

ACTION GROUP ACCUSES RCVS OF 'DESERTING VETS'

ACTION group UK Raw Meaty Bones (UKRMB) has accused the RCVS of leaving individual vets alone to face the consequences of selling processed pet food.

The group, which believes that processed pet food is causing serious illness in animals, reacted angrily to a statement on pet nutrition in the November issue of *RCVS News*.

The reminder to vets from the college read: "While the responsibility for pet food sold out of practice premises may be limited to that of a retailer, if specific advice is given on pet nutrition, or particular products recommended, then this is part of professional practice. Veterinary surgeons should be aware

report by
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that many clients buying pet food from them in either context will assume it carries some veterinary endorsement."

Consequences

Jackie Marriott, of UKRMB, told *Veterinary Times*: "This is a very obvious step at excusing and distancing themselves, leaving the individual vets alone to face the consequences, despite the fact that it has been the responsibility of the RCVS all along."

Mrs Marriott said the RCVS was seeking to "bluff its way out" of a serious situation. She

said: "Vets have been kept in the dark and now need to beware of legal action. Things could be worse; at least they've now been warned – and cast adrift – by the RCVS."

The BSAVA said it supported the BVA's policy brief, on the feeding of raw meat and bones, which states that commercially-prepared pet foods have been scientifically formulated to contain the optimum balance of essential dietary nutrients for each species.

Unbiased advice

BSAVA spokesman Mark Johnston said that the association agreed with the RCVS that it was important that vets provided unbiased advice based on sound

scientific research that has been, where possible, published in peer-reviewed journals. He added: "The small number of people who are advocating the feeding of raw meat and bones should warn pet owners of the risks involved."

Veterinary surgeon Richard Allport, of the Natural Medicine Centre in Hertfordshire, said: "This should make vets think more seriously about the food they are selling, and take an independent view rather than simply regurgitating the pet food companies' advertising blurb."

Logical thinking

Mr Allport said that if vets really started to think about pet nutrition seriously and logically, the

only conclusion they could draw was that a natural raw diet was best. He went on: "Whether the RCVS can ever be persuaded to take an official view on pet nutrition is another matter. Most vets don't like being told what to do by the RCVS in any shape or form, and this would apply to a directive on nutrition, I'm sure."

He added that waiting rooms stacked from floor to ceiling with bags and cans of "processed but profitable pap" implied there is a long way to go. But, he concluded that the RCVS' statement might make vets think a little more about the poor substitute for real food they are promoting to their clients.

The RCVS declined to comment on UKRMB's points.