

Look after your pets – and look after the planet?

You may have seen the press reports a few weeks ago: a UK pet food manufacturer is launching a dog food product that is 40 percent insect—soldier flies, to be precise. However, feeding flies to Fido isn't the only way that we can help to conserve energy and reduce carbon emissions.

From an environmental perspective, the flies-as-food idea is to help combat climate change by avoiding beef from cattle fed on soya grown in Brazilian plantations that have been cleared from rainforest.

With pets estimated to eat around 20 percent of global meat, this soya is “responsible for the release of greenhouse gases in significant quantities,” said BBC News in its article ‘Climate change: Will insect-eating dogs help?’ (www.bbc.co.uk/news/science-environment-46811358)

So could this initiative really help to protect the planet, as yet another way to “go green”?

With other companies already using fly protein in their pet food, this latest product is from a UK start-up company. The insect grubs are fed on food waste in the Netherlands.



The idea, in fact, goes back quite a while. In 2014, for example, PetfoodIndustry.com reported that a Dutch manufacturer had launched a dog food using insects as its only animal source of protein. (www.petfoodindustry.com/articles/4328) With similar products possible for cats, it remains to be seen if pet owners take these new products to their hearts.

Feeding flies to our four-footed friends, however, isn't the only way that we can help conserve energy and protect the planet—while also paying less for the energy we do use.

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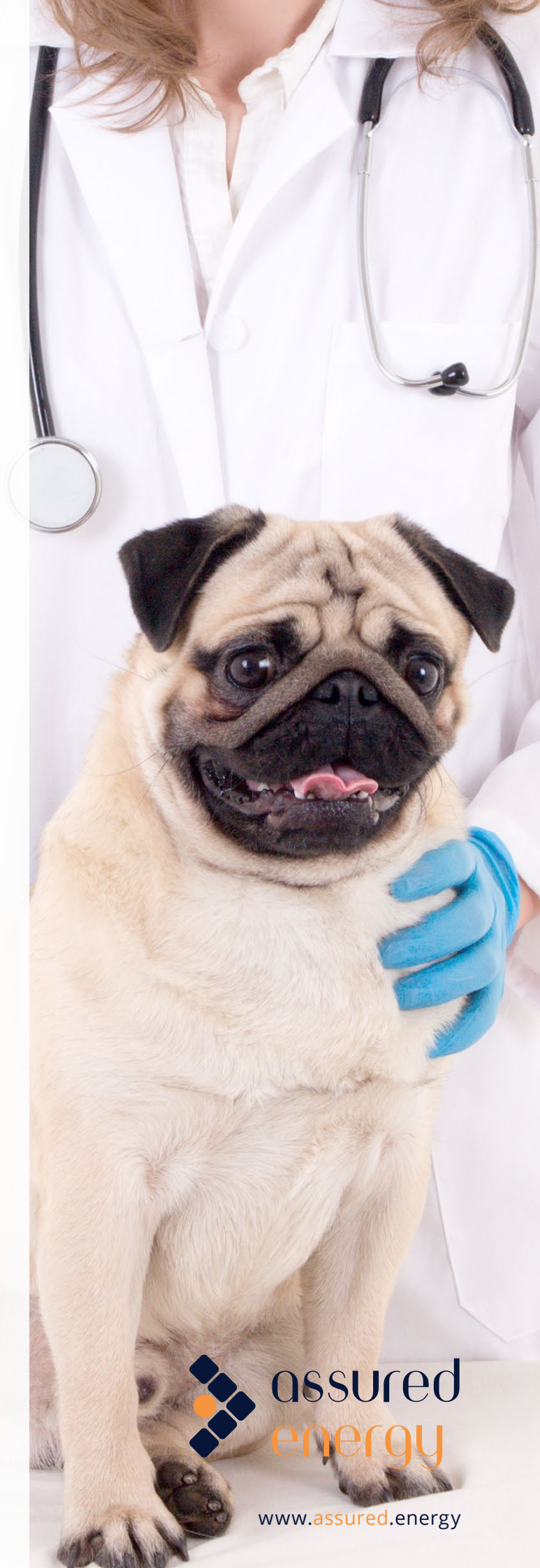
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