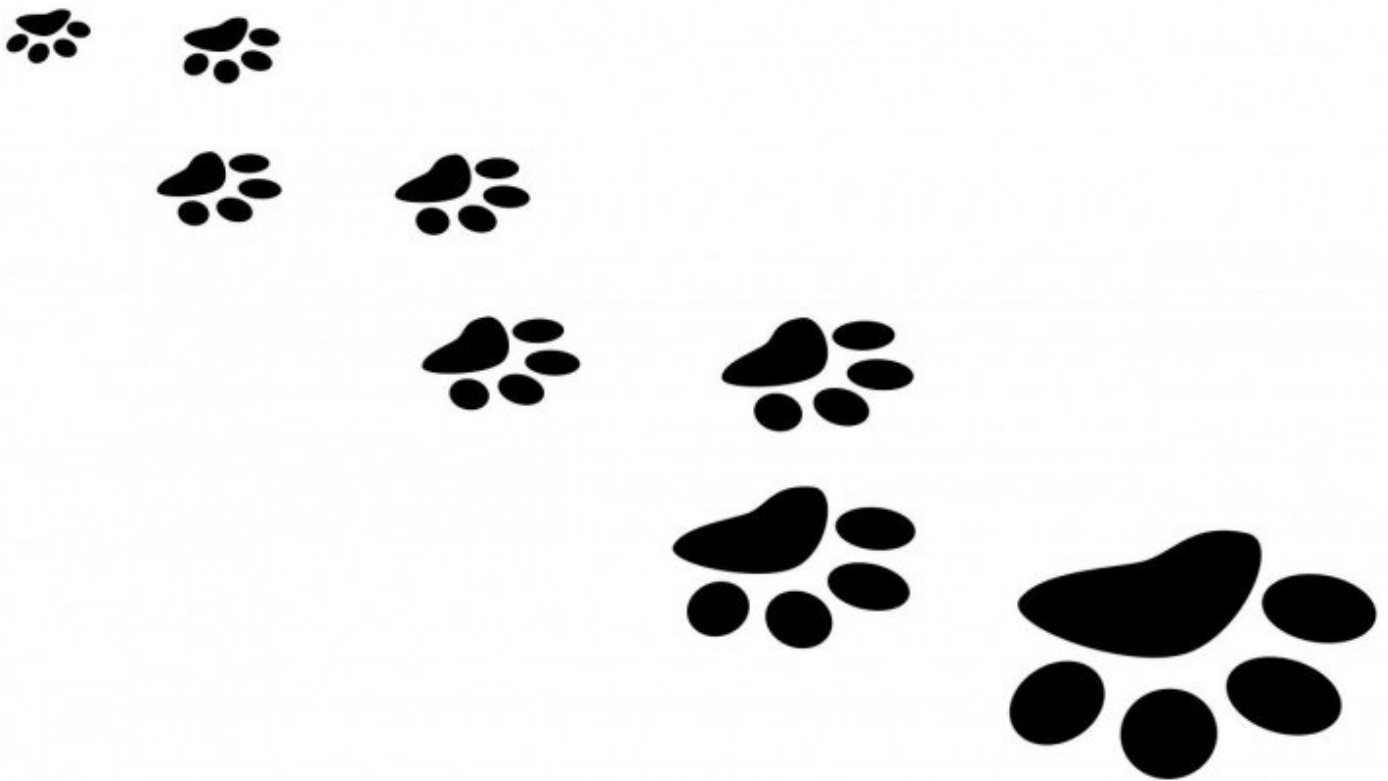


A DOG DAY AFTERNOON AT THE COOP

October 28, 2025



A PACK OF COOP CANINES SAT AND WAGGED FOR MEMBER-PHOTOGRAPHER JACKSON KRULE

Words by Anita Bushell and Photography by Jackson Krule

October 28, 2025

They sit or they lie down on the sidewalk, patiently waiting for their human to return. If the timing is right, they meet others like them during Canine Rush Hours (after school, when parents and their children stop by for a quick shop with their dogs in tow; or when people grab a few things before dinner while taking dogs for their evening walk). “Sometimes there is a whole pack out there!” says Elly Dittmar, Membership Coordinator and dog admirer.

