

Nutrition During Lactation

Croney Research Group

Dogs Need an Appropriate Balance and Amount of Nutrients


Energy!!

- Fats
- Proteins
- Carbohydrates

And

- Vitamins
- Minerals

High energy diets (e.g. for early lactation) include greater fat than diets for adult dogs (maintenance diets)



CALORIES and WATER:
the two most important
nutrients for the dam after
whelping!

The production of milk
requires additional
nutrients and clean water
provided at all times

Feeding a Dam After Whelping

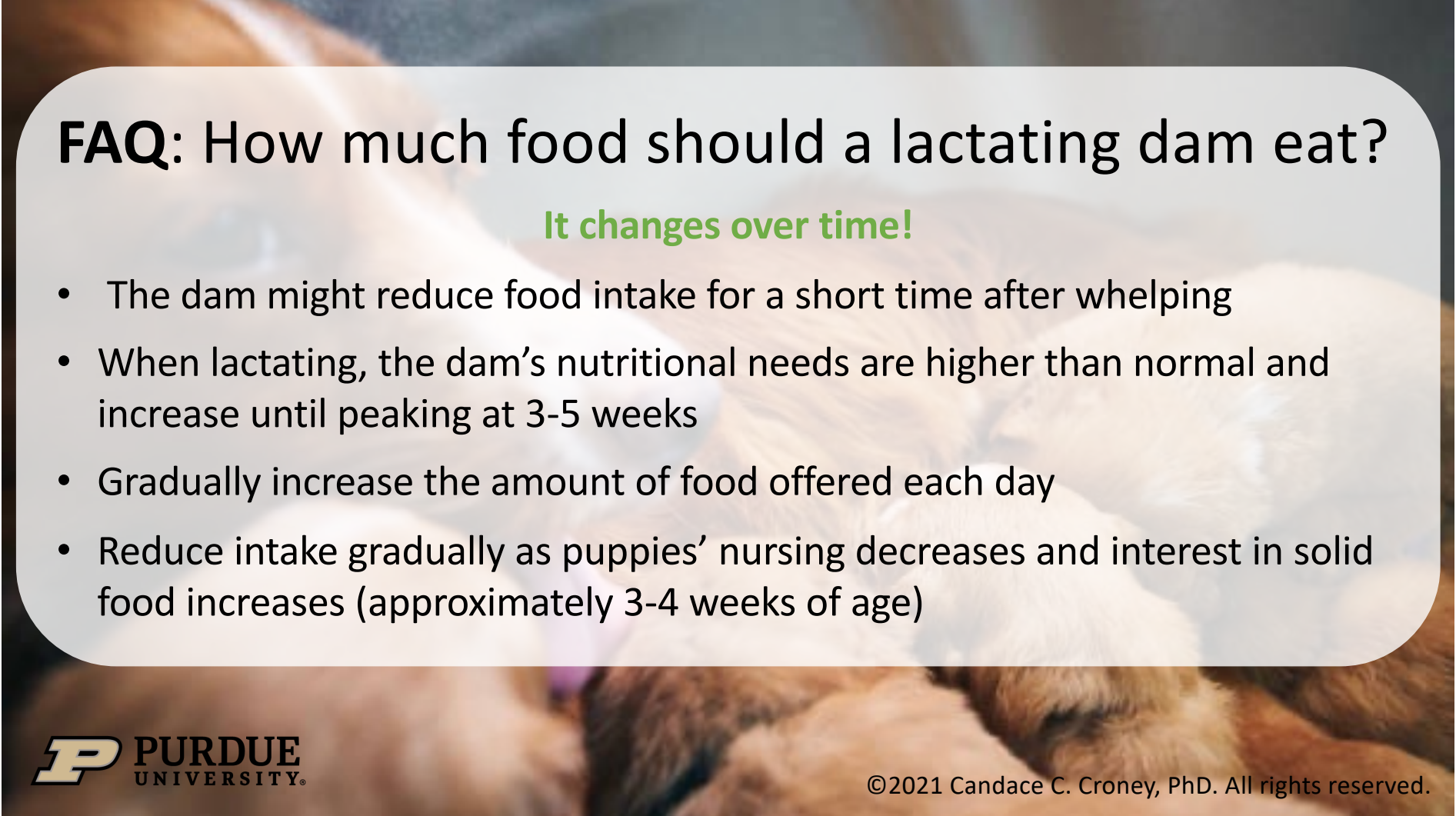
- Provide ample fresh water and food soaked with water to rebuild her energy and fluid levels
- Feed the same highly digestible, high energy puppy food as during gestation through lactation and for at least 3 weeks after weaning



The Dam's Increasing Nutritional Needs

- Week 1: 150-200%
- Week 2: 200%
- Weeks 3-5: 250-300%
(for larger litters this may increase to 500%!)
- Week 6: 250%
- Week 7-8: 125%

Note: The dam should be only 5-10% above her pre-breeding normal weight



FAQ: How much food should a lactating dam eat?

It changes over time!

- The dam might reduce food intake for a short time after whelping
- When lactating, the dam's nutritional needs are higher than normal and increase until peaking at 3-5 weeks
- Gradually increase the amount of food offered each day
- Reduce intake gradually as puppies' nursing decreases and interest in solid food increases (approximately 3-4 weeks of age)



Learn More:

- [At-a-Glance Nutrition Application](#)
- [At-a-Glance Adult Nutrition](#)
- [At-a-Glance Nutrition During Gestation](#)
- [At-a-Glance Puppy Nutrition](#)
- [Implications of weaning age for dog welfare](#)