

# **FEDIAF EuropeanPetFood – Report of activities in 2023**

## **EU Code of Conduct on Responsible Food Business and Marketing Practice**

### **A common aspirational path towards achieving sustainable food systems**



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## **FEDIAF EuropeanPetFood**

[FEDIAF](#) is the Pet Food Industry's governing body in Europe. FEDIAF represents the interests of 15 national pet food associations, together with five pet food manufacturers operating in Europe. This covers 18 European markets.

Across Europe, there are approximately 150 pet companies producing 10.5 million tonnes of pet food, which is provided to many of the 91 million European households benefitting from the love and companionship of their 340+ million pets. There are around 127 million cats, 104 million dogs, 53 million birds, 29 million small mammals, 22 million aquaria and 11 million terraria.

In Europe, there are an estimated 118,000 people directly employed and 950,000 indirectly employed throughout the pet food industry.

FEDIAF promotes pet food that contributes to the health and wellbeing of pets. It is the voice of the European pet food industry and collaborates with authorities, regulators and academics and civil society to achieve favourable conditions for the supply of safe, nutritious and palatable products.

FEDIAF is fully committed to promoting responsible pet ownership, the wellbeing of pet animals, their important social role and sustainable development.

## **Background**

In January 2022, FEDIAF signed the EU Code of Conduct. By signing the Code, FEDIAF committed to support and contribute to the aspirational objectives that it sets out, where relevant for the pet food sector.

FEDIAF also subscribes to the Code's obligations, such as disseminating and promoting the Code amongst its members to encourage more sustainable practices and exploring the possibility of developing sector-specific tools and resources.

## A. Dissemination and Promotion of the Code among Members

Since signing the Code of Conduct, FEDIAF has communicated its commitment to the Code of Conduct and informed on its values and objectives, via a number of channels.

**Website:** In the sustainability section of our [website](#), we include a link to the Code of Conduct alongside summary of the objectives and obligations. This has been incorporated by national associations when promoting the value of membership of their own organisations eg [NVG's membership pages](#).

**Social Media:** On our social Media channels, [LinkedIn](#) and X, we continue to make references to signing the Code and its implications. These are frequently shared by member companies and national associations.

**Stakeholders:** Our regular communications to members and stakeholders –shared on our LinkedIn page with over 9000 followers, which includes other trade associations, animal welfare organisations, policy makers as well as members promotes the Code. For reference, our stakeholders include [FoodDrinkEurope](#), [AnimalhealthEurope](#), [FECAVA](#) Federation of European Companion Animal Veterinary Associations, [FVE](#) Federation of Veterinarians of Europe, [FEFAC](#) European Feed Manufacturers Association, [GAPFA](#) Global Alliance of Pet Food Associations, [EFSA](#) European Food Safety Authority and [FEFANA](#) EU Association of Speciality Feed Ingredients. We are also members of FoodDrinkEurope and support their membership of the Code of Conduct.

**Annual Congress Agenda:** At our 2023 [Annual Congress](#), we welcomed Dirk Jacobs, Secretary General of FoodDrinkEurope who made reference to the Code of Conduct and our shared goals during the CEO Forum.

**Annual Report:** Additionally, the Code of Conduct is referenced in the welcome from our President, Rosa Carbonell, in our [annual report](#), which was published at the Annual Congress.

**External Presentations for Members:** The Code is referenced and detailed in most external presentations with recent examples including:

- FEDIAF presentation to the UK Pet Food Annual meeting; Alice Tempel Costa 30<sup>th</sup> November 2023
- 'Latest EU policy and regulatory developments impacting our sector and an overview of FEDIAF's current priorities, campaigns and activities', Alice Tempel Costa & Aleksandra Prandota, PFAI, the Irish Pet Food Association 18 September 2023.

