

Special Report

Supplements

In the coming year, supplement suppliers are eager to introduce new products to the industry designed to address common issues afflicting pets and pet owners. Companies are continuing to demonstrate their commitment to quality and pets' safety. As pets live longer, supplement companies are supporting the goal of allowing pets to have a high quality of life.

FoodScience will be working hard to support its retail and distributor partners while also driving demand for its brands with pet parents. "We have a number of new products that we are excited about, including our Pet Naturals Hemp items that launched at the end of 2019," said Derek Archambault, Director of Marketing for FoodScience Corporation, makers of Pet Naturals and VetriScience. "In addition, we will be looking to translate our decades of experience in supplements and nutrition to new educational opportunities for retailers," Archambault said. "Our VetriScience brand will continue its omnichannel approach, working with veterinarians to provide the most efficacious solutions to a wide range of conditions while also making many of those solutions available to retailers so that they can benefit from that strong vet recommendation."

For 2020, NOW Foods' main area of focus is new product development, including the launch of three products addressing pets' heart and kidney health along with fleas and ticks: NOW Pets Cardiovascular Support, NOW Pets Kidney Support and NOW Pets Flea & Tick Spray. "In keeping with our mission 'to provide value in products that empower healthier lives,' we are very excited for three products that are new to the pet market," said Regina Flight, Pet Brand Manager for NOW Health Group. "Our NOW Pets Flea & Tick Spray does not contain harmful chemicals to your pet or the environment like DEET, synthetic pesticides or pyrethrins," Flight said. "There are more products that we are in the process of formulating with the help of Dr. Barbara Royal, DVM, CVA that will help support pet health."

Greg Tilford, Founder of Animal Essentials, has pinpointed education, transparency and community build-

ing as the main areas of focus in 2020. "Our mission is to help improve quality of life for companion animals, their humans and the communities they live in through our products, but also by illuminating the deep importance of the human-animal bond," Tilford said. "We believe that holistic wellness is not unilaterally administered but shared between all involved."

"The animals in our homes bring us joy, healing and perspectives on life that cannot be had from any human teacher," he added. "At Animal Essentials, we strive to bring all of this to light while providing the best human-grade supplements in the world made from sustainable sources."

NOW Foods is working to create products to address additional health concerns that pet owners have asked about. "Some of the products include vision support, a geriatric formula, and a multivitamin and mineral with antioxidants to help with overall general health," Flight said.

"As more people realize the importance of the human-animal bond as it relates to their own health, they are becoming more aware of the true, natural needs of their companion animals," Tilford said. "Although we tend to 'humanize' our pets with human names, accessories and such, the nutritional and emotional needs of our companion animals are quite different from our own," he said. "From a foundation of love and respect, more people are learning about the 'natural ways' of their pets, and thereby caring for them out of love and respect for what they really are: not human."

"At Animal Essentials, our mission is 'to enhance quality of life for companion animals, the people who care for them and the communities they live in.' We find enormous opportunities within our mission, and with this rapidly-evolving, holistic mindset," he added.

"One of the most obvious developments is what will continue to happen with hemp and CBD," Archambault said. "It feels like we are getting closer and closer to some sort of clarification of what will happen long-term—whether that be a reckoning or an unleashing of

potential, or something in between," he said. "Regardless of what happens, the opportunity for our VetriScience Laboratories brand is to bring our proven formulas—in numerous cases supported by clinical studies—to more pet parents so that they can know that what they buy will work for their pet while providing something that is safe and legal for retailers."

"Many pet owners use natural health products for themselves and see the benefits," Flight said. "They are more open to also use similar products on their pets to support their pets' health," she said.

Tilford has observed several opportunities coming out of what the industry is learning from the "green rush" of CBD. "Not so much from the cannabis plant itself—which is indeed amazing—but from the increased awareness that it is bringing to people who have never before picked up an herbal medicine," he said. "Hemp is amazing, but to me it is really just another herb. Wait until these people learn about what else is out there."

"The biggest opportunity for health and wellness continues to be preventative care," Archambault said. "So many products are focused on supporting an already-existing problem or issue, but in many cases, it would be better if the supplement was being administered before the problem started," he said. "It may not prevent the issue, but it could delay the onset of symptoms or make the symptoms less severe. We see this all the time for hip and joint supplements where the pet owner starts to think about it at the point where the dog is already limping or less active, whereas if it was a breed prone to joint issues, they could have provided support to the pet before the problems started."

"There are a lot of products in the market already, and like human counterparts, we should create products to drill down to address more specific issues," Flight said. "Not always do we see a one-size-fits-all approach to wellness. We are working closely with Dr. Royal and she is creating products that will target more specific health issues."