

Fruits Dogs Can Eat (And Fruits That Are Toxic to Dogs)

by Diana Laverdure- Dunetz | Dogster.com

According to the Produce for Better Health Foundation's 2015 State of the Plate report, Americans are projected to increase their consumption of whole fruit by 9 percent over the next five years. If the researchers included canine fruit consumption in this study, I bet that number would be a lot higher! After all, what dog doesn't enjoy the occasional piece of sweet, delicious fruits? Not only are fruits like apples, watermelons, and pineapples cooling when the temperature rises, they're packed full of healthy nutrients. However, a few fruits, like grapes, raisins, and strawberries, are toxic or dangerous for dogs. Make your next fruit salad Fido-friendly by checking out our list of fruits dogs can eat (and fruits they should definitely avoid!). It's important to note there are only two types of allergies: food and environmental. Food allergies create year-round symptoms in pets, whereas seasonal environmental allergy symptoms flare intermittently depending on when triggers bloom, blossom and grow. Sensitivities to dust mites or fleas (flea allergy dermatitis) are environmental triggers that can be year-round, depending on your pet's exposure.

Fruits That Dogs Can Eat



Dog eating watermelon by Shutterstock.

This list of dog-safe fruits is by no means exhaustive, but it represents my dog Chase's favorites.

Apples: Apples have amazing antioxidant benefits thanks to a wide variety of polyphenols, which are phytochemical (plant-based) compounds that defend the body against oxidative damage from free radicals. Eating apples helps regulate blood sugar,

protects the heart, and provides anti-cancer benefits. Apples are high in pectin, a type of soluble fiber that soothes irritated intestines and eases diarrhea.

Bananas: Bananas are an excellent source of dietary fiber as well as vitamins A, B, and C and the minerals copper, magnesium, manganese, and potassium. Bananas are high in carotenoids, polyphenol compounds shown to protect against chronic diseases like cardiovascular disease, diabetes, and types of cancers.

Berries (blueberries, blackberries, cranberries, raspberries): The rich blue, purple, and red colors of berries come from anthocyanins, plant-based pigments with powerful antioxidant, anti-cancer, and anti-inflammatory benefits. Anthocyanins help protect the heart, improve visual acuity, enhance memory, and prevent age-related cognitive decline due to oxidative damage. Anthocyanins also reduce angiogenesis, the proliferation of unwanted blood vessels implicated in tumor formation and cancer cell proliferation. W. Jean Dodds, D.V.M., founder of NutriScan saliva-based food intolerance test for dogs, recommends avoiding strawberries due to the potential for dogs to exhibit allergic reactions similar to those seen in humans.

Cantaloupe: Chase loves munching on cantaloupe. Along with great taste, he's also getting a healthy dose of antioxidants like vitamin C, alpha-carotene, and beta-carotene, as well as B vitamins, vitamin K, potassium, and magnesium. Cantaloupe also contains lutein and zeaxanthin, two carotenoids shown to benefit eye health.

Pears: A low-acid fruit, pears are a great choice for dogs with sensitive stomachs. Dog needs more fiber? Pears with skin are one of the highest-fiber fruits. Pectin, the soluble fiber in pear skins, may also help decrease digestive upset. Pears provide a good amount of vitamins C and K as well as minerals, such as copper, magnesium, phosphorus, and zinc. Pears also contain phytonutrients, including beta-carotene, lutein, and zeaxanthin.

Pineapple: This fruit touts powerful antioxidant properties from high levels of vitamin C, plus serious anti-inflammatory effects from bromelain, an enzyme that may decrease signs of arthritis and even modulate tumor growth, among other benefits. Keep pineapple portions small, as too much vitamin C and bromelain may lead to severe digestive upset, including diarrhea and vomiting.

Watermelon: Juicy and sweet, watermelon is packed with lycopene and beta-carotene, phytochemicals that give watermelon its deep pinkish-red hue and provide powerful antioxidant and anti-inflammatory benefits. Due to its high water content, watermelon is low in calories and high in refreshment — the perfect summertime thirst quencher to cool off your canine.

Fido-friendly fruits are a healthy part of a well-rounded canine diet. Fruit, however, is not an adequate source of protein, which your dog needs lots of to thrive, and the carbohydrate calories can quickly add up. So, don't deny your dog his daily fruit; just remember that moderation is the key.

Fruits That Dogs Can't Eat



Grapes by Shutterstock.

For the lowdown on which fruits are bad for dogs, I turned to Justine Lee, D.V.M., DACVECC, DABT, board-certified veterinary specialist in emergency/ critical care and toxicology and consultant at the ASPCA's Animal Poison Control Center. Steer clear of giving your dog the following fruits on Dr. Lee's "baddies" list:

Avocados: While often incorrectly listed as "poisonous" to dogs, avocados are generally safe. However, their high fat content and large pit land them on our "baddies" list. "Note that avocados are deadly to certain species like birds," Dr. Lee said.

Citrus fruits (like oranges and grapefruits): "While citrus isn't considered 'poisonous' to dogs, it does contain ample amounts of acid that may cause gastric distress," Dr. Lee said. Besides, dogs likely don't appreciate the sour taste.

Fruit pits/seeds: Cherry, mango, peach, and plum pits as well as apple seeds, contain cyanide that, if ingested in massive quantities, could result in poisoning. “Seeds and pits are also a choking hazard, or, if swallowed, may lodge in the stomach or intestines,” Dr. Lee said. Remove all pits or seeds prior to letting your dog indulge in fruit.

Grapes/raisins: “When ingested by dogs, grapes and raisins can cause acute, and irreversible, kidney injury,” Dr. Lee said. If your dog eats these, immediately contact your veterinarian or emergency veterinarian for life-saving advice.