

# Letter of Introduction

## **ATTN: Veterinary Professionals**

Your client is seeking a referral for a Nutritional Consultation for their pet. It is my hope that this letter serves to clarify my qualifications, my role, and my goals so that you can decide if your client would benefit from the services that I offer. My goal through my Nutritional Consultations is to answer questions that clients have about pet nutrition, develop a meal plan for their pet that fits their goals and their pet's nutritional needs.

## **Background**

### **Education:**

- 2011: Bachelor of Science in Biology from San Diego State University
- 2013: Associates in Animal Health from San Diego Mesa College.
- 2014: Registered Veterinary Technician - CA RVT 10772
- 2023: Southern Illinois University - Diploma in Companion Animal Nutrition.
  - Courses: Introduction to Companion Animal Nutrition, Introduction to Nutrition, Topics in Companion Animal Nutrition, Canine and Feline Nutrition, Companion Animal Clinical Nutrition, and Ration Formulation for Companion Animals (18 units and over 270 hours of education)

→ *In progress: Masters in Animal Nutrition University of Glasgow*

### **CE in Animal Nutrition:**

*Over the years I have focused a good portion of my time on RACE approved CE focused on nutrition, and have pursued several certifications within the veterinary space. Those below have been completed in the past two years. However they are by no means an all-inclusive list as I often sit-in on CE through Royal Canin, Hills, Purina, Vetfolio, VetGirl, & DVM360 each month.*

- NAVC (Vetfolio) - Pet Nutrition Coach Certificate (CE 10hrs)
- University of Tennessee Nutritional Case Management Certificate (CE 10hrs)
- WSAVA Nutrition Guidelines Certification (CE 2hrs)
- The Science Dog Masterclass Certificate - taught by Linda Case (CE 20hrs)
- VetGirl Animal Nutrition Certificate (CE 10hrs)

## **Limitations and Benefits:**

I am not a veterinarian, and I am not qualified to offer a diagnosis or prescribe medication in any situation.

My goals are to provide services that are complementary to regular veterinary care, to answer questions and provide explanations regarding pet nutrition for owners that maybe (due to time limitations), are unable to occur in the clinic.

All nutritional consultations are 45 minutes long and will go over the pet's caloric needs, healthy treats/enrichment options, key nutritional needs, and a meal plan using one or a combination of diets to satisfy both behavioral/emotional and physical needs.

## **Homemade Recipes:**

I use BalanceIT, a formulation software and supplement created by a board-certified veterinary nutritionist to formulate homemade recipes for both dogs and cats. I have used BalanceIT for both my own dogs and clients for 8 years. BalanceIT is an open-access software that can be used by anyone, however often I find clients and veterinary professionals are overwhelmed with learning the software. Or constantly get "errors" due to ingredient choice or composition.

Using BalanceIT I create recipes that are customized to the individual pet and their needs - based on stool consistency, food intolerances/preferences, activity level, age, and body/muscle condition. *If clients are looking to help with a homemade diet, typically a consultation will include one recipe, however clients can upgrade to a full weekly or bi-monthly meal plan.* I can also teach clients how to use BalanceIT to create their own recipes if they would like.

I will also Hand-formulate using an Excel Spreadsheet for owners looking to use human over-the-counter supplements instead as BalanceIT does not have custom supplement addition options. *If you would like to see my Excel Spreadsheet I'd be happy to share it.*

***All homemade diet consultations will discuss:*** food safety, how to meal prep using balanceIT, storage of fresh foods, how to transition onto the new recipe, and how to monitor their pet on a homemade diet.

## **Prescription Diets & Sick Pets:**

*For prescription diets & sick pets - I do not diagnose or prescribe - animals with diseases and conditions are referred back to their veterinarian for final approval on all recipes/diet recommendations.*

***For premade prescription recipes:*** I will discuss key nutritional factors for different diseases and conditions, then give 2-3 options (if possible) for clients to discuss with their veterinarian.

***For homemade recipes:*** I will discuss key nutritional factors, review diet options (balanced, human over-the-counter supplements, base mixes), and I can create diets that are balanced according to nutritional profiles established through research for the nutritional management & support of disease.

***For dogs with kidney disease, liver disease or urinary disease – these conditions can require dietary management outside of AAFCO nutrient profile. I strongly believe working with a board-certified veterinary nutritionist to create a homemade recipe is the best option [DVM, DACVIM (Nutrition)]. I will typically stress to owners the importance of doing so, and give them a temporary option while they wait for their appointment.***

## **Contact Information**

If you have any questions feel free to email me at [thecaninehealthnut@gmail.com](mailto:thecaninehealthnut@gmail.com). For more information regarding my business, you can visit my website: [www.thecaninehealthnut.com](http://www.thecaninehealthnut.com)

If you believe your client would benefit from my services I would greatly appreciate it if you could fill out the following referral form. You can either send it back to me directly or through the client. *I do ask that all pets that have a disease receive veterinarian approval prior to working with me.*

Thank you for your time, and I understand how busy you are, and truly appreciate you sharing any insights or information that you feel may help me design the best nutritional plan for your client.

**Sincerely,**

**Nikki Giovanelli, RVT  
The Canine Health Nut**

# Referral Form

<b>Date:</b>	
<b>Referring Veterinarian:</b>	
<b>Clinic:</b>	
<b>Phone Number:</b>	
<b>Email:</b>	
<b>Pet Name:</b>	
<b>Client Name:</b>	

*Please send a copy of the pet's medical records with this referral form to:  
thecaninehealthnut@gmail.com*

**Case Summary:**

**Medical History:**

**Current Medications / Supplements:**

**Diet & Meal Plan Goals:**

**Special Requests/Comments:**

**Veterinary Approval of Nutritional Consultation:**

I \_\_\_\_\_ (*veterinarian*) authorize **Nikki Giovanelli, RVT** of the **Canine Health Nut LLC** to perform a nutritional consultation with \_\_\_\_\_ (*client name*) and \_\_\_\_\_ (*pet name*).

**Would you like to receive a copy of the nutritional consultation for your patient's medical records?**

- Yes
- No