



# *Lightfoot Ragdolls*

*and Cherubims*

## Food Safety and Why High Quality Food?

Over the past 13 years that I have been breeding, we have used a LOT of different brands of cat food! We may have used something like Friskies or Meow Mix when we very first started, but shortly after, figured out better food would make better babies. We have used Merrick, Science Diet, Blue Buffalo, Blue Wilderness, Purina One and Purina Pro Plan, IAMS, Instinct, Royal Canin, Nutro and several other "high quality" foods at the pet food store. We've used the dry food at Costco, Paw Tree (very good, but expensive), the brand at Tractor Supply, Purina; grain free, not quite grain free, etc. Some experiences weren't very good, most were okay. We have finally landed with Life's Abundance. It has worked really well with my cats of various ages, and with the kittens. It's all stages food, so I don't need to worry about more than one kind around and who is eating what. I also like that I can have the food automatically delivered on a schedule I choose. They have canned cat food, as well that we use some of. I haven't used the supplements at this point, but they look good.

Just like people, cats benefit from healthier food. High carb food and fillers are not good for your cat. Corn and wheat are not good. If they use "meal (chicken meal, etc.)," ask questions about what is included in that meal. It could be okay and it could be awful. Even when the "ingredients" listed look good, something you need to look a little deeper and find out where they source that ingredient.

Some good things to keep in mind: don't use plastic bowls. It can cause acne on your cat's chin. The next better choice is ceramic or stainless steel. It's also a good idea to wash the bowl every day. We have automatic dry food feeders, and sometimes that's hard, because it nearly always has food in it, but it's worth the extra work. Don't leave dry food in the bowl over 24 hours or so, just replace it every day. Eventually, you will figure out how much they eat a day and just put that amount in. Wash your water bowl every time you put water in it. Again, stainless steel is best.

Some cats don't drink a lot of water. I think my cats drink a fair amount, based on how often I need to fill the fountains. It's good for them to get some high quality wet food that increases the moisture content of their food. When feeding wet food, don't just put it out and leave it. After about 30 minutes, it will start growing bacteria and you need to remove whatever hasn't been eaten. It's better to figure out about

how much your cat will eat in a serving and only put that much wet food out at a time. Some cats love wet food and other's aren't interested. Our Merida most often won't even touch it, or might have one nibble and be done. There is a new automatic feeder from PetLibro that plugs in and chills the food to keep it fresh longer. I believe it has 3 sections and only one is exposed at a time. I'm not sure if there's any protection from it being out too long and after it's gone around the 3 times, it doesn't feed any more??? I need to look into that better.

We use freeze dried raw-coated "treats" instead of something like Temptations that is more like candy as far as nutrition goes. We also use freeze-dried chicken or turkey and freeze-dried chicken hearts.

Things you will notice with a good quality food, is their coat is better, less skin issues, less weight issues, less allergy issues. Over-all better health. No high quality food is going to be ideal for every cat, so you may need to try a few. Do some research online about companies that have had recalls in the past few years, complaints about quality and cats getting sick eating it. Some of the well-known, high-quality brands will surprise you.

PLEASE remember that it takes about 2-3 weeks to change your cat's food, if you do it right and want to avoid tummy

upsets. You need enough of the old food to use to transition. Add  $\frac{1}{4}$  the amount of new food to 3 to 5 days. If the cat is handling that fine, then the next 3 to 5 days, it will be half new and half old. If they are struggling a bit, do that a bit longer. If it's going well, then the last 3 to 5 days is  $\frac{3}{4}$  new food and  $\frac{1}{4}$  old food. After that you can use 100% new food. If you go too fast, you might think the food isn't good for your cat, instead of just needing more time to adjust to it. If you go slow enough, you will be able to determine if your cat is doing well on that food. If you go slow enough and there is vomit or diarrhea or constipation, then you need to try something different.

Life's Abundance has been amazing for us. If you would like to try it out, please go to [www.lifesabundance.com/lightfootragdolls](http://www.lifesabundance.com/lightfootragdolls) to order. If you have questions about which product may be best for your cat, please let me know! [lightfootragdolls@gmail.com](mailto:lightfootragdolls@gmail.com)

Pam Banta

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