



What Vegetables can Dogs Eat?



Leafy Greens

A good rule for finding leafy greens that your dog can eat is to stick to those that you would consume. Lettuce, spinach, chard, cabbage and kale are all okay for dogs. Besides being rich in vitamins A, C and K, calcium, iron and potassium, leafy greens are also a good source of fibre. Much like humans, dogs get the most nutrients when the veggies are uncooked. Of course, if you want you can steam your dog's vegetables for something a little different, or bake them for a crunchier treat. The high fibre in leafy greens can cause some dogs to have an upset stomach after initially added to their diet. Introduce any new food slowly to keep your dog's tummy safe.

Root Vegetables

In general root vegetables like carrots, beets, sweet potatoes and parsnips are safe to feed your dog. These vegetables are starchy and high in sugar, which means you do want to limit the amount you give to your dog (especially if his commercial or raw dog food already contains root vegetables - many do).

Stalks

This includes vegetables like celery and asparagus. It may be a little harder to get your dog to enjoy these types of vegetables, but they are safe for dogs to eat. Some don't like the taste, and some find them hard to grind up in their teeth. To help, cut stalky vegetables into small pieces and/or steam them.

Squash

Squash of all varieties are safe for dogs to eat. Pumpkin and butternut squash can help dogs with bouts of diarrhea and most dogs don't mind the taste of squash. Use up all your excess summer squash from the garden by steaming it up for your dog, or cut up and bake this year's jack-o-lantern after Halloween for your dog to eat. It's best to limit your pup's consumption to the meat of the squash, keeping the seeds and skin away.

Legumes

This vegetable group includes bean and alfalfa sprouts, mature beans such as kidney, pinto, as well as lentils and peas. The topic of legumes in dog food has been in the news lately. The reason is due to a recent FDA update which states there are reports of canine dilated cardiopulmonary (DCM) in dogs eating pet foods containing legumes or potatoes high up on the ingredients list.



If the protein of your dog's diet relies heavily on legumes or potatoes, you should not only avoid giving more of this plant group to your dog, but also consider reducing the levels of legumes in his main dog food, i.e. changing dog foods.

A note on green beans: Green beans may be the most widely-fed vegetable to dogs because of their taste and easy digestion. Please be aware that, despite their name, green beans are not actually classified as beans, and therefore don't warrant the limitations recommended for true legumes.

Alliums

Alliums are bulb vegetables like onions, garlic, leeks, chives and shallots. Do not give your dog access to these plants, as they are toxic to dogs. Negative side effects of eating onions or garlic for dogs range from a stomach ache to developing anemia which, at its worst, can cause organs to shut down.

Broccoli, Brussel sprouts, Cauliflower, Corn and Cucumber

All of these veggies are safe for your dog to munch on but, like other vegetables, keep it to small quantities – especially if your dog isn't used to eating these types of foods. Remember to take the corn off the cob before handing it over to your dog. Although the cob itself isn't bad for a dog to consume, it is easy to swallow in chunks or whole, which can cause choking or intestinal obstruction. Whenever changing your dog's diet make sure to check with your Vet. Go slowly and pay attention to your dog. If you follow these guidelines, adding vegetables to your pup's food can help him receive a more varied, nutritionally complete profile in his diet.