

BIRD - DIET

NUTRITION

Thankfully traditional ideas of seed only diets for birds are changing. Seeds can be a moderate component of a healthy avian diet. The problem is that seeds are addictive for birds and even diets that mix seeds with bits of dried fruit and veggies are often ineffective because the bird simply discards the non-seed parts of this diet. People often mistakenly take comfort by the claim that the outside of the seed hulls are coated with vitamins. The seed hulls and their vitamins invariably end up as a mess on the bottom of the cage.

Species of birds that should still be fed a seed based diet are canaries, finches, budgies and cockatiels. I recommend La Feber's nutriberries as the main staple for budgies and cockatiels. These "berries" are actually balls of seeds which have been hulled and then all of the vitamins and minerals that are missing from a traditional seed diet are included in the "glue" that holds the seeds into the shape of a ball. I find that with a little patience, perseverance and advice even the worst sunflower addicts can be converted to this diet. To the nutriberries a wide variety of fruits,

vegetables and healthy table scraps should be added. Most birds need to see a new food item many times before they will consider trying it out. Please be persistent in offering fresh food choices. Try offering the new food item in the morning before the seed staple is offered so they are hungry and motivated to try it. Healthy table scraps are important for environmental enrichment as well as nutritive value.

Birds larger than cockatiels should be fed a high quality pelleted diet with plenty of fresