

Palatability approaches for performance and profit

As consumers are postponing vacations, turning down thermostats, and buying fewer treats – for themselves and their pets – the pet food industry needs to look at ways to stay resilient.



Manufacturers who are trying to squeeze value out of their formulations without sacrificing quality, nutrition, or brand integrity may benefit from initiating 'same performance, lower cost' palatability projects with their suppliers.

When looking into palatability cost savings, be sure to keep these four points in mind:

Do your current palatability requirements cover the bill?

If your palatability goal is superiority to the competition, are you leveraging that superiority through brand labeling and promotion? If not, can parity be acceptable, even for a short time?

Are your current palatability testing requirements appropriate?

Is a two-bowl preference test necessary, or can you use a single-bowl acceptance test?

What about your competitors – are they making palatability adjustments?

Market changes can prompt palatability adjustments. In good times, manufacturers tend to invest more in palatability. During economic downturns, some companies economize on palatability. If an entire market is feeling the same stress, it is possible that competitors are quick to make adjustments to palatability. Before you make any changes, know how you compare on palatability. Your palatability supplier can guide and assist you in assessing this.

Is your palatant solution the most cost-effective?

You might be able to change your palatant solution to reduce overall cost in use. For instance, cost-effective flavor boosters can make a real difference even when added in very small amounts. Or if you're using a liquid + dry cat solution, you might be able to achieve the same palatability results by using dry only. If you're using one expensive palatant across multiple brands, the savings of using an additional, less expensive palatant enhancer might outweigh your carrying costs.

Same performance, lower cost

To effectively cover all the points, it is advised to start a 'same performance, lower cost' project with your supplier. Together, you can explore all cost-saving possibilities and assess the impact on your brand. Projects like this can take time, but the potential value at the end of the day makes them a worthwhile investment.

Supplier success comes from fulfilling customer needs. Sometimes this means innovative, highly palatable products are needed. At other times more economical approaches are called for. By leveraging unique capabilities, AFB has worked with customers in the pet industry to deliver hundreds of successful projects in high-performance pet food palatants. AFB is ready to leverage that knowledge to help meet today's market needs for great-tasting pet food at affordable prices. ♦



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