



Ss. CYRIL AND METHODIUS UNIVERSITY IN SKOPJE
FACULTY OF VETERINARY MEDICINE - SKOPJE

BOOK OF ABSTRACTS

**“Days Of Veterinary Medicine”
10th International Scientific Meeting
and
2nd European Conference on
Veterinary and Medical Education 2024**

22-25 September 2024,
Republic of North Macedonia

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Skopje, 2024

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Published by:

Faculty of Veterinary Medicine – Skopje,
Lazar Pop Trajkov 5/7, 1000 Skopje
Tel: ++389 2 3240 700 Fax: ++ 389 2 3114 619
www.fvm.ukim.edu.mk



CIP - Каталогизација во публикација

Национална и универзитетска библиотека "Св. Климент Охридски", Скопје

636.09(062)(048.3)

INTERNATIONAL Scientific Meeting Days of Veterinary Medicine (10 ; 2024)

Book of abstracts [Електронски извор] / 10th International Scientific Meeting Days of Veterinary Medicine – 2024 and 2nd European Conference on Veterinary and Medical Education 22-25 September 2024, Ohrid ; [editors Miroslav Kjosevski ... и др.]. - Skopje : Faculty of Veterinary medicine, 2024

Начин на пристапување (URL):

https://dvm2024.mk/wp-content/uploads/2024/09/dvm-ecvme-2024_book_of_abstracts.pdf.

- Текст во ПДФ формат, 154 стр. - Наслов преземен од екранот. - Опис на изворот на ден 18.09.2024. - Регистар

ISBN 978-9989-774-43-0

1. European Conference on Veterinary and Medical Education (2 ; 2024)

а) Ветеринарна медицина -- Зборници -- Апстракти

COBISS.MK-ID 64439045

P29**RAW FOOD DIETS FOR PETS: BALANCING HEALTH BENEFITS AND NUTRITIONAL CHALLENGES**

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Raw food diets, also known as BARF diets (Biologically Appropriate Raw Food), have gained popularity among pet owners seeking alternative feeding options for their dogs and cats. These diets aim to replicate the natural diet of wild animals, consisting of raw meat, bones, fruits, vegetables, and other unprocessed ingredients. Proponents of raw food diets claim several potential benefits, including improved digestion, enhanced dental health, shinier fur, healthier skin, and increased energy and vitality in pets. However, it is crucial to consider the associated risks of raw food diets. These risks include nutritional imbalances, bacterial contamination, choking hazards, and an increased risk of parasites. Consulting with a veterinarian or veterinary nutritionist is essential to ensure that a raw food diet is properly balanced and meets the pet's specific nutritional needs. Additional challenges include the higher cost and time required to prepare raw food diets compared to commercial pet foods. Pets may also develop allergies or sensitivities to specific ingredients, necessitating careful selection and monitoring. Furthermore, the long-term effects and benefits of raw food diets on pet health remain a topic of debate among veterinary professionals. Individual variations and medical conditions must be considered, as some pets may have specific dietary requirements or underlying health issues that make a raw food diet unsuitable. Not all pets thrive on a raw food diet, and individualized guidance is necessary to address any potential nutritional deficiencies or health concerns. Making an informed decision to feed a raw food diet requires careful consideration of both the benefits and risks, with the pet's overall well-being as the top priority.

Key words: raw diet, alternative feeding, pet health, nutritional balance