

WHAT COOKING DOES TO FOOD

When you cook any food you are changing its molecular structure. You see it happen in your frying pan. A piece of meat becomes more firm, a carrot gets soft, a potato gels and a tomato turns into a sauce. What's happening is the cellular structure is breaking down and forming different bonds. This means the nutrient value is changing, and in most cases the its is decreasing.

Below are the results of a 2003 study from the USDA which tested the effects of cooking on nutrient levels in a variety of food. The overall finding was that any heat exposure will break down and reduce the amount of nutrients available in the food. The higher the heat or longer the exposure the greater the loss. Each number represents the overall nutrient loss of food being "baked" which is basically how dry kibble is produced. Keep in mind that canned food is exposed to more heat and will high greater nutrient losses.

Nutrient	Beef	Chicken	Turkey	Fruits	Vegetables	Benefit of Nutrient
Calcium	20%	5%	0%	5%	0%	Strengthens Bones and Teeth
Magnesium	35%	25%	20%	0%	0%	Strengthens Bones and Teeth
Potassium	45%	20%	25%	10%	0%	Manages Blood Pressure and Improves Muscle Strength
Vitamin C	20%	20%	30%	50%	30%	Supports Eyes, Skin and Immune System
Thiamin	55%	30%	35%	20%	10%	Supports Metabolism, Nervous System
Vitamin B-6	65%	20%	30%	10%	5%	Enables other enzymes to do their jobs
Folate	35%	40%	40%	50%	25%	Improves Cellular Function
Vitamin B-12	40%	35%	35%	0%	0%	Improves Energy
Vitamin A	25%	25%	25%	25%	5%	Supports Eyes, Skin and Immune System
Lycopene	25%	25%	25%	25%	5%	Neutralizes Free Radicals (found in cancer, heart disease and other age related problems)

When kibble is cooked it is exposed to multiple levels of heat. First it is put under extreme pressure and high heat from steam when it is extruded. The final round in its actual "cooking" phase where it goes through dryers and is typically baked at 350F. Therefore the numbers found in the 2003 study may be higher then what is truly available in kibble.

The Cost of Cooking

Many pet owners feel raw pet food is too expensive. However, as we have illustrated, cooked food does not give you the same bang for your buck. If you increase the price of canned or kibble 25-50% to account for the loss in nutrient value, you will see that raw is competitively priced.

QUICK FACTS - Raw vs. Cooked Kibble

Kibble can have fillers and non-digestible ingredients that tax the pet's organs.

Kibble absorbs water which can contribute to dehydration and diarrhea and eventually kidney disease.

Kibble causes teeth decay and gum disease. 75-85% of domesticated cats and dogs suffer from periodontal disease at a level requiring treatment by 3 years of age.

Cooking = Up to 50% Less Nutrients

