



# Answering the Call

As more people look for ways to proactively support their dog's wellness or address and relieve health issues, supplements and remedies are providing the means to these ends, propelling category sales.

**BY PAMELA MILLS-SENN**

**S**usan Goldstein, co-founder with Dr. Bob of Earth Animal Ventures, a Southport, Conn.-based, vet-owned company that provides natural/organic foods, treats, organic remedies and supplements for dogs and cats—as well as a natural flea and tick prevention product—has probably attended too many trade shows to count. After all, the company was founded in 1979, giving her nearly 40 years in the business. One show she never misses is Global Pet Expo in Orlando, Fla., working the booth and taking the pulse of the industry, where it's heading and what attendees are excited about. And over the past several years, one of the biggest changes she's noticed is the attention supplements are receiving.

"It used to be that supplements were in the back of our

booth," she recalls. "But now, people are asking about them, how to sell them and [how to] get training, so the interest is very high. Also, people are now buying the entire line, instead of just a few products. [With this in mind,] at future trade show events, we'll be providing training on supplements at our booth."

Goldstein says the human interest in conscious nutrition has trickled down to pets, boosting sales of supplements. Remedies have benefited as well, propelled by a strong movement towards alternatives to vet-prescribed, chronic drugs and a desire for natural solutions that don't have the side effects of conventional treatments or medications, she explains. As a result, sales of their supplements, their flea and tick line and their Daily Health Nuggets have skyrocketed, growing by 195 percent from 2015 to 2018.

## TRANSFORMATIVE CHANGES

Also making a difference to supplements and remedies is the mental—and emotional—transformation from "pet owner" to "pet parent," with pets now being considered actual family members, says Brittany Green, product manager for Tomlyn

Veterinary Science (a division of Vetoquinol USA). Located in Fort Worth, Texas, the company offers a range of products for dogs, cats, horses and calves, including high-calorie supplements, digestive aids, joint support, calming aids and more.

“With this change comes a more perceived responsibility to care for them and maintain a healthy life with the hope to extend pet’s lives,” she explains. “We’re seeing pet parents being more proactive with supplements, rather than reactive when symptoms arise. They’ll add a digestive aid before tummy issues appear, offer a calming chew before a potentially stressful event, and add joint supplements to keep pets moving and active for as long as possible.”

Tomlyn offers the Pill Masker to help turn pill time into treat time, says Green. The paste-like, bacon-flavored Masker comes in a jar; pet parents simply pinch a small amount of the substance, wrap it around the pill and feed it to the dog or cat. It can also be used on its own as a quick treat or training reward. This August, the company will introduce its Loose Stool Remedy: Firm Fast. The product, intended for pets that experience occasional episodes of loose stools, will come in two gel sizes and tablets.

Travis Draeger, leader of business development for PetAlive, says one of the biggest changes has been in the volume of pet owners who are looking for alternative solutions, like remedies and supplements. This, in turn, has propelled more of these products to enter the market, further fueling interest and growth. But while it’s great that people have become more open to these products, caution is advised, says Draeger.

“They just have to be careful to read between the lines,” he advises. “They need to be sure these products can support their claims. As you are seeing with the growth of CBD, many companies make claims without any real backing.”

Located in Oshkosh, Wis., PetAlive provides high-quality herbal and homeopathic remedies for dogs, cats and

## SELLING SOLUTIONS

**Because Animals’** (*becauseanimals.com*) **Superfood and Probiotic Supplements for Dogs** are loaded with antioxidants, omega fatty acids, vitamins and minerals along with prebiotics and probiotics. Ingredients include seven different kinds of algae, organic wheatgrass, organic pumpkin, organic turmeric, organic inulin and organic coconut flour—all are human-grade. The supplements are formulated to support skin and coat health, digestion and overall immunity.



Made with a proprietary blend of homeopathic ingredients, including full-spectrum hemp CBD and essential oils, **CBD Dog Health’s** (*cbddoghealth.com*) products are formulated for a pet’s specific needs. Among the company’s offerings are the **CALM for Dogs** tincture combining 550 mg of full-spectrum hemp CBD with lavender essential oil to help ease stress and anxiety. Also available is the **SOOTHE** salve, used to treat bug bites, skin allergies and hotspots in all types of pets. The topical salve contains 150 mg of full-spectrum hemp CBD, hemp seed oil, coconut oil, beeswax, ginger oil and honey, and is safe for dogs that lick.