**Committee Meetings:** FEDIAF has also engaged with the Code commitments via its Working Groups and it is included on the agenda of quarterly meetings plus board meetings. Working Groups include:

- Executive Committee meetings
- Review Committee meetings
- Environment and Sustainability Working Group
- Nutrition Working Group
- Additives Working Group
- Small Pets Working Group
- Animal Welfare Task Force
- Analytical Science Working Group
- Feed Material and Trade Working Group
- Product Communication Working Group
- Communication Working Group

## **B. Encouraging Members to align sustainability actions**

In addition to the activities and channels for communicating the Code listed above, there are specific activities FEDIAF has undertaken that align with three of the seven aspirational objectives of the Code and they are listed here:

### **Aspirational Objective 1: Stimulate healthy, balanced and sustainable diets**

At the heart of FEDIAF's work are its Nutritional Guidelines. FEDIAF fills a gap in legislation by producing this 'go-to' guidance for the pet food industry and they are regarded as the 'Gold Standard' for pet food manufacturers in Europe. They help guide manufacturers in the formulation of safe, palatable and balanced diets by detailing the nutritional needs of cats and dogs at the varying life-stages. All manufacturers are encouraged to adhere to the Guidelines.

The Guidelines are produced in collaboration with the Scientific Advisory Board (SAB), which comprises independent and renowned nutrition and veterinarian scientists from European academia and consultancy across Europe. The Board of experts review the latest National Research Council data and scientific research and update the Guidelines on a regular basis. The most recent version was updated at the end of 2021 and can be accessed at [fediaf.org](https://fediaf.org). The guidelines was recently reviewed and its publication is expected by September 2024.

In our communications materials and our [online](#) material we remind our members and pet owners that a badly-balanced diet, composed of table scraps and over rich foods may cause health problems such as obesity, liver dysfunction, renal insufficiency etc and may shorten the life of the animal.

FEDIAF also produces a wide range of over 20 [factsheets](#), which cover nutrition topics such as 'how to choose a pet food', 'understanding pet food labels' and 'how pet food is made'. This wide range of factsheet topics encourages responsible practice.

FEDIAF also communicates the significance of the pet food industry's commitment to recycling via its use of surplus by-products from the human food industry, as detailed in Aspirational Objective 2.

FEDIAF has also collaborated with AnimalhealthEurope to form the [Pet Alliance EU](#) where we communicate the importance of a balanced diet to a wider audience including MEPs, joined animal welfare organisations, assistance animal associations & pet owners.

### **Aspirational Objective 2: Prevention and reduction of food loss and waste**

The pet food industry is one of the oldest to commit to recycling and circular economy. The use of surplus by-products from the human food industry re-introduces them into the economic system and prevents the need for final disposal, as well as its associated environmental impacts. Members are skilled in converting by-products into added value products, which ensure proper nutrition for pets. By maximising the use of by-products, the industry is not competing with the human food chain and contributes to the prevention and reduction of the loss and waste from the human food supply chain.

FEDIAF has developed section on its website dedicated to the [ingredients and sustainable sourcing](#) where members, stakeholders and pet owners can find more information and advice on this topic.

## **Aspirational Objective 4: An optimised circular and resource-efficient food chain in Europe**

Throughout 2023, FEDIAF worked with its Environmental and Sustainability Working Group to develop position papers and promote FEDIAF's commitment to improving the effectiveness of EU legislation on environmental topics.

FEDIAF has followed the EU debate on the Green Claims Directive and has developed and published a Position Paper and a "flyer" highlighting the importance of PEF/PEFCR (*Product Environmental Footprint Category Rules*) in the petfood sector and calls for more importance to be given to these standards in future legislation.

FEDIAF also developed and published a position paper linked to the draft Packaging and Packaging Waste Regulation published in Nov 2022 by the European Commission. As the debate evolved, FEDIAF also published and circulated a flyer on the specific concerns of the Pet Food industry on proposals for reuse and refill in some of the parliamentary amendments.

In addition to publishing these documents on [fediaf.org](https://fediaf.org), they were circulated to MEPs and Permanent Representations to the EU ahead of debates.