A beat-up aluminum dog bowl lives by the bench near the entrance. Sometimes a walking shift worker fills it; other times a dog owner is moved to do so. It's not a scientific system, and there's only one rule: Dogs must be secured to the bench, and away from the door. "I think it would be great if we could add a dog shift," said a Coop member named Ronna, whose dog Shelby accompanies her to and from the Coop. "Everyone would want that job!"



ALL TIED UP

"The Coop is the only place I would ever tie her up. She's safe." – Ronna, Shelby's owner



AT YOUR SERVICE

"Millie likes coming to the Coop if it's not too crowded. She has some human friends who she's gotten to know. She also knows the aisle where the treats are!" - Rebecca, Millie's owner



FIERCE ATTACHMENTS

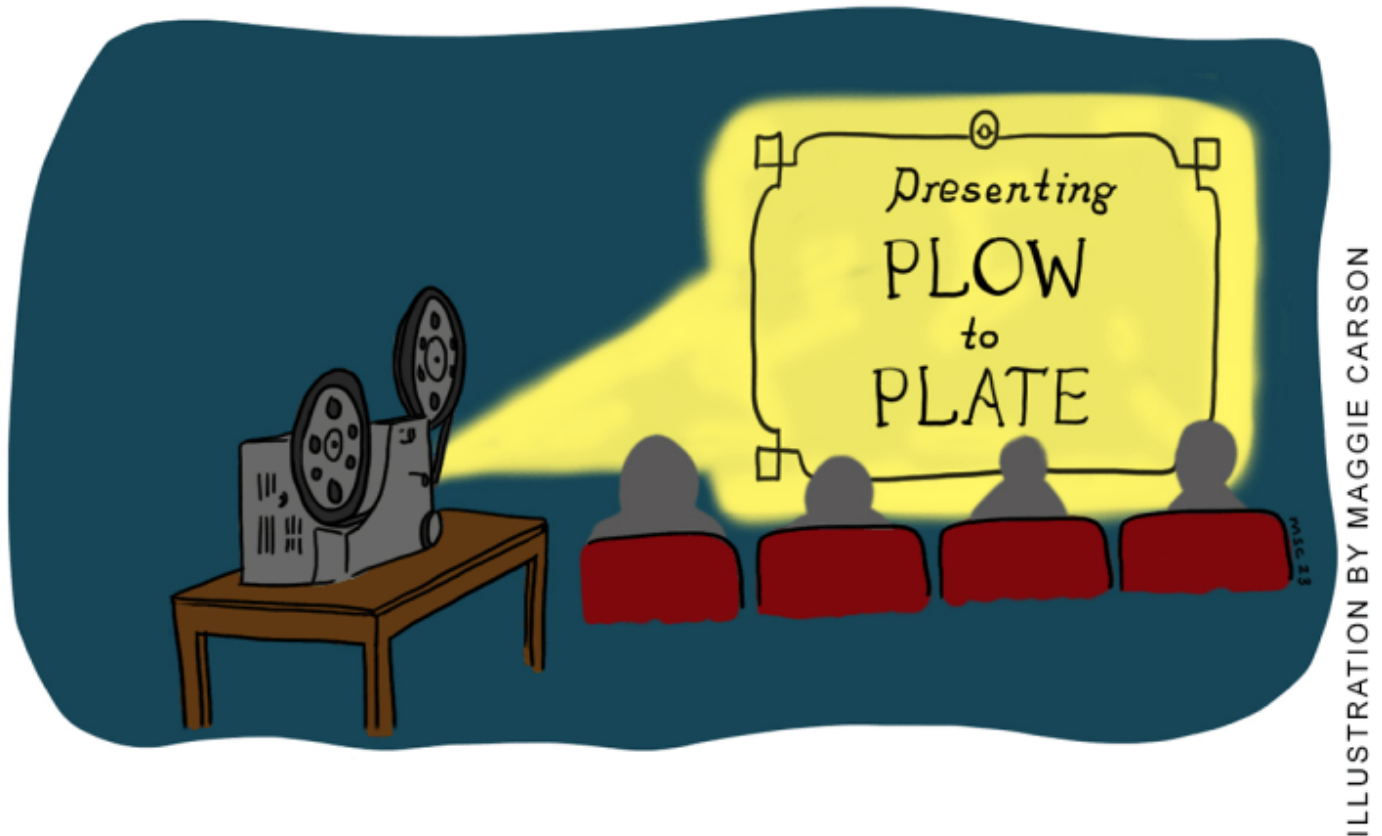
"I hope he doesn't take too long. I wonder what they sell in there..." - Miranda, waiting for her owner

