



The Truth About Shark Products in Pet Food

Sharks are being decimated around the globe to meet the demand for shark products. Yet, the average consumer, and sometimes brand, are not even aware of their participation in this destructive market. While the trade of fins is the biggest offender, the demand for shark meat is a close second. Because of these exploding markets, other random industries (pet food, cosmetics, supplements, leather products and exotic meats) are being created to make a profit from sharks. Most of these are pointless, ineffective and unhealthy, while others are purposely concealing shark with pseudonyms and false label claims.

-Sharks have survived for 450 million years, that's 5 mass extinction events, and yet the human population is killing them off in a matter of years.

-Healthy shark populations are directly correlated to the health of our oceans. They are the white blood cells of the sea. They keep the ocean clean and keep disease from spreading by removing the sick, dead or dying. As apex predators, they maintain healthy fish populations by removing weak animals and keeping the strongest of a species to thrive.

-Sharks are slow to reach sexual maturity, reproduce infrequently and only have a couple pups at a time. They reproduce more like mammals and their populations do not bounce back easily. Most fish in commercial fishing industries have very high reproductive rates and millions of eggs per year, adapting over time to survive predators. Sharks have had very few predators for millions of years, until humans.

-Shark fin, meat and liver oil markets have decimated shark populations by 90-95% in the last 20 years. Fins from 100 million sharks end up in the shark fin trade, including illegally fished protected species.

-More often than not, when shark is included in a product the ingredient is disguised through misleading names (such as "squalene", "ocean fish" or "fish meal" to name a few). It is important to mention that 30% of the seafood we eat is mislabeled. Companies need to do their research and vet suppliers for accurate Certificate of Analyses claims.

-It is scientifically proven that shark meat, in most cases, contains extremely high levels of Mercury, PCBs, Urea and other toxic pollutants widely recognized as dangerous for consumption.

-Additionally, the use of shark cartilage as a source of chondroitin, glucosamine, methylsulfonylmethane and squalene or squalane in joint nutraceuticals is scientifically proven to promote inflammation.

Such false advertising leads to unsuspecting consumers and brands unintentionally buying products made from sharks, yet there are ample alternatives! Plant-based products are cleaner and just as effective. And in the case of meat, we really need to ask ourselves, it is necessary to eat an endangered species, an apex predator at the risk of our and our pet's health? We are hopeful that with this knowledge, you will start conversations and the right choices will come easily to you.