

Lions and tigers and bears, oh my!

DICK VAN PATTEN'S ANIMAL ATTRACTION

AFTER his hit family show *Eight is Enough*, Dick Van Patten went to the dogs...and the cats and the birds and even the lions, too!

The 74-year-old actor - who played father-of-eight Tom Bradford on the late '70s series - turned entrepreneur, manufacturing a line of healthy pet foods, which is now sold worldwide.

"We're even supplying the San Diego Zoo, which is one of the biggest zoos in the world!" Van Patten tells GLOBE.

"We feed their polar bears, lions, tigers, birds - we have different formulas for each kind of animal. We even have a reptile formula for their snakes."

It all began with Dick Van Patten's Natural Balance in 1989. With its low-fat, low-cholesterol formula, Natural Balance is considered a healthy alternative to commercial pet foods.

"It gives me such a thrill when people come to me and say, 'My pet is a finicky

eater, but he loves your food!'" says Van Patten.

Only recently did he start catering to wild creatures. Van Patten says his Natural Balance Zoological Formulas are researched by leading zoo animal nutritionists. Even movie star Tippi Hedren - Melanie Griffith's animal-loving mom - uses it to feed the exotic critters at her California animal refuge.

Lifelong pet advocate Van Patten says he was inspired to create his own line of animal food after finding an injured kitten and nursing it back to health.

He explains, "Making pets happy and healthy is a way to repay them for all the happiness they've given me in my life."

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Gone to the dogs:
Dick's pet food is a hit



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