

Experts and Innovators Gather for Purina's Better with Pets Summit To Explore the Future of Pet Care

The fourth annual summit in Brooklyn, New York celebrated the evolving pet and owner bond, showcased the latest in pet care and wellness advancements, and revealed a new nutritional blend that will help improve and extend the lives of senior cats

BROOKLYN, N.Y., Oct. 19, 2016 /[PRNewswire](#)/ -- Nestlé Purina, a global leader in pet care, hosted its fourth annual Better with Pets Summit at the Brooklyn Expo Center in New York City on Tuesday, October 18, bringing together pet community experts and leaders across the nation to explore how pets and people are living bigger and better lives thanks to new research and innovation that will shape the future of pet care.

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Featuring three interactive panel discussions, the Better with Pets Summit examined topics that continue to affect pet care and wellness including the evolving role of pets and their impact on people's well-being, nutritional innovation that will allow pets to live healthier lives, and demystifying pet nutrition quality and safety standards.

"At Purina, we use our scientific resources and passion to give pets bigger lives and in return, help improve quality of life for pets and people," said Nina Leigh Krueger, president at Purina U.S. for Nestlé Purina PetCare Company. "For four years now the Better with Pets Summit has showcased the latest advancements of the pet care community and raised awareness of topics that are fundamental to the well-being of pets and people. By bringing together the brightest minds and helping encourage these conversations to take place, we are working to create a better future for our pets."

At the summit, Purina also revealed that after a nine-year longevity study, the company's research team has developed a proprietary nutritional blend proven to improve and extend the lives of cats ages seven and older. Purina's latest product innovation can be found in Purina Pro Plan Prime Plus™ and will be available starting in early 2017.

Purina also announced it is teaming up with Mayo Clinic on a study the clinic is leading to measure the benefits of animal assisted therapy as a way to reduce pain and depression while improving quality of life in patients with fibromyalgia.

Leaders and experts examine top themes in pet care

A wide range of expert panelists gave the audience a unique perspective through their knowledge and experiences. These individuals included scientists from top research facilities, veterinarians, therapists, and executives from national organizations who are leading the

charge in improving the lives of pets and the people who love them. The three panels and featured panelists were:

- **Demystifying Pet Nutrition Quality and Safety** : Expert panelists discussed the effort, rigor and transparency that goes into the creation and distribution of pet food, and how pet foods are among the most regulated products on the market. Panelists included:

John Bear, the head of manufacturing for Purina; Shaun Kennedy, a University of Minnesota professor who has served as director of the National Center for Food Protection and Defense; and Steve Dale, a noted animal behavior consultant and host of the popular radio show, Pet World;

- **Why a Passion for Pets Builds a Better World** : This panel discussed how connecting pets and people builds stronger communities that will improve the health and well-being of pets and people, and ultimately shape a better world. Panelists included:

Flip Becker with St. Louis Children's Hospital, which recently opened the Purina Family Pet Center to allow patients to bring their pets to the hospital for visits; Nathaniel Fields, CEO of Urban Resource Institute, an organization that is committed to helping victims of domestic violence find a safe haven with their pets, and that on Oct. 12 opened the third Purina Pet Haven pet park at one of its New York-area shelters in Harlem; Dr. Brent Bauer, a Mayo Clinic researcher who discussed how pets can help the healing process for people; and Joanne Yohannon with North Shore Animal League America, an NYC-based pet shelter which offers a wide range of adoption, foster care and collaborative pet lifesaving efforts;

- **The Science of Innovative Nutrition for Pets** : This panel explored how nutrition has the power to help manage certain health conditions to enable better lives and secure a better future for pets. Panelists included:

Renowned veterinarians Dr. Steve Ettinger (author and founder of Berkeley Veterinary Medical Group); Dr. Lisa Freeman (professor at Tufts Cummings School of Veterinary Medicine); Dr. Joe Wakshlag (professor at Cornell College of Veterinary Medicine); and Dr. Steve Hannah (director of molecular nutrition for Nestlé Purina);

"I learn something new that will benefit pets every year at the Better with Pets Summit," said Marty Becker, DVM and who is known as "America's Veterinarian." "I greatly appreciate Purina bringing these industry experts together, and providing a platform for engaging and relevant discussions that will make a difference in the lives of our pets."

In addition to the panel discussions and in partnership with North Shore Animal League America, summit attendees also had the opportunity to play with adoptable dogs and cats and learn about pet therapy curriculums from NSALA, including its Mutt-i-Grees program.

Making a difference for pets

Purina also honored key leaders and innovators in the pet industry who have made a difference in the lives of pets and their owners, including Kevin Li. Li, co-founder of PlayDate, a remote-controlled ball that enables users to play with their dogs or cats from any location, was presented with the Emerging Growth Award for his work in helping pets and their owners stay connected in an interactive, meaningful way. In addition, Purina announced the new Pet Care Innovation Prize, which was developed to advance the ambitions of passionate pet care entrepreneurs to improve the lives of pets and pet owners and help grow the pet care industry. Entrepreneurs have submitted entries, and winners will be announced in late 2016.

For more information about the Better with Pets Summit, visit www.purina.com/better-with-

[pets/summit.](#)

About Nestlé Purina PetCare

Nestlé Purina PetCare Company is a global leader in the pet care industry. Nestlé Purina PetCare promotes responsible pet care, community involvement and the positive bond between people and their pets. A premiere global manufacturer of pet products, Nestlé Purina PetCare is part of Swiss-based Nestlé S.A., a global leader in nutrition, health and wellness.

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