## **Aspirational Objective 7: An optimized and resource efficient food chain in Europe**

The pet food industry is committed to recycling and has been using surplus ingredients from the human food chain for many years. In 2022, FEDIAF has been extensively promoting the significance of this sustainable system for pet food production, in order to protect some of its vital ingredients (e.g.: Category 3 animal fats). FEDIAF promoted several activities, [articles](#) and [Op eds](#) and meetings in 2023 to safeguard [Category 3](#) animal fats to be kept for use in pet food rather than biofuels.

As part of this campaign, FEDIAF has regularly posted on social media, distributed press releases and updated web content to promote the benefits of the pet food industry's [circular](#) and [resource-efficient](#) chain.

## **C. Explore possibility of developing sector-specific tools & resources to support the Code**

FEDIAF has developed a number of tools to support and disseminate the Code. As previously mentioned in section B:

- Nutritional Guidelines to help manufacturers produce nutritionally complete, balanced and safe food.
- Promotional Material used on social media to be shared by stakeholders and members.
- Factsheets
- Press releases and statements to be shared by members

In addition, FEDIAF has a dedicated Environment and Sustainability Working Group, which is working on several topics such as sustainable use of ingredients and the update of the FEDIAF PEFCR (Product Environmental Footprint Category Rules). FEDIAF is proud to be one of the 'pilot' trade associations that has voluntarily partnered with the European Commission (EC) to support the development of the methodology during the pilot phase. This work was part of the EC initiative "Building the Single Market for Green Products" which aimed to harmonise the communication of environmental performances and impact of products and organisations for producers and consumers alike. In 2018 the European Commission endorsed the Product Environmental Footprint Category Rules (PEFCR) that we developed for pet food. The PEFCR for pet food includes the full life cycle of a pet food product, 'from cradle to grave', including the following life cycle stages: ingredient sourcing, packaging production, pet food manufacturing, distribution, use and packaging 'end of life' (EOL).

Most recently, in order to promote and protect the circular pet food model and promote the use of sustainable ingredients, FEDIAF has developed toolkits for members. The focus of these toolkits is the protection of Category 3 animal fats from use in biofuels.

## **D. Engagement in dialogue with other food chain / systems to forge relationships and partnerships**

FEDIAF collaborates with sister organisations in Brussels active in the animal feed chain as well as a range of other organisations, such as the European Commission and EFSA. FEDIAF is member of FoodDrinkEurope and a founding member of GAPFA (Global Alliance of Pet Food Association).

FEDIAF is also a member of:

- EU Feed Chain Task Force, a gathering of 41 EU organisations of the different sectors of the feed chain (feed material producers, traders, compound feed manufacturers and farmers)
- [The Animal Welfare EU Platform](#)
- [The Pet Alliance](#)

**ENDS**

### **Reference:**

THE 7 ASPIRATIONAL OBJECTIVES AND CORRESPONDING INDICATIVE ACTIONS OF THE CODE:

1. Healthy, balanced and sustainable diets for all European consumers

- ▶ Improved food consumption patterns in the EU
- ▶ A food environment that makes it easier to choose healthy and sustainable diets

2. Prevention and reduction of food loss and waste

- ▶ Supporting improved food management at household level
- ▶ Minimising waste and reducing losses in operations and across value chains

3. A climate neutral food chain in Europe by 2050

- ▶ Reducing net emissions from own operations

4. An optimised circular and resource-efficient food chain in Europe

- ▶ Improving resource efficiency within own operations
- ▶ Improving the sustainability of food and drink packaging

5. Sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, employment and decent work for all

- ▶ Improving business resilience and competitiveness
- ▶ Supporting a skilled workforce and providing safe and inclusive workplaces for all

6. Sustainable value creation in the European food supply chain through partnership

- ▶ Supporting improved resilience and competitiveness of the supply chain
- ▶ Stimulating sustainable production

7. Sustainable sourcing in food supply chains

- ▶ Transforming commodity supply chains
- ▶ Improving social performance in (global) food supply chains