

Guidelines for Dental Related Claims

The AAFCO Pet Food Committee supports and recommends the following guidelines for tartar and plaque control with respect to pet food products (including snacks and treats), rawhides, and other chews.

- (1) Foods bearing dental related claims (claims to cleanse or whiten teeth or freshen breath) by virtue of their abrasive or mechanical actions are not objectionable.
- (2) Foods bearing dental related claims for plaque or tartar reduction or prevention, or control of bad breath odor may be misbranded. However, if these claims are made only with respect to the products' abrasive action or masking flavor, enforcement would be a low priority.
- (3) Foods bearing expressed or implied drug claims to prevent or treat dental diseases (e.g. gingivitis, gum problems, tooth loss) are not permissible unless they are the subject of approved New Animal Drug Applications.
- (4) Food ingredients that are not GRAS (generally recognized as safe) for the intended purpose of affecting the teeth or gums may be unapproved food additives or unapproved drugs, depending on the nature of the claim.
- (5) Foods bearing claims for plaque or tartar reduction, prevention, or control of bad breath odor that achieve their effect, in part or in total, by means other than mechanical action or masking flavor must have an approved New Animal Drug Application or a letter of favorable review from the FDA prior to being marketed.
- (6) The labels of foods bearing dental related claims must state the method(s) or mechanism(s) by which the intended effects are achieved, such as, but not limited to: with ridges to help scrape teeth, coated with a unique ingredient to help prevent tartar buildup, with peppermint to help freshen breath.