

FLINT RIVER RANCH

Here are some excerpts from an article written by ELLIOTT B. WEISS, who has been and is a professional handler and conditioner of show dogs for over 25 years. Mr. Weiss is a recognized authority on judging all breeds at international dog shows.

(Permission received from the author. Statements in parenthesis are mine, Dr. McCall. Mr. Weiss does not specifically recommend any product- only, that in his professional opinion, an oven-baked kibble product is the best food for dogs.)

Elliott Weiss: I will be stating my personal opinion of feeding, exercising, and maintaining condition on show dogs. What I have come to call...the inside and outside of show conditioning.

THE INSIDE: I believe show and coat condition is a direct reflection of what we feed our dogs. Their condition outside is a result of what we put inside. Over the years I have tried every dog food fad that has come and gone, and most of the current extruded or pressed types. None of them produced results that satisfied me. I have never been able to keep a dog in what I consider top condition by feeding anything other than a top quality KIBBLED biscuit mixed with meat and a fatty acid supplement. It is a lot less expensive to extrude or press dog good than to bake or "kibble" it.

(Both Flint River Ranch Regular Maintenance and Senior dog foods are a baked KIBBLED biscuit.)

When all the major manufacturers of dog food did their market research, the number one concern of the public was that their dogs have hard stools that are easy to clean up. They answered this public demand by adding ingredients to dog food that in my opinion are better suited to feed cattle than our dogs. The side affects of the dog food companies solution to cutting productions costs (extruding) and satisfying the number one concern of their public marketing survey are in direct conflict with this dog persons requirements for show conditioning. It may be more costly to produce a baked or kibbled food, but the process appears to do something that allows the dog's digestive system to better absorb the necessary nutrients from the food. With proper exercise and feeding a kibbled dog food, I have been able to maintain dogs in good weight and proper muscle tone. I have not been able to do this feeding a pressed or extruded food.

TODAY I KNOW... that our dogs have a harder time digesting starches than we do. The baking process makes the food easier for our dogs to digest by changing hard to digest starches into easy to digest dextrins. (The manufacturing process used by Flint River Ranch.) Yes, baking dog food is more expensive, but the results I see in a dog's condition certainly justify the (small) additional cost.

THE OUTSIDE. First, there is nothing that is put on the outside (hair or skin) that is going to make the coat grow. Second, to maintain coat, it must be kept clean and pliable. Hair is an inside job, nothing, but nothing put on the outside is going to make it grow any faster or any better. A dog's coat conditioned from within is pliable and therefore more durable and easier to maintain.

TRY THIS...on one dog for a two-month period. Feed an all-natural premium kibbled biscuit. Find one whose ingredients say: chicken meal, lamb meal, NOT chicken by-products (or poultry by-products). Moisten with a little hot water and adding a small handful of raw meat, beef or lamb heart is excellent, organ meats are fine except for liver because it is a detoxifying organ. Add a fatty acid supplement directly to the food. In my opinion the very best product is cold pressed flax seed oil. For a large dog give eight tablespoons daily for the first three weeks, then drop to five. The diet will first appear to be much more costly, but, give it eight to ten weeks and then tell a fellow dog person the results you see.

I do not believe in allowing a dog to go longer than a week without a bath. My colleges and I choose to use a top quality dish detergent... Yes a liquid dish detergent. A quart of detergent into a gallon jug, fill it with water, and I have a gallon of shampoo that will leave hair squeaky clean. I will usually apply a rinse or conditioner depending on the dog. This may mean using only a very inexpensive pink cream rinse, one with almost no oil in it. However, dogs under the stress of the show circuit being bathed sometimes twice daily will benefit from a moisturizing conditioner. This also holds true for short-coated dogs. I recommend that you stay away from anything oily, it will make the hair elastic but will quickly attract dirt causing much more harm than good. Use tepid water and never hot water. Don't ever use a hair dryer on HOT, it will damage the ends of the hair. Always try to brush or comb only clean hair.

(Some Flint River Ranch customers, not involved in professional shows, elect to feed Flint River Ranch food without the addition of a small amount of raw meat. They find the cost of feeding is less because they feed less than other foods).