**Vet Worthy’s** (*vetworthy.com*) **Chewable Toothpaste** is formulated to support teeth and gum health in dogs and to aid in keeping plaque, tartar and bad breath at bay when brushing is not possible. Ingredients include zeolites, which help to prevent plaque from sticking to teeth; and propolis, an antifungal, antibacterial that assists in reducing bad breath. The toothpaste comes in a flavor designed to entice dogs and is intended to be digested. It is not meant to replace regular dental care provided by a vet.



**King Kanine’s** (*kingkanine.com*) **King Kalm Soothe**, found in the company’s natural line of King Kalm CBD pet wellness products, is a topical spray developed specifically for dogs with skin irritations, abrasions and red, inflamed itchy skin typically resulting from allergic reactions. The blend of natural oils includes tea tree, aloe and CBD. The company also offers a mange-and-mite-management spray with CBD, and the King Kalm Balm, used for pets with dry or irritated paws, dry noses and callused elbows.



small animals, offering over 150 items that support a variety of ailments, says Draeger. Their number-one selling line is Cushex-S and Cushex-M formulated for pets with Cushings disease and designed to support endocrine health in dogs. Draeger describes the company as taking a “dual modality” strategy with these products—meaning they offer an herbal (via the S items) and a homeopathic (the M items) in tandem for “a holistic approach to health,” he says.

## CDB: A GAME-CHANGER

PetAlive has recently launched a hemp extract, joining other companies excited about what CBD products have to offer.

You can count Goldstein among those who see CBD as a game-changer, dubbing it the “gold rush of products.” So, it makes sense that Earth Animal’s newest offering is the hemp-based (full-spectrum and organically-grown) CBD line, Nature’s Comfort.

Currently, there are two products in the line, Nature’s Comfort Zen Pen and Nature’s Comfort Zen Tabs. The pen is a CBD transdermal gel applied to the inside tip of the ear. It also includes “uptake technology” for rapid absorption. The tabs also offer the uptake technology but additionally contain Regen+, designed to work synergistically with the CBD to stimulate and support the immune system. The tabs can be given by mouth or crumbled up and put into food, says Goldstein. Both products are designed to address anxiety, pain and inflammation.

Pet Releaf is a Littleton, Colo.-based company making a wide range of holistic supplements for dogs and cats, such as the Canna Care Tropical, a 100 percent plant-based formula for dry skin, inflammation, insect bites, arthritis relief and skin irritations. Pet Releaf also offers Liposome Hemp Oil, an organic, full-spectrum hemp extract with naturally occurring CBD mixed in with sustainably-sourced Wild Alaskan Salmon Oil, says Jillian Dutson, marketing and advertising manager.

“This oil can be administered directly on food without losing any effectiveness,”

## SELLING SOLUTIONS

**Loving Pets’** ([lovingpetsproducts.com](http://lovingpetsproducts.com)) calorie-friendly ActivPetz treats contain therapeutic supplement levels made from real meat and fish. The treats are free of grain, wheat, soy and corn and are available in four vet-recommended formulas and in two varieties including: Digestive Health & Probiotics (Chicken, Lamb); Hip and Joint (Beef, Chicken); Multivitamin & Immune Booster (Chicken, Duck); and Skin and Coat (Chicken, Salmon).



**NOW Pets’** ([nowpetsupplements.com](http://nowpetsupplements.com)) Joint Support for dogs and cats is a blend of ingredients with demonstrated joint benefits, including glucosamine, MSM, curcumin, Yucca, hyaluronic acid and cayenne. The supplement is delivered in a chewable, beef liver flavored lozenge. Also available is the NOW Pets Relaxant for dogs and cats. The supplement is formulated to promote relaxation and contentment during changes in a pet’s daily routine and contains natural botanicals like valerian, chamomile and passionflower, with L-Tryptophan. The chewable lozenge is flavored with beef liver powder and chicken flavoring.



