

# PET FOOD'S WELLNESS REVOLUTION

AS PETS BECOME FAMILY, BRANDS ARE REDEFINING NUTRITION WITH PROBIOTICS, VITAMINS AND FUNCTIONAL INGREDIENTS TO SUPPORT LONG-TERM ANIMAL HEALTH. *By Daniel De Bomford and Bernard Thompson*

**T**hey share our homes, routines and often, our beds. For many, pets are family, no different from a child or sibling. Yet, for years, their food was an afterthought—cheap kibble packed with fillers. Now, that's changing. Companies like Kamihata Fish Industry Group and AIXIA Corporation are moving beyond basic sustenance, formulating meals with probiotics, vitamins and superfoods. The goal isn't just to feed, but to support long-term health, mirroring the shift in human nutrition.

Hidetaka Amano, president of AIXIA, a pet food manufacturer, disagrees with the traditional Japanese notion that animal food should be considered feed. "It's my belief that pet food is considered food, with the only difference being who's consuming it, whether it's people or pets," he explains. For that reason, both AIXIA and Kamihata are committed to maintaining the highest standards of safety and quality. President Michiko Kamihata of Kamihata, a leader in ornamental fish care, explains that performance and safety go hand in hand, especially when caring for people's beloved pets. With shifting demographics, a rise in single-person households, and changing household priorities, Japan is seeing an increase in pet ownership, especially in the wake of the Covid-19 pandemic.

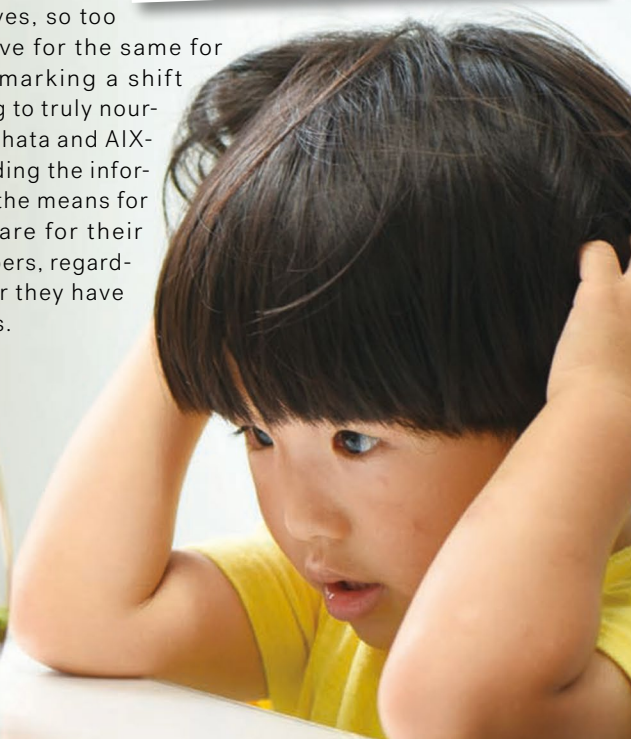
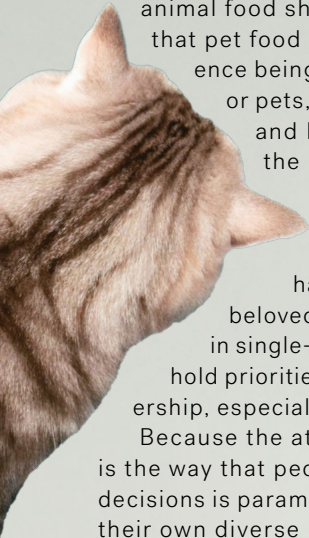
Because the attitude towards pets has shifted, so too is the way that people care for them and making informed decisions is paramount to this care. Like humans, pets have their own diverse needs in their balanced diets. AIXIA's "i CARE" food empowers pet owners to make informed decisions on providing for their cats' health. After its market

research revealed that people had difficulty understanding the necessity or benefits of products, Aixia created food for specific purposes such as hydration or allergies. Mr. Amano says that he wants people to be aware of what they are feeding their

pets and through AIXIA, he hopes to educate people while understanding the needs and challenges that they face. "We have a collaboration with university professors, and we have an in-house veterinarian, so we are constantly updating our knowledge and spreading that information to pet owners."