Anita Bushell is a freelance writer and native New Yorker. She recently published One Way to Whitefish, a novel.

Jackson Krule is a New York based photographer. He graduated from The Tisch School of the Arts at New York University in 2014. He is currently the Senior Visual Producer at The Players' Tribune.

PLOW TO PLATE FILM SERIES

October 28, 2025



PET FOOLED: THE SHOCKING TRUTH ABOUT THE PET FOOD INDUSTRY

By Adam Rabiner

September 4, 2024

Let's just say that the documentary *Pet Fooled* is brought to you by *Plow to Bowl* rather than *Plow to Plate*. Never in our long-running series have we presented a film on what we feed our pets, although we have discussed whether cows are grass or grain fed. Yet *Pet Fooled* builds on the series' commitment to unveiling the less than savory aspects of an industrialized, corporatized and profit-driven food system. What

plagues the pet food industry are the same problems that bedevil the system designed for our eating—namely, false and misleading packaging, monopoly power and consolidation, weak or non-existent regulation and a focus on profits over health.

It's really not shocking therefore to learn that our pets suffer from many of the same maladies that we do: obesity, allergies, autoimmune issues and diseases such as diabetes. The main reason for this is that many of the pet food formulations are not biologically appropriate. Dogs and cats are carnivores. A cat's favorite meal is a freshly killed mouse. And dogs evolved from meat-eating wolves. In fact, every animal has a unique diet best suited for it. Worms eat dirt; hummingbirds thirst for nectar. Serve a snake a salad and it will hiss at you as it slithers away into a hole where it will choose to starve to death. Yet, many pet foods are packed with carbohydrates. One beautifully designed package listed the following top unnecessary ingredients: ground yellow corn, chicken byproduct meal, corn gluten meal, whole wheat flour and animal fat. Another leading dog-food brand with all organic brown rice, oats, millet, barley, sorghum, peas and potatoes is described as "fabulous quality ingredients...if you were a goat."

Even the animal parts are problematic. By-products are what's left over after an animal has been slaughtered and all the edible parts removed for human consumption. They consist of every piece and part imaginable. In other words, "mystery meat" of unknown quality or grade. These by-products, ground up and blended with synthetic vitamins and minerals, are obtained from slaughterhouses, but can also include dead animals from farms, ranches, maybe even zoos.

There are other problems. Kibbles, otherwise known as dried pet food, exacerbate dehydration in cats and dogs and contribute to kidney problems. The words on packages do not actually mean what most people think they do. For example, "dinner, nugget and formula" must contain up to 25% actual meat. However, "with" may contain only 3% meat. And "flavor" may contain little to no (0%) meat, yet the package might contain an image of a fresh steak. Similar deceptions apply to words such as "natural" and "organic."

A lot of this deception was revealed in 2006 because of a major product recall and congressional hearings resulting from a mysterious illness afflicting dogs caused by melamine, a deadly chemical used to make plastic. Subsequently, between 2007 and 2013, dog deaths and illnesses were associated with chicken jerky tainted with trace elements of antibiotics produced in a single factory in China.

The negative attention that thrust the industry into the spotlight created an opening for Blue Wilderness, which developed into a billion-dollar brand, to offer ostensibly healthier, grain-free and more biologically appropriate foods, though a lawsuit filed by Purina later revealed that the upstart company, Blue Buffalo, mislead consumers and engaged in false advertising when it claimed it used no animal byproducts.

