamin preparations in the US are Dyne®, Stat®, Lixotinic®, Vi-Sorbin®, Val Syrup®, and Calphosan®. Care should be taken to avoid preparations containing polyethyleneglycol (PEG) and stimulants such as caffeine. Vitamin E (alpha-tocopherol) is commonly given at 200 mg (or IU) per day with food to protect against oxidative stress during exercise. Excessive amounts of vitamin E, 1,000 mg per day, were found by Hill et al., (2002) to have a detrimental or slowing effect on performance.

Typical American Diets for Racing Greyhounds.

(Note: The authors are not indicating preference for one commercial meal/kibble/biscuit preparation in these diets. These example diets have been selected from published diets or from information from select trainers.)

Beef 1¼ to 1½ pounds (570 grams) per Greyhound
Purina Hi Pro®, rice or pasta (elbow macaroni),
water and vitamins.

When mixing for a kennel of 40 Greyhounds, mix 50 pounds (23.5 kg) of beef, 25 to 30 pounds of Purina Hi-Pro®, 1 pound of cooked pasta or rice, 3 to 4 gallons (12 to 16 liters) of water added to make mixture soupy. One half cup of Stress Dex is dissolved in the water that is

added to the mixture to provide additional electrolytes.

or

Beef 1¼ pounds (570 grams) per Greyhound
Equal amounts of high quality meal or kibble
Canned vegetables and buttermilk.

Fresh vegetables are added as available.

In cold weather, cooked barley or suet is added.

or

Fresh ground beef with equal amount of
Purina Hi-Pro® and vegetable stew.

Each Greyhound gets 1½ to 2¾ pounds (700 grams to 1.3 kg) of mixture depending on size.

or

Atta Boy Hi-Pro® kibble or high quality kibble—50% by weight

Beef (4-D meat) 50%

1 cup of tripe

½ teaspoon of K-zyme®

Add water to moisten

Occasionally add milk, cottage cheese or yogurt for variety plus added calcium.

Males get approximately 2½ pounds (1.1 kg) and females get 2 pounds (0.9 kg).

Trainers may feed twice a day if a Greyhound is underweight or recovering from illness. Weight of the Greyhound is a key factor in the quantity of feed given, with trainers often weighing their Greyhounds on a weekly basis. (When racing, official weights are taken twice at each race.) Water is made available at every one of the three to five turnouts during the day.

Bones are given to some kenneled racing Greyhounds to help prevent tartar and to provide them with the enjoyment of chewing. Figure 8-12 on Plate XV shows bones utilized by one racing kennel. Chicken bones, pork chop bones and small bones are to be avoided.

Research on Greyhound Nutrition.

The energy requirements of Greyhounds relative to the short term, explosive power output required for a race has been most extensively studied and reviewed by Grandjean, a professor of nutrition in France (Grandjean, 1992, 1993a&b). He has determined that the metabolic energy required for the Greyhound's race amounts to a total of approximately 75 kilocalories which is only 4.5% of the total calories needed to maintain the Greyhound per day. This energy is used to make adenosine triphosphate (ATP) which is the final energy molecule to which all foods ultimately convert. There are three energy producing mecha-