**Pet King Brands, Inc.’s** ([zymox.com](http://zymox.com)) ZYMOX product family includes Ear Solutions for infected ears that works without antibiotics; Ear Cleanser for smelly, dirty ears that provides mild microbial benefits; Topical Cream and Spray, antibiotic alternatives for wounds, hot spots, ringworm and other skin infections; and Shampoo and Conditioning Rinse for calming itchy, irritated skin and for supporting a healthy coat and skin.



**Podium Pet Products’** ([podiumpetproducts.com](http://podiumpetproducts.com)) Pet Remedy is a natural, calming remedy to help relieve a pet’s anxiety and stress. Available as a plug-in diffuser, calming sprays (the company offers a 15 ml refillable pocket spray and a 200 ml trigger spray) or a wipe, Pet Remedy is water-based and safe to use on the skin and coat. The sprays can also be used on bedding and bandanas, in carry baskets, on crates and on towels used to wrap a small pet for a procedure and even on the pet owner’s clothing and hands.



says Dutson. “It’s three times more absorbent when administered this way than our standard CBD hemp oils, which gives you more use out of each bottle, since you’ll be administering less.”

Pet Releaf’s hemp oils are intended to not only assist overall health but to also address more serious conditions like seizure management, situational anxieties and arthritis pain.

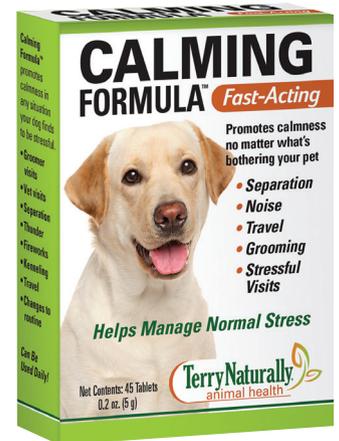
Pet owners and pet specialty retailers alike are jumping on the CBD bandwagon, says Dutson. But, like Draeger, she advises both to do their research to ensure a CBD product will perform and deliver good results—especially important since so many of them are pouring into the market. To assist, Pet Releaf has developed the following five questions for anyone

## SELLING SOLUTIONS

**SynergyLabs** ([synergylabs.com](http://synergylabs.com)) offers formulas incorporating new ingredients along with superfoods. The Hip & Joint formula with Mobility5 includes a blend of five highly effective actives like glucosamine, calcium fructoborate (a staple in human joint pain relief supplements), Green Lipped Mussel, turmeric curcumin and salmon oil.



Calming Formula from Terry Naturally Animal Health ([tanimalhealth.com](http://tanimalhealth.com)) help canines manage normal stress. The specific key compounds from Echinacea angustifolia in an easy-to-take tiny tablet are perfect to promote calming from summertime activities like fireworks, travel, grooming, separation and the extra noise that comes with the season. Calming Formula works quickly and doesn’t cause drowsiness.



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## SELLING SOLUTIONS

**The Missing Link's** ([missinglinkproducts.com](http://missinglinkproducts.com)) Smartmouth Original Dental Chews clean teeth, reduce tartar and deliver a daily serving of hip and joint, skin and coat, and digestive support through balanced omegas and glucosamine. The long-lasting chews are available in large/extra-large, small/medium and petite dog sizes. The company also offers the Missing Link Pet Kelp Supplements, a limited-ingredient, premium line of organic and/or non-GMO powders that naturally support digestive health, weight management and reduced shedding. Each hypoallergenic serving is packed with essential micronutrients pets need to be at their healthiest. The formulas are available in Hip & Joint, Skin & Coat, Probiotic and Feline-specific.



**Under the Weather's** ([undertheweatherpet.com](http://undertheweatherpet.com)) Ready Balance Microbial Supplement contains a stabilized source of beneficial bacteria, select vitamins and the prebiotic inulin in a palatable base. The six strains of probiotics and the prebiotic help maintain normal digestion, appetite and gut health during stressful times like travel, competitive shows, breeding/birthing, lactation and kenneling. The formula is also useful following antibiotic therapy and during times of digestive upset. Also available are the Hemp Joint Soft Chews, designed to support hip and joint mobility and normal inflammatory response. The full-spectrum hemp blend with CBD oil also incorporates glucosamine and chondroitin, grown without pesticides and processed without solvents; and the Hemp Neuro Soft Chews to help support normal brain health and neurological function in dogs of all ages.