Today, many passionate animal lovers have founded and launched pet food companies that form the basis of an alternative industry. Many of these visionaries enthusiastically and transparently talked about their products with the film makers. As for the five main conglomerates, they have gauged consumer sentiment and branded their own newer formulations; however, their spokespeople remained more secretive about the sourcing of their ingredients.

The bottom line is that today there are plenty of options for the educated consumer and animal lover, whether it is the newly popular raw food craze, or the glut of gently-cooked, human-grade options delivered frozen monthly to your door (shout out to my dog Sparky's favorite—The Farmer's Dog). There is no longer a reason to be fooled. Read labels. You can also make your own dog food like my veterinarian friend does. Though, if you are like me, that is going a bit too far.

"Pet Fooled," September 10, 2024 @ 7:00 p.m.

Screening link: <http://www.plowtoplatefilms.com/events/>

To be added to our mailing list for future screening announcements, please email a request to plowtoplate@mail.com.

Adam Rabiner lives in Ditmas Park with his wife, Dina, and two children, Elan and Ana.

THE COOP'S PET FOOD SECTION: SMALL PAW PRINT, LARGE IMPACT

October 28, 2025



By Rahima Nasa

The Coop is the one-stop-shop for everything we need to nourish our family and, I recently discovered, our pup too. Nestled in the back of the aisle at the center of the Coop are shelves of food for dogs and cats, litter and plenty of treats. I've overlooked this aisle until recently, when my husband and I welcomed Cardamom (we call her Cardi) into our home. She is still a puppy so we pay a lot of attention to what she eats

and the ingredients in her food. When I stumbled upon the pet food section I was delighted by the options. I wanted to know more about what was on the shelves so I called up the buyer for the pet food section, Tomo Mizoguchi.



Mizoguchi has been the Coop's pet supplies buyer for about half a year and hasn't quite been able to put his mark on the pet aisle yet. He's tried his best to maintain the usual selection of items, because members have been consistently buying items from the Raw Dynamics and Honest Kitchen brands. Mizoguchi faces a challenge when certain items go out of stock for long periods of time. In those cases, he tries to switch the item out with something else from the same brand. For example, if a chicken flavor treat is out of stock, he'll look for beef flavor, always checking the ingredient lists and avoiding anything with artificial coloring. "I go with looking for similar products within the same brand because it looks like the ones that we do have seem to be working," Mizoguchi explained.



PREMIUM CAT FOOD
**CHICKEN, BROWN RICE
& EGG RECIPE**

SIMPLE WHOLESOME INGREDIENTS

Real Chicken is the #1 Ingredient

No Artificial Colors or Flavors 

No Corn, Wheat or Soy 

No By-Product Meal 



FOR CATS OF ALL AGES

NET WT 48 OZ (3 LB) 1.36kg

MANUFACTURED IN THE USA WITH
FOREIGN AND DOMESTIC INGREDIENTS

Unit Price
\$2.80

LB



1

RETAIL PRICE

\$8.41

Rows

3 LB

Wild Harvest Cat Food - Chicken, Rice & Egg

PHOTO BY CHRISTIAN DIAZ

Mizoguchi has noticed that the cost of canned pet food, for both dogs and cats, has declined over the years. “We used to sell canned food that [was] around \$1.50, but that has gone down so right now we sell the most of canned food that’s around \$1,” he noted. Wild Harvest is the most popular brand among shoppers, according to Mizoguchi. The Coop is selling twice as much Wild Harvest cat and dog food compared to other brands.

But the pet food section has a lot more to offer than just kibble and canned food. Shoppers can pick up essentials like cat litter, poop bags, supplements and treats. Though technically not in the pet food section, raw options in the freezer section also feed Coop pets.

