Limited-Ingredient & Novel-Protein Diets

Single-Source Proteins • Novel Meats • The 12-Week Food Trial & Rotational Feeding

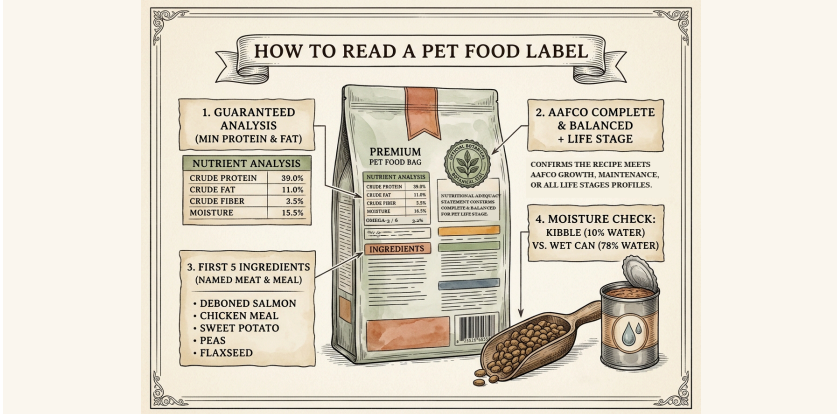
The Quick Version: 'My dog or cat is itchy or has a sensitive tummy — what food should we try?' is one of the most common questions on our floor! While environmental triggers (fleas, pollen, dust) are common, switching to a **single animal protein your pet has never eaten before ('novel protein')** with matching single-ingredient treats for **about 12 weeks** is the cleanest way to test whether a food ingredient is the culprit.



APPLIES TO	SINGLE PROTEIN	NOVEL PROTEIN	FOOD TRIAL TIME	TREAT RULE
Dogs & Cats (Sensitive Skin/GI)	**1 Animal Meat + Simple Carb**	**A Meat Never Eaten Before**	**About 12 Weeks (Hill's Guide)**	**100% Matching Protein Treats!**

1. Limited-Ingredient vs. Novel-Protein vs. Rotational Feeding

ALWAYS READ THE BACK INGREDIENT PANEL — ONE HIDDEN CHICKEN MEAL OR OFF-PLAN TREAT SPOILS A TRIAL!



Limited Ingredient (L.I.D.)
No official AAFCO definition — read the bag! Usually 1 meat + 1–2 carbs
Check Entire List

Novel Protein
A meat your pet has never eaten (e.g., Kangaroo, Venison, Duck, Rabbit)
New to Your Pet

Trial Length
Hill's notes food trials 'typically take about 12 weeks' with zero cheats
~12 Weeks Strict

Matching Treats
One chicken jerky undoes a duck-only diet — match treats to the meal!
Zero Off-Plan Items

Protein Rotation
For non-trial pets: rotating proteins (Beef → Salmon → Lamb) adds variety
Pause During Trial

2. Two Ways That Work — Pick What Fits Your Home

SHORT & SWEET: BOTH OPTIONS WORK GREAT

Step 1: Audit Every Protein Your Pet Eats Now (Including Treats!)

What is 'novel' depends 100% on your pet's own history — duck is only novel to a dog that hasn't eaten duck:

CHECK YOUR PURCHASE HISTORY AT THE REGISTER
Can't remember every bag your dog or cat has tried over the last two years? Just ask our crew — we can look up your past food purchases right in our register system!

READ THE FINE PRINT ON CURRENT

Step 2: Pick Between Limited-Ingredient (L.I.D.) & True Novel Protein

We shelve our sensitive-diet dog foods in two clear sections so they are easy to compare:

LIMITED-INGREDIENT DIETS (FAMILIAR MEATS, SHORT INGREDIENT LIST)
Pairs a single animal protein (such as Salmon, Lamb, Duck, or Turkey) with simple carbohydrates like sweet potato, pumpkin, oats, or brown rice — skipping multi-meat blends.

Step 3: The 12-Week Food Trial vs. Everyday Rotational Feeding

Know which strategy you're running right now — because they have opposite rules!

DURING A 12-WEEK FOOD TRIAL: STRICTLY ONE PROTEIN ONLY
As Hill's notes, food trials typically take **about 12 weeks**, and your pet cannot have even one off-plan treat, flavored medication, or table scrap during those 12 weeks.

EVERYDAY PROTEIN ROTATION (AFTER OR OUTSIDE A TRIAL)

3. Single-Protein & Limited-Ingredient Lines We Stock

AVAILABLE IN DRY KIBBLE, CANNED WET, FREEZE-DRIED & DEHYDRATED ACROSS OUR STORES!

