

RWWA Notice to Greyhound Trainers – feeding home prepared diets

The feeding of raw meat and other home prepared foods as part of a greyhound's diet is an established practice within the industry.

Trainers should be vigilant in ensuring good quality food is offered to their greyhounds, and they consider any potential contamination risks that exist in feeding home prepared diets.

Food storage and preparation practices should be routinely evaluated by trainers to minimise risk associated with bacterial contamination, which may result in disease through poor food hygiene practices i.e., gastro-intestinal disease (vomiting and diarrhoea).

RWWA Stewards also remind trainers of their responsibility under the RWWA Rules of Greyhound Racing to ensure greyhounds are presented free of prohibited substances on race day.

Trainers should be aware that certain feeding and supplementation practices may expose them to the risk of a positive swab. Feeding raw meat that has not been sold as “fit for human consumption” may pose a medication residue risk, as explained below.

Livestock that are treated with medication shortly before slaughter, may be processed as “unfit for human consumption” and sold on as knacker meat or pet food.

Residues of medications (prohibited substances) may be present in raw pet meat bought directly from pet food producers, such as pet meat abattoirs. Some medications used in livestock may be prohibited substances under the rules of greyhound racing.

For these risks outlined above, RWWA cautions against the feeding of raw meat “unfit for human consumption” to racing greyhounds. The safest raw meat to feed to racing greyhounds is meat that is sold as “fit for human consumption”. Meat that is guaranteed from a single, non-livestock protein source such as kangaroo is likely to be of lower risk.

Other foods that may contain prohibited substances include;

- Bread or baked products containing poppyseed,
- Chocolate, tea, coffee, human health supplements or food products containing caffeine or other stimulants.
- Certain foods are also considered toxic to dogs and trainers are advised to seek veterinary advice should they have any concerns about preparing homemade diets for their greyhounds.

Commercially manufactured good quality dry and/or polony dog foods are the safest option to feed racing greyhounds.

Further advice may also be sought from the RWWA Veterinary Department.

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