100%
REAL FOOD

BOCCE'S BAKERY DAILIES

brushy
sticks

a daily bar to support dental
health and fresh breath

✕ made in the usa
✕ all natural ✕ wheat free



MEDIUM DOGS
25-50 lbs

coconut + mint recipe
16 dental bars
dog treats · net wt 13 oz (368.5g)

PHOTO BY CHRISTIAN DIAZ

At a glance it would seem like dog treats dominate the pet section. There are several options of treats from local New York state brands like Raw Dynamics and Bocce's Bakery. I've had my eye on some treats from Portland Pet Food Company, which was also started by a pet parent who wanted to give her dog healthier, more natural options to eat. But to my surprise, cat owners are the biggest consumers for the pet section. "Dollar amount wise, we sell three times more cat food than dog food," Mizoguchi said.



While the pet section may have a relatively small footprint in the store, it's clear that members rely on the section to feed their furry companions. Mizoguchi doesn't have any plans to shake up the pet food section any time soon, so shoppers can rest assured that tried and true favorites like Wild Harvest will remain on the shelves. But the Coop is planning to add dried catnip in the coming months. "It's interesting because I do get a lot of product suggestions for the other categories that I order for but I haven't gotten any product suggestions for pet food," Mizoguchi added. Until he

does, he's not expecting to make any major buying changes.



PHOTO BY CHRISTIAN DIAZ

Shoppers who wish to see new products on the pet supply shelves are encouraged to send suggestions to Mizoguchi through their Member Services account (log in, click “contact us” and then the “product suggestion” tab).

Rahima Nasa, a public radio producer, has been a member of the Park Slope Food Coop since 2022.



THE COOP AND THE SEAN CASEY ANIMAL SHELTER

October 28, 2025



Supporting Animal Rescue Efforts: PSFC Hopes to Reengage Members in Donation Program for Local Shelter

By Frank Haberle

Anybody who has been a Coop member for a reasonable amount of time has heard at least something about the Coop's longstanding relationship with CHIPS, a local soup kitchen and residence for young mothers. Coop members and staff have donated produce, volunteered and worked shifts to ensure support for this local community non-profit.



On a much smaller scale, and completely under the radar, in the past decade the Coop has also moved products like cat litter, dog food and other essential supplies to Sean Casey Animal Rescue. Boxes of dented cans of dog and cat food and bags of litter in damaged packaging that would otherwise not sell on the Coop shopping floor have instead been packed up and delivered to the nearby Animal Rescue Center by a committed team of staff and members.

The effort to collect and move products to the shelter began several years before the COVID crisis, with coordinators and members working together to collect and deliver needed items to Sean Casey, located just off of Fort Hamilton Avenue in Kensington. Sean Casey Animal Rescue is a thriving animal rescue and rehabilitation center that currently takes in over 2,000 animals per year, more than any private rescue in New York. Sean Casey shelters and rehabilitates animals and then works to find them loving, adoptive homes. Operated largely by volunteers, since its founding in 1998, Sean Casey has saved more than 8,000 animals from the city's Animal Care & Control

alone.

Starting With Litter



The project started with a cat litter problem, remembers Jessa Fisher, then an on-site receiving coordinator and now a remote Coop staff member. “I was the Tuesday monitor, from 2:30 to 3:30,” Fisher recalls. “Every Tuesday afternoon, I had 20 to 30 receiving workers I was in charge of. I was obsessed with using every worker efficiently and not wasting time with people standing around not knowing what to do. (People probably hated having me as their monitor!) That’s when we came up with the lists of ‘things to do when you think there is nothing to do.’ ”

THE BAGS WOULD BUST OPEN, THERE WAS CAT LITTER EVERYWHERE, AND A PERFECTLY USABLE BUT BROKEN BAG OF CAT LITTER HAD TO BE THROWN OUT. THIS

MADE THE GARBAGE REALLY HEAVY AND SEEMED LIKE A TOTAL WASTE.



