

# Global Alliance of Pet Food Associations



GAPFA NEWSLETTER  
DECEMBER 2020

Dear reader,

Welcome to the end-of-year edition of the GAPFA Newsletter.

There is no doubt that this year has been marked by an unprecedented situation around the world. National authorities worldwide have urged people to stay at home to keep safe and to help countries control the spread of COVID-19.

## Outline

- Welcome to the GAPFA newsletter
- GAPFA's response to COVID-19
- GAPFA partnership with HABRI
- GAPFA Recent Publications
- GAPFA AGM 2020

If 2020 has taught us anything, it's that **pets are not just animals to many people, they are now family, friends, companions**: their power lies in their ability to ease the stress and isolation that owners can feel. More than ever, people have experienced these conditions in 2020, with the uncertainty caused by the pandemic, lockdown and closure of large parts of the economy. Faced with growing social seclusion and economic hardship, **many are now looking to companion animals to help provide comfort and company**.

Driven by COVID-19 **pandemic pet ownership has risen in some markets during 2020**. Shelters in some areas have reported increased pet adoption rates during the pandemic, for example as exercising of dogs daily was one of the few permitted outdoor activities and as people worked from home and had more time to take care of a pet.

In this newsletter you will find highlights from key GAPFA external activities from the past challenging few months.

We take this opportunity to wish you and your families happy holidays and all the best in 2021!

**Enjoy your reading!**

## GAPFA'S RESPONSE TO COVID-19

### COVID-19 RESOURCES

In March, GAPFA promoted [links to the websites](#) of the World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE), the World Health Organization (WHO) and the World Small Animal Veterinary Association (WSAVA), **to help pet owners find answers** and advice from worldwide recognised experts on questions related to companion animals and the new coronavirus.

### GAPFA OPEN STATEMENT ON PETS AND PET FOOD DURING COVID-19 PRECAUTIONS

Once the COVID-19 lockdown period began, the pet food industry, as many others, faced significant uncertainty, with social isolation, shifts in shopper behaviour, strained supply chains and an unprecedented recession on the immediate horizon.

The pet food industry urged public and policymakers to also consider the well-being of the pets loved by millions of citizens throughout the globe, and called for **ensuring that pet food retailers and pet services are deemed 'essential'** and are exempt from any mandatory closures during the crisis. Just as food stores/supermarkets provide necessary supplies to humans, GAPFA called for pet businesses to remain operational to ensure the continued care for millions of pets.

GAPFA members are pleased to share that **reports from around the world indicate that the flow of ingredients and finished product remains steady** and national and local governments and regulators across the globe have consistently designated pet food as 'essential' products, allowing pet food retailers to keep dogs and cats healthy and nourished during the pandemic.

Click [here](#) to read the full GAPFA open statement.

## GAPFA PARTNERSHIP WITH HABRI



In April, GAPFA teamed up with the [Human Animal Bond Research Institute](#) (HABRI) to **highlight the science and research insights demonstrating the human health and wellness benefits of pet ownership**. As millions of pet owners stay home and practice social distancing during the COVID-19 crisis, our pets are there for us. Having spent years aggregating scientific knowledge and information examining how pets and people are beneficial for each other, both organisations are now working together to promote their online libraries dedicated to the study of human-animal interaction and the

benefits of pet ownership for many different groups of pet owners around the globe. Key resources include information on the [physical and mental benefits of pets for children, adults, and older people](#).

Please click here to read [more](#).

## GAPFA MEDIA COVERAGE

### GAPFA INTERVIEW IN FEEDINFO

In May, GAPFA published an interview in FeedInfo with the former GAPFA President, providing views on how global pet food demand has evolved in the past few months and the outlook for the global pet food market generally for the rest of the year.

Please find [here](#) the article.

### GAPFA ARTICLE IN PET FOOD PROCESSING MAGAZINE



GAPFA is pleased to be part of the October issue of Pet Food Processing magazine with a dedicated article on our worldwide alliance which serves as a **key, central forum for discussions about food safety, trade, nutrition and companion animal welfare in the global pet food processing industry**.

As GAPFA looks to the future, **the alliance will continue to focus on sharing key industry learnings and best practices for all its members**,

as well as keeping the industry up to date on the scientific knowledge regarding the production of safe, nutritious pet food.

To read the full GAPFA article in Pet Food Processing magazine, please [click](#).



### **WHAT'S NEXT FOR PET FOOD IN A POST-PANDEMIC WORLD?**

GAPFA is pleased to have been able to cooperate again with PETS International and to publish an **online article** in November with GAPFA's reflections on **what's next for pet food in a post-pandemic world**. GAPFA has a clear view on the global status of the pet food industry, due to its strong connection with prominent associations and manufacturers worldwide. Please find [here](#) the article in which you will find reflexions on the times before, during and after the pandemic, regarding pet ownership, consumer behaviour and industry trends.

***“Our members are the heart behind the industry, and we admire the work our members do every day to ensure that our pets are kept happy and healthy, as well as helping to educate all current and future pet parents on the importance of responsible pet ownership and the benefits pets bring to our everyday lives.” Robert Kaczmarek, GAPFA President***

## **GAPFA EVENTS**

### **GAPFA AGM 2020 WENT VIRTUAL**

GAPFA members decided on an exceptional basis to postpone this year's GAPFA Technical Congress and Annual meetings to 2021 due to the COVID-19 pandemic. On the 16<sup>th</sup> June, **over 40 representatives** from **12 GAPFA members** took part of the **virtual GAPFA General Assembly meeting** which covered statutory requirements only.

As part of the items adopted at the GAPFA Annual General Meeting, the following GAPFA Officers were elected by the GAPFA General Assembly to serve a 1-year term renewable: Robert Kaczmarek (Mars Petcare) as GAPFA President, Carlos Gonzalez (PFAC) as GAPFA Vice-President for Member Associations, and Michelle Lang (Nestlé Purina PetCare) as GAPFA Vice-President for Member Companies.

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