The ice cream company Ben & Jerry’s is entering the pet food business for the first time with frozen treats for dogs. The treats, called Doggie Desserts, will be available for sale at U.S. food and pet stores later this month.

The treats will be sold in small containers and come in two tastes, or flavors: pumpkin with cookies and peanut butter with pretzels. The treats are made from the same products Ben & Jerry’s uses in milk-free desserts.

Ben & Jerry’s is the latest food company to start making products for pets. The number of American households with pets rose 6.5 percent between 2015 and 2020. That information comes from the trade group American Pet Products Association.


Spending on dog treats has increased 44 percent to $5.5 billion between 2015 and 2020, the data company Euromonitor reports.

Ben & Jerry’s says people 40 years of age and younger spend more money on their pets and look for pet products made with materials that even humans can eat.
Lindsay Bumps is a marketing specialist with Ben & Jerry’s. She said the company had seen the growth in pet spending and started developing its dog treats early last year. Bumps added that the company checked with experts in animal nutrition and other advisors to make sure the treats are safe and easy to eat.

Bumps noted that as with any treat, owners should introduce the treats to their dogs in small amounts.

The move to pet products does not mean Ben & Jerry’s is seeing any sales decrease on the human side. Unilever, which owns Ben & Jerry’s, said in October that its ice cream sales for home use grew more than 10 percent in the most recent quarter. Bumps noted that buyers wanted tasty treats during the pandemic and bought several containers at a time so they could make fewer food store trips.

She said, “This is an opportunity for people to treat their dogs as they’re treating themselves when they grab a pint off the shelf.”

I’m Jonathan Evans.

Dee-Ann Durbin wrote this story for the Associated Press. Jonathan Evans adapted this story for Learning English. Ashley Thompson was the editor.

Words in This Story

flavors – n. particular types of taste

household - n. the people in a family or other group that are living together in one house

opportunity – n. an amount of time or a situation in which something can be done

pets – n. tame animals kept as companions rather than for work

pint – n. a unit for measuring liquids that is equal to 0.473 liters
shelf – n. a flat board which is attached to a wall, frame, etc., and on which objects can be placed