**HealthyCoat** ([healthycoat.net](http://healthycoat.net)) is a highly digestible source of omega-3 and -6 essential fatty acids, vitamin E and lecithin. It is fortified with niacin, biotin and vitamin B12, and contains no artificial preservatives. It is recommended by veterinarians and trainers because it is comprised of the purest form of omega-3 and -6 essential fatty acids. These essential fatty acids cannot be produced by your pet and must come from an outside source. HealthyCoat's essential fatty acids are preserved due to its unique cold pressed process. This method uses low temperatures and no chemicals.



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interested in CBD products to ask manufacturers:

- **Where is the hemp grown? Can they prove this?** “With the passing of the 2018 Farm Bill, this question is extremely important,” says Dutson. “This bill doesn’t make all CBD products legal. Imported hemp oil and imported CBD isolate are still considered Schedule 1 Drugs in the DEA’s eyes. The bill only legalized U.S.-based hemp grown under State Department of Agriculture regulations.”
- **Do they have the required certifications to back up organic claims?** As organic has become a key focus for growing numbers of consumers, it’s increasingly common for companies to make false organic claims.
- **What extractions methods are they using?** Dutson says many CBD extracts are derived using chemicals like butane, ethanol and even acetone to leach the CBD and other cannabinoids from the hemp plant material—a method called Toxic Solvent Extraction. “Residual traces of these chemicals can always be found in the final product,” say says, suggesting that people

inquire if third-party testing has been done to ensure no residuals are detected in the product.

- **Are they using a CBD isolate?** According to Dutson, 95 percent of CBD isolates come from countries like China or Russia, making this a Schedule 1 Drug under the 2018 Farm Bill.

- **How much CBD does the product contain?** Ask about third-party testing to confirm the product actually contains CBD and in the amount claimed on the label.

As for helping customers find the best supplements or remedies for their needs, Green advises asking open-ended questions. She suggests inquiring about the type and age of pet; any issues the pet might be experiencing, such as pain, discomfort, mobility, digestive, skin irritations, etc.; how long the pet has been experiencing the issues; and what remedies or supplements have already been tried.

Remember, there doesn't need to be a problem in order to turn a customer's attention to this category since more and more pet owners are looking for ways to support or enhance a pet's already good health. Also, take the time to talk with and educate those customers who may not even

be aware of these products and how they can benefit their pets.

Other best practices Green recommends are properly educated sales associates and carrying a wide assortment of supplements and remedies addressing a broad array of needs.

Kathryn Garsh, CEO of Nature's Pet Herbals, also agrees that education is key, especially when selling CBD products.

"Education and understanding are key to a retailer's success in marketing CBD products," says Garsh. "There are many consumers that are aware of the benefits CBD provides and there are many that don't. It's a relatively new market."

The St. Petersburg, Fla.-based company produces hemp extract, available in pump bottles or with droppers, in various sizes. It also manufactures spray pain relief, topical creams and treats.

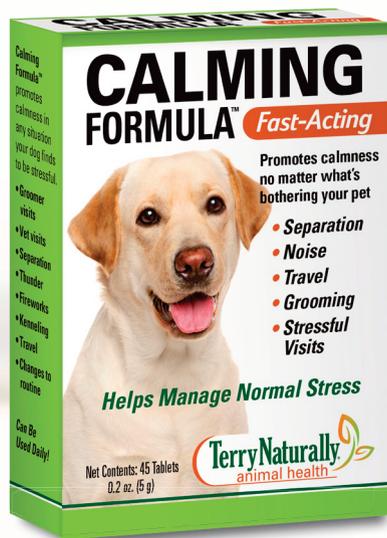
"Our most popular and unique product is our Hempful Chicken Stix," says Garsh. "They are made with only two ingredients in addition to the CBD, Chicken and Sweet Potatoes They are all natural and dogs love them."

However, perhaps the best practice of all is for pet specialty retailers to hold supplements and remedies to a very high standard, says Draeger.

"Make sure you understand the ingredients and avoid sub-par brands that use things like standardized extract—at least if you're looking to be truly all natural in your approach," he advises. "The benefit you get from sticking to a high standard is the reduced risk of side effects for your customers and the efficacy that keeps them coming back to your store." **PB**

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