One of the big jobs every Tuesday was handling the cat litter. “Every week we got a whole U-boat’s worth, maybe 40 bags total, of the World’s Best cat litter in both green and red bags from our main distributor, UNFI. We also received another 10 bags of the Feline Pine cat litter in bags. The World’s Best came shrink-wrapped in plastic, three bags to a bundle. But when the bundles got sent to the aisle, people would invariably use the sharp end of their box cutter to open [them] up, without anyone being there to instruct them. The bags would bust open, there was cat litter everywhere, and a perfectly usable but broken bag of cat litter had to be thrown out. This made the garbage really heavy and seemed like a total waste. At the time, it seemed like we were ripping open one out of every three bags.”

Fisher addressed the problem by dedicating shift workers to focus their attention on taking shrink wrap off bags of cat litter and putting them in milk crates, so they

stacked easier and there was less chance of bag damage. The member workers developed a technique using the blunt end of the box cutters. “During my receiving shift,” Fisher remembers, “I would have two strong people doing this job, dismantling a U-boat of cat litter and transferring bags into milk crates, sending the U-boats down to the basement and stacking very heavy crates of cat litter in the basement. Invariably, though, we still lost bags. Not only that, we always accumulated dented pet food cans or cans where the label was missing, neither of which we could sell. I couldn’t bear this going into the garbage as our normal soup kitchens didn’t take pet food, and we paid for our garbage by weight.”



Another coordinator came up with the idea of sending the food and litter to Sean Casey. “I called Sean Casey and, as it turned out, they were happy to be the recipients of our torn cat litter bags and dented cans,” Fisher recalled. “During my shift I would ask if any receiver wanted to go on a bike ride or drive their car to Sean Casey to drop off some donations. People were often willing to go (anything to get out of

stocking aisles), but didn't always have transportation. Two of our regular receiving workers, Zach Poff and David Cutler, were always happy and willing to make the delivery. (Shout out to Zach and David!) But those two were only here once every four weeks and we needed this done every week. I was the only receiving coordinator who oversaw this and it needed to get done once a week, or the dedicated milk crate we had on the top of the gray shelf in the receiving room for damaged goods would start overflowing. So I eventually made it a shift, and kind of tucked it in with the vitamin workers I oversaw."

The Need Today



COVID reshaped the project and limited the Coop's ability to dedicate time to collecting and delivering the supplies. Presently, there is no member shift committed to the pet supplies. But while the flow of donated materials has been stemmed, the need has grown. City-wide, after an initial burst of pet adoptions in the early months of the COVID crisis, the numbers of rescued dogs and cats began to soar again in the past

year, leading to overwhelming demand for programs like Sean Casey.



Fisher, who relocated to Rochester in 2020 and continues working remotely for the Coop as the vitamin and supplement coordinator, ensured that the project would continue, although it was slowed during the COVID period, when there were no longer shifts. Today, Receiving Coordinator Charles Parham, who has been at the Coop for several years in the meat and produce departments, has taken over the project. As Parham recalls, during COVID, “I noticed a build-up of pet food in the receiving area, and I connected with Sean Casey. I now take the materials directly to Sean Casey. The amount varies from week to week, depending on breakages that occur when pallets arrive off the truck, or when members mistakenly cut into bags, or dented cans.” Parham’s interactions with the Sean Casey staff are limited when he drops off the materials at a table set up outside the facility for donations (at 153 East Third Street). “I go in and we say hello, but only briefly,” he explains. “The staff there are really focused on taking care of the animals.”

**"WE COULD CONDUCT A PET FOOD DRIVE, SIMILAR TO WHAT WE DO FOR CHIPS,"
PARHAM ADDED.**



Asked about the possible return of a member shift to support this project, Parham said that “bringing the shift back could happen, but it might have to be modified. Regular pickup of pet items might not be required or available always. So maybe the shift would include other Coop work in addition to the pet food drop-off. Reflecting on other ways that members can support this effort, Parham added that we could conduct a pet food drive, similar to what we do for CHIPS. “I think if the members knew more about the need, they would certainly help.”



Sean Casey Animal Rescue welcomes volunteers, donations, animal foster families and adoptions. For more information please visit <https://www.nyanimalrescue.org/volunteer>.

Frank Haberle has been a Coop member for nearly 30 years. He works for New Settlement in the Bronx and is the author of the novel Shufflers.