

Diets for Pet Birds



Pet birds should be fed high quality, low fat, moderate protein, and moderate carbohydrate diets. Seeds, nuts, pasta, starch beans, bread and other grains are not a balanced diet for your bird. Diets based on seeds lack essential vitamins, minerals, and proteins necessary for health. Just because these are marketed as “bird food” does not make them a good diet for your bird.

Pelleted diets are now available in many sizes, shapes, colors and formulations for pet birds. These do contain adequate protein, vitamins and minerals for most pet birds. Your avian veterinarian may recommend additional nutrition items if your bird is laying eggs, raising chicks or is a young, growing bird. Pelleted diets are designed to provide 70-80% of a bird’s daily diet, with the additional nutrition as well as environmental enrichment from fresh fruits and vegetables.

Remember that it is better to provide small amounts of a variety of produce rather than a larger amount of just one or two “favored”

items. Birds, like people, tend to pick out their favorites and leave other foods that may be better for them nutritionally. Addition of non-green beans, nuts, seeds, breads, cereals, pasta, rice, grains, cake, cookies, candy, corn, potatoes, or other starchy vegetables should not be fed as these items decrease the value of the protein, vitamins, and minerals balanced in the pellets. Birds will eat far too much carbohydrate and fats if these are fed in addition to pellets and produce.

Fruits and vegetables should always be of good “human” food quality, washed, and preferably free of preservatives, processing chemicals, and pesticides. Produce should also not be salted, cooked in oils or fats or fried. Birds, like humans, need to minimize their intake of fats, oils, and salt to maintain a healthy heart!

Avocado (even in combination with other ingredients such as in guacamole) should not be fed to any bird – it is toxic!

Appropriate Non-Starchy Vegetables:

artichoke, asparagus, beans (green, wax, Italian, lima), bean sprouts, beets, broccoli, Brussels sprouts, cabbage, carrots, cauliflower, celery, cucumber, eggplant, greens (chard, collard, kale, mustard, turnip), jicama, leeks, okra, onions, pea pods, peppers (green, yellow, red bell)

Evergreen Avian & Exotic Animal Hospital
425-821-6165
www.exopet.com
Kirkland, WA

radishes, salad greens (endive, escarole, leaf lettuce (not iceberg/head), romaine, spinach), summer squash (crookneck, yellow), tomatoes, turnips, water chestnuts, zucchini). It is best to offer small quantities of a variety of different vegetables, chopped together to encourage foraging.



Fruits: Stone fruits need to have stones/pits removed prior to offering these to your bird: apricot, plum, peach, prune, cherries, dates. Citrus fruits may cause diarrhea as they may have astringent qualities. Other fruits such as banana, papaya, kiwi, mango, pear, apple, grapes, starfruit, pineapple, melons, berries, pomegranates are often enjoyed but may cause discolored droppings. Edible flowers such as nasturtium, pansy or hibiscus may be enjoyed provided they are washed and contain no pesticides.

Your veterinarian will determine the appropriate quantities of pellets, fruits, vegetables for your bird.

For your bird: _____
