

This article on Nutrition appeared in Dog World, June 2011

12 **NUTRITION** – Dog World Supplement, June 10, 2011

PETITS BASSETS GRIFFONS VENDÉENS **Linda Skerritt, Monkham**

AS WITH HUMANS, correct canine nutrition is the cornerstone of good health, resistance to disease and longevity.

From the late 1960s onwards, our Bassets were happy with canned food and mixer, supplemented with cod liver oil, Vetzymes, Vitalin and cooked vegetable parts otherwise thrown in the wastebin. Raw, meaty bones free from a local butcher were a great supplement, helping to clean teeth.

Even today, this diet would stand our dogs in good stead. However with the plethora of convenient complete feeds on the market, to keep our PBGVs in peak condition for the show ring we are now drawn into considering nutritional content of each brand and specific needs of each dog based on age and existing condition.

Coat texture rarely comes into the equation. This is very much a part of the PBGV's genetic make-up and, if lacking, no amount of special diets or supplements will

turn a silky or woolly coat into a harsh one with thick undercoat.

Fortunately, ours are all blessed with correct coat and the breed sheds very little. Chief concerns therefore are overall health, to maintain body weight of 12-17kg and ensure peak condition.

To restore a female's coat after whelping, a supplement of Fit-n-Fertile before and after giving birth minimises shedding or prevents hair loss altogether. For itchy skin, natural products like Yumega which contain essential oils are also beneficial.

Certainly we have come a long way since American James Spratt arrived in England and realised that dogs being fed on scraps would benefit from a manufactured dog food of wheat, vegetables, beet and meat. In recent years there has even been a major shift back to a raw food-based diet but for us, like many, confidence in quick and easy complete feeds is the answer.



photo Skerritt