



CALIFORNIA STATE SCIENCE FAIR 2006 PROJECT SUMMARY

Name(s) Katherine A. Kavetsky	Project Number J1019
Project Title Chow Time	
<p style="text-align: center;">Abstract</p> <p>Objectives/Goals Chow Time is an experiment about dog's food preferences. I have always wondered why some types of dog food are more popular than the rest. Is it because the popular dog foods are better tasting, is it because they are healthier for dogs, or is it just because they are the cheapest?</p> <p>The goal of this experiment is to find out if dogs prefer doggy junk food over healthy dog food.</p> <p>Hypothesis: If dogs prefer one type of dry dog food over another, then at least 60% of dogs will choose unhealthy dog food over healthy dog food.</p> <p>Methods/Materials Ten adult dogs were tested to see which of six dry dog food brands they preferred. The brands that were tested (Beneful, Natural Balance, Nutro, Pedigree, Royal Canin, and Science Diet) are top sellers and represent a nutritional range from high to low end. Six identical bowls with ten kibbles of each dog food were set up ten feet away from the dog's release point. The dog was then released and monitored while eating. This procedure was repeated ten times for each dog, shuffling the bowls in a preset order after each sampling.</p> <p>Results I found that although in some cases the canine subjects chose higher end dog foods, most of the dogs chose the lower end dog foods over the higher. The more popular (top selling) dog food, Beneful just happens to be most preferred by dogs in my study. In addition, it's the cheapest, but the least healthy of the six brands tested.</p> <p>Conclusions/Discussion My hypothesis was correct, 60% of the dogs tested preferred Beneful, Pedigree, and Science Diet, which are all junk, and 40% of them preferred Natural Balance, Royal Canin, and Nutro, the healthier foods. By doing this experiment, I have learned that while some brands of dog food say that dogs prefer their dog food over others, that they provide the most nutrition possible, or that they are the best for your dog, their claims are not always accurate. It is important to read nutrition labels, compare ingredients, and make informed decisions for your dog. Although you may be tempted to buy an economy dog food, remember it is mainly undigestible junk food; it will not give your dog as much nutritional value as a higher end dog food and that you will have to feed them up to twice as much to make up for that loss.</p>	
Summary Statement Chow Time is an experiment about dog's food preferences and attempts to answer the question "Do dogs prefer doggy junk food over healthy dog food?"	
Help Received Friends and neighbors helped by letting me use their dogs as test subjects, Petco donated some of the dog food used, my mother drove me to pet stores and homes of the test subjects, and my science teacher, Mr. Dilworth helped me overcome problems through the research and experimentation phases of my project.	