

# Feeding your small parrot

Cockatiels • Budgies • Princess Parrots • Canaries • Lovebirds • Quaker Parrots •  
Conures • Finches



Feeding your small parrot a complete and balanced diet is essential to their wellbeing and longevity. To prevent deficiencies and health problems there is a variety of foods that may be offered.

You should offer your parrot a variety of fresh fruit and vegetables on a daily basis. A higher ratio of vegetables to fruit should be fed due to the relatively high sugar content of many fruits. The following list gives examples of raw fruits and vegetables that can be fed:

- Dark green, leafy vegetables, including bok choy, silverbeet and endive (Do not feed lettuce as this can cause digestive upset)
- Broccoli, cauliflower, beans and snow peas
- Carrot, pumpkin, sweet corn and sweet potato (may be fed raw or parboiled)
- Sprouted seeds – alfalfa, mung beans, or a pre-packaged fresh sprouted seed mix from the supermarket or green grocer
- Small amount of fruit including apples, oranges, bananas, pears and stone fruit
- Fresh water should be available to your parrot at all times
- Avoid rhubarb, avocado, and chocolate as they are toxic

In addition to the above listed foods, table foods such as boiled egg, wholemeal rice and pasta (cooked) and beans and legumes (lentils) may be offered occasionally in small quantities. Avoid foods high in salt or fat.



Small parrots commonly suffer from obesity and vitamin and mineral deficiencies. To ensure you have a fit and healthy parrot, it is suggested that you feed a complete and balanced diet in limited quantities. Avoid free access to seed as your parrot may tend to pick and choose its favourite seeds and avoid eating the others. Parrots should be offered extremely limited quantities of sunflower seeds due to the very high fat content. Avoid black coloured sunflower seeds and only choose high quality grey striped seeds.

Small parrots are often fed on all or nearly all seed diets. Many of the seeds found in parrot mixes contain 50% fat and are deficient in nearly all vitamins and minerals and some proteins. It is the bird equivalent of eating fast food all day, every day! A diet of seeds (even if they are vitamin fortified) simply does not meet the basic nutritional requirements of our companion birds. A pet bird that eats a seed diet is not getting all the nutrients it needs to remain healthy. Common cereal grains in seed diets include sunflower, millet, oats, safflower and corn which are deficient in at least 32 essential nutrients and are often contaminated by pesticides and preservatives.

Obesity and vitamin and mineral deficiencies lead to many serious diseases such as cancer, fatty liver, egg binding, diabetes, weak bones and heart disease. To prevent these problems we recommend monitoring the food intake of your parrot and advise annual health checks for your bird.