

The benefits of New Zealand green mussels



introduction

New Zealand green mussels, as the name suggests, are only grown in New Zealand's shallow coastal, nutrient-rich waters. For centuries Māori, New Zealand's indigenous people, have enjoyed the taste and health benefits of New Zealand green mussels.

While often cited as a superfood, most pet guardians are unaware of what makes New Zealand green mussels superior to other shellfish and seafood ingredients.

Why is New Zealand green mussels such a beneficial ingredient for your pet? The secret is found within its omega-3 fatty acids, and more specifically, a type of omega-3 fatty acid that is not found in any other marine product.



Joint health

Omega-3 fatty acids are associated with anti-inflammatory benefits. The primary anti-inflammatory fatty acids in the omega-3 family that help with anti-inflammation are docosahexaenoic acid (DHA) and eicosapentaenoic acid (EPA). New Zealand green mussels oil has excellent levels of EPA and DHA, up to 36% combined DHA and EPA ⁽¹⁾. Compared to common and widely used Atlantic salmon oil, New Zealand green mussel has almost 15% more combined EPA and DHA ⁽²⁾.

In addition to EPA and DHA, New Zealand green mussels also have other fatty acids, including furan fatty acids or F acids. Furan fatty acids have potent antioxidant effects and scavenge the body for free radicals. It is this action that may have a significant impact on the reduction of inflammation and subsequent joint pain ⁽³⁾.

Eicosatetraenoic acid (ETA) is another fatty acid found in New Zealand green mussels. However, unlike EPA and DHA, which are found in many marine species, ETA is found exclusively in New Zealand green mussels. ETA is being studied for its potential to act as an inhibitor of the cyclooxygenase and lipoxygenase pathways which create pro-inflammatory arachidonic acid metabolites. These metabolites contribute to inflammation in the body which can present itself as joint pain, stiffness, and a reduction in mobility ⁽⁴⁾.

In addition to these fatty acids, New Zealand green mussels also have antioxidant compounds such as carotenoids and anthocyanins ⁽⁵⁾. These compounds have been studied for their effects on relieving symptoms of arthritis and other inflammatory related ailments in dogs. When assessed, diets that included supplemental New Zealand green mussels at varying levels showed a reduction in arthritic score, joint pain, and swelling ⁽⁵⁾.

Skin and coat health

Omega-3 fatty acids, specifically DHA and EPA, have been studied for their role in relieving symptoms of pruritis, otherwise known as itching. Itchy, dry skin can affect pets for different reasons, but if not treated can result in skin lesions and abrasions. Omega-3 fatty acids can help alleviate symptoms of skin irritation through their anti-inflammatory properties ⁽⁶⁾. The omega-3 fatty acids in New Zealand green mussels are higher than in many fish oils, such as cod liver, sardine, and anchovy oils ⁽¹⁾.



Cognitive health

Omega-3 fatty acids, such as DHA and EPA, are vital to brain health. DHA is widely known as the most important fatty acid for the brain due to its role in protecting the neuronal membrane from degeneration

⁽⁷⁾. In addition to supporting joint, skin, and coat health, New Zealand green mussels are also an excellent brain food.

Conclusion

While the scientific community is certain of the benefits of New Zealand green mussels for joint, brain, skin and coat health, research is ongoing as it is believed this superfood offers even more health benefits for dogs and cats. ZIWI® Peak offers various recipes that feature New Zealand green mussels. Peak inclusion levels of New Zealand green mussels are in ZIWI® Peak booster recipes - designed to giving your dog or cat a boost of nutrient-dense, natural, superfood nutrition.

References:

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