

## Home-cooking for Your Pet: Tips and Tricks

Batch-cooking: **Unless otherwise stated, the diets you received are for 1 day.** If you want to batch-cook, simply multiply the weighed amount by the number of days for which you want to cook.

1. Ex: a recipe calls for 4 ounces of hamburger. You want to cook a 21-day batch: 4 oz times 21 portions = 84 ounces (5 pounds, 4 ounces).
2. To know how much to feed of your batch-cooked food per day, simply add all the weights from the diet together. For example, if a 1-day diet calls for 98 grams of ground turkey, 55 grams of sweet potato, 22 grams of spinach, and 15 grams of flax oil, then the amount to feed per day is  $98 + 55 + 22 + 15 = 190$  grams.

Other tips:

- **Unless otherwise stated, the weight and volume for each ingredient is the cooked weight and volume,** NOT the raw weight and volume.
- It is advisable to **use the weights** of solid ingredients rather than using cups because the size of the cut will affect the volume. As an example, 1 cup of largely cut veggies may weigh 4 ounces, but 1 cup of finely cut veggies may weigh 6 ounces.
- Use an online (or phone app) conversion tool to convert grams to ounces and vice versa. Simply use a search engine and type “grams to ounces”. Other conversion tools are also readily available (and free) online.
- Boiling ingredients causes leaching of vitamins and minerals into the water and may damage vitamins. Steaming, pressure-cooking, or cooking on low heat will help preserve these important nutrients. You can also include the boiled water in the food; however, some vitamins will still be lost. **\*\*IF your diet is from BalanceIT and calls for boiling an ingredient, then do so and do not use the water as the supplements added will replace what’s been lost in the boiling process.**
- If your pet does not want to eat certain ingredients in the diet, try puréeing those ingredients with about 1/2 to 2/3 of the meat source to hide the flavor and texture.
- **Transitioning to new diets: To avoid upset tummy, we recommend transitioning slowly from your pet’s original diet to the new diet. Feed 75% original + 25% new diet for 3-5 days, then 50/50 for 3-5 days, then 25/75 for 3-5 days. If at any point upset tummy occurs, stop the new diet and call us.**

How much to buy? Uncooked to cooked weights (these are approximate as cooking times and heats can slightly change final weight) – *you still need to weigh!*

1. USDA Table of Cooking Yields for Meat and Poultry available online at [USDA Table of Cooking Yields for Meat and Poultry | Ag Data Commons](#)
2. 1 pound 85/15 ground beef raw makes about 13 ounces cooked (drained).
3. 1 pound of dry beans makes about 2.5 pounds of cooked beans. In smaller quantities: 1 ounce of dry beans makes about 2.5 ounces of cooked beans. Dry beans are significantly less

expensive than canned and carry a smaller environmental impact. If you have a pressure-cooker, you do not need to pre-soak the beans.

4. A 2.5-pound rabbit will provide about 1.2 pounds of meat, if you strip the bones pretty clean.
5. 1.6 pounds raw beef liver makes about 1 pound cooked liver
6. A 6-pound whole duck makes about 1.5 pounds of cooked meat and skin

What you need:

1. Sharp knives, preferably a chef's knife and a serrated knife
2. Cutting board(s)
3. Oven, stovetop, and/or pressure cooker (We do not recommend using a slow-cooker.)
4. Pots/skillets and/or pressure cooker (We do not recommend using a slow-cooker.)
5. Kitchen scale that measures grams and ounces. A waterproof scale is recommended. Ex: [AmazonSmile: KOIOS USB Rechargeable Food Scale, 33lb/15Kg Kitchen Scale Digital Weight Grams and oz for Cooking Baking, 1g/0.1oz Precise Graduation, Waterproof Tempered Glass, 6 Weight Units, Tare Function: Home & Kitchen](#)
6. Mixing bowls – size depends on amount of food you're making at a time.
7. Strainer for washing vegetables (metal)

Other items you may need or find handy:

1. Vegetable peeler
2. Blender (stand alone or immersion)
3. Food processor (faster than chopping fine it by hand!)
4. Pressure cooker (Instant Pot)
5. Kevlar kitchen glove to prevent cutting yourself. Ex: [AmazonSmile: FORTEM Cut Resistant Gloves, Level 5 EN388 - ANSI/ISEA Certified Cutting Gloves, Kitchen Work Gloves for Chefs, Food Grade : Clothing, Shoes & Jewelry](#)

Hard-to-find ingredients and finding great ingredients for less:

1. For Asian ingredients: Google (or other engine search) "Asian market near me"
2. For uncommon meats: Google (or other engine search) "butcher near me"
3. A variety of responsibly farmed meats and organs can be purchased at: [White Oak Pastures Since 1866, Grassfed Beef and Pastured Poultry](#)
4. Consider Misfits Market for online produce shipped directly to you. Some of their products "look funny" like a misshapen sweet potato, but are perfectly healthy and edible.
5. Consider local farmer's/produce markets.
6. For our Gainesville friends,
  - a. [Ward's Supermarket Gainesville, FL | Family Owned & Operated Grocery \(wardsgainesville.com\)](#) carries whole duck and rabbit (rabbit is from China).
  - b. UF Meat Processing facility ([meat processing center - UF/IFAS Department of Animal Sciences - University of Florida, Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences - UF/IFAS \(ufl.edu\)](#)) sells BEEF and PORK to the public at an excellent price on Friday's (cash or check only).