EUKANUBA CELEBRATES 50TH BIRTHDAY

The year was 1969, and headlines were ablaze with Neil Armstrong’s moonwalk, Woodstock and, alas, bell-bottomed trousers. Meanwhile, Paul Iams founded a premium dog food company that he named Eukanuba. Competitors wondered, “who in their right mind would double production costs while dramatically increasing prices at retail?” Paul Iams, that’s who. His customers loved the product so much that the brand is today celebrating a half-century of research-based, high-quality sporting dog food.

The process of making great dog food ran in Paul Iams’ blood. The Ohio native had one major takeaway from his Depression-era pet food sales career: despite massive economic hardships, owners continued to buy dog food.

World War II forced Iams’ attention on service with the United States Navy, but following his honorable discharge, he resumed work. In 1946 he launched the Iams Company, a manufacturer of pet food. Cost dictated dog food production, and virtually all kibble was produced from a variety of inexpensive grains and vegetables.

Iams sold such foods, but kept wondering about the value of premium dog food. He reasoned that to perform at a high level, sporting and working dogs required more protein and fat. Research led him to study kibble made from the highest-quality meat and, in 1969, the Eukanuba brand was born.

Iams knew Eukanuba would serve a niche market, so he created an innovative distribution platform. Sales were to specialty feed stores and veterinarian offices. His target audience of hunters, ranchers and farmers frequented those venues, and they loved the product. Their dogs had plenty of energy, increased muscle stabilization, better health and coats, and the company thrived.

Throughout the brand’s history, Eukanuba changed ownership several times. Business partner Clay Matilde bought Iams’ assets in 1982. In 1999, Matilde sold the company to Procter & Gamble, which in 2014, sold Eukanuba to Mars, Inc. In honor of their half-century milestone, Eukanuba is returning to their sporting dog roots.

Eukanuba continues to manufacture products based on scientific-research from their industry-unique Pet Health and Nutrition Center. Every chemist, biologist, nutritionist and research assistant in the Dayton, Ohio research center is focused on providing the very best nutrition to hunting, working and house dogs. Even the company’s unique name speaks to quality, for it comes from the legendary songwriter and jazz singer Hoagy Carmichael.

Eukanuba means “of supreme quality.” Happy 50th birthday, Eukanuba.

—Tom Keer