FirstMate & PureVita (KLN) Dog & Cat (Dry & Canned)	**FirstMate** ('The Best Nutrition is Simple') pairs a single meat protein with a single carb source; **PureVita** offers 'Limited ingredients, single-source proteins' with NutriSource's Good 4 Life gut support.
Zignature, Acana Singles & Nulo Limited+ Dog Dry, Canned & Freeze-Dried	**Zignature's** original line is 'formulated without grain or chicken' (Kangaroo, Venison, Trout & Salmon, Goat); **Acana Singles** and **Nulo Freestyle Limited+** deliver high animal protein from a single meat.
Koha, Natural Balance L.I.D. & The Honest Kitchen Wet Cans, Dry & Dehydrated	**Koha** specializes in 'moisture-rich, minimal ingredient' single-protein wet foods for dogs and cats; **Natural Balance L.I.D.** and **The Honest Kitchen Limited Ingredient** offer simple, gentle formulas.

Single-Ingredient Treats & When to See Your Vet:

Single-Ingredient Treats
Freeze-dried single-protein treats (vital organs/meat from the exact same animal as your meal!)

Watch Flavored Chews
Check dental chews, pill pockets, and peanut butter jars so hidden poultry doesn't sneak in

No 'Hypoallergenic' Claims
We never call an OTC food 'hypoallergenic' or promise it cures allergies — only your vet diagnoses allergies

When to See the Vet First
Open or spreading sores, ear infections, vomiting, blood in stool, or not eating go straight to your vet

Important Vet Note: Hill's points out that environmental allergies (fleas, dust mites, pollen) are more common than food allergies. If your pet has open or spreading skin sores, severe ear redness, vomiting, diarrhea with blood, or is on a veterinary prescription hydrolysed/allergy diet, always consult your veterinarian first!

4. Tips, Tricks & Big No-Nos from Our Pet Nutrition Team

REAL-WORLD HABITS THAT KEEP THEM THRIVING

Match Treats to the Main Meal
During a single-protein trial, use the kibble itself as training rewards or pick a 100% single-ingredient freeze-dried treat of the exact same animal.

Transition Gradually
Even when switching to a gentler limited-ingredient recipe, follow the transition directions on the new bag so the gut microbiome adjusts smoothly.

Keep a Simple Food Log
Write down the exact brand, protein, and date you started on the back of this sheet so you know which proteins your pet has already tried.

Ask Us to Check Your History
Before picking a novel protein, ask at the register — we'll pull up your past purchases so you pick a protein that is genuinely new for your pet!

5. Grab-and-Go Setup Checklist

ASK US ON THE FLOOR — WE'LL HELP YOU MATCH EVERYTHING!

1. PICK ONE SINGLE-SOURCE PROTEIN

- [ ] Limited-Ingredient or Novel-Protein Dry Bag (Check Entire Ingredient List!)
- [ ] Matching Single-Protein Wet Cans or Pouches (Optional Topper/Meal)
- [ ] Verify Zero Hidden Chicken/Poultry Meal or Fat (If Avoiding Poultry)

2. MATCH TREATS & CHEWS 100%

- [ ] Single-Ingredient Freeze-Dried Meat Treats (Same Animal as Meal!)
- [ ] Check All Chews, Dental Treats & Pill Wraps for Off-Plan Proteins
- [ ] Alert Everyone in the Household: Zero Table Scraps for 12 Weeks!

3. SKIN, COAT & TRANSITION SUPPORT

- [ ] Follow the New Bag's Gradual Transition Directions
- [ ] Single-Species Fish Oil (e.g., Wild Salmon Oil, if Fish Is Part of Plan)
- [ ] Medicated or Sensitive-Skin Oatmeal Shampoo for Topical Comfort

A Quick Note from Our Team — Keep Learning & Ask Us Anytime!

The quick version: there's more than one right way to feed a healthy, thriving dog or cat! Flip the bag over with our crew anytime — we're happy to check the Guaranteed Analysis, AAFCO life-stage statement, and first five ingredients with you for **12-week food trial & beyond** — use these two pages as your home-base cheat sheet, use your phone number at the register for our Frequent Buyer Program (buy 10–12 bags of most brands, get the next free!), and stop by or call any of our 6 stores anytime!

MY PET'S PROTEIN TRIAL LOG

Pet Name & Age: _____

Current Brand & Protein: _____

Frequent Buyer Phone: _____