Kamihata adheres to the same philosophy of creating food that contributes to the wellness of ornamental fish. Saki-Hikari became a global hit and the de facto standard for care as the "world's first probiotic food for ornamental fish care." Ms. Kamihata says that Saki-Hikari and Hikari-Germ are only one part of Kamihata's product philosophy, and it is constantly iterating its products. "We strive to develop products that are truly needed by the people who raise, sell and breed ornamental fish, as well as the fish themselves," she says. With over 300 formulas, Kamihata's dedication to the health and well-being of ornamental fish is evidenced by its high standards of safety. Keeping the process internal to its own factories, it is the first ornamental fish food manufacturing plant in Japan to acquire ISO 22000 certification.

Pets are no longer just animals in the home—they are family, and their care should reflect that. As people prioritize health in their own lives, so too do they strive for the same for their pets, marking a shift from feeding to truly nourishing. Kamihata and AIXIA are providing the information and the means for people to care for their family members, regardless whether they have fur or scales.



# AIXIA REVOLUTIONIZES PET CARE WITH SAFE, RELIABLE AND IRRESISTIBLY DELICIOUS FOOD

KNOWN FOR PREMIUM, SAFE PET FOOD, THIS JAPANESE MANUFACTURER IS NOW EXPANDING ITS HORIZONS.  
By Daniel de Bomford, Bernard Thompson and Cian O'Neill

**P**ets are family. They bring companionship, healing and joy to people every day, and enrich the lives of those they live who take care of them. Hidetaka Amano, president of pet food manufacturer AIXIA Corporation, considers pet food and human food one and the same. The only difference is who consumes it. Therefore, the same level of care applies. "The best strength of our products is their safety and quality," he says.



[www.aixia.jp](http://www.aixia.jp)

AIXIA was originally founded to upcycle the dark meat for cat food that remains after making cans of white tuna meat. It expanded beyond its initial scope and now offers a diverse array of pet food for cats and dogs. AIXIA's catalogue focuses on health care prod-

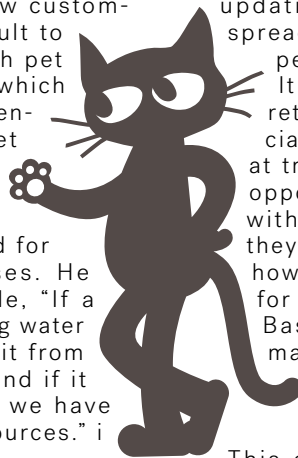


ucts for pets with a focus on safety and quality. Amano says that more Japanese households are choosing to adopt pets in the wake of Covid-19 isolation, as well as an increase of single person households. He explains, "Having pets leads to better mental well-being for these people."

With a focus on the well-being of pets, AIXIA has launched the i CARE series, to assist in clarifying the benefits of different food. Amano describes how customers find it difficult to understand which pet food to pick for which specific health benefit. After market research, they created the i CARE series which is pet food for specific purposes. He gives an example, "If a cat is not drinking water well, then it could benefit from i CARE with hydration, and if it has food allergies, then we have hypoallergenic protein sources." i

CARE was created specifically for the health benefit of cats and there are eight solutions and 12 products with different flavors. It also removed all unnecessary colors and flavors.

An important part of AIXIA's mission is to provide pet owners with educational resources to help improve their pet's quality of life. "We have a collaboration with university professors, and we have an in-house veterinarian, so we are constantly updating our knowledge and spreading that information to pet owners," Amano says. It also communicates with retail workers, through social media and importantly, at tradeshow. "We take the opportunity to communicate with users to listen to what they need from pet food and how they are doing in caring for their pets," he explains. Based on firsthand information in conjunction with academic information, they provide product advice to pet owners.



This communication has led to the development of products like the Kenko-can (health-can) food which focuses on cat-specific conditions such as dehydration, kidney issues and oral care.

As AIXIA looks to expand internationally, it remains steadfast in its mission to provide high-quality food, education and improve the quality of life of pets worldwide to create a better society. Amano emphasizes that good food is essential for pet care. As he puts it, "As with humans, food is an integral part of raising and caring for pets."



**"Through our food, we want to provide happiness to the pets and the pet owners from Japan to Thailand so we can create a happier society."**

**Hidetaka Amano**

President, AIXIA Co., Ltd.



[www.aixia.jp](http://www.aixia.jp)

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