A lot of people around the world have pets...

In the US there are 74 million cats and 72 million dogs – that's 146 million cats and dogs in the US in total.

There are more cats and dogs in the US than people in New Zealand, Australia and Canada combined.

New Zealand has 1 million cats and 1 million dogs.

Almost half of the homes in New Zealand own a cat, but only 1 in every 3 New Zealand homes owns a dog.

The countries that spend the most money on caring for their pets are US, Australia and Western Europe.

New Zealand produces a lot of meat that is used in pet food, for example:

- Lamb
- Beef (cows)
- Deer
- Seafood
- Pork
- Poultry (chickens)

The whole animal is not used for pet food, only parts of the animal. For example with lamb the leg is used for roast dinners, but other parts of the lamb are used for pet food. We send this meat to other countries as raw meat, processed meat and packaged meat (tins/bags) ready to go on the shop shelf.

So which countries does New Zealand send our pet food ingredients to?

Most of our pet food ingredients and packaged pet food items are sent to US, Indonesia, Australia, China, Japan, Taiwan.

In 2012, New Zealand sent $260 million US dollars of pet food to other countries.

Other countries like buying our meat because we are an island well away from other countries, and our animals do not have some of the diseases that other animals around the world have.

Something new that is happening with pet food is that other ingredients are being added to the pet food to help dogs and cats be healthier. Some pet food has manuka honey for better teeth and skin, green-tipped mussels to help relieve pain or king salmon for a shinier coat and better brain function.

Pets eat a lot of food

Every year people around the world who own pets spend $67 billion US dollars on feeding their pets – that’s about $78 billion NZ dollars.

There is more money spent around the world each year on pet food than on baby food or breakfast cereal. Every year pet owners are spending more on pet food than they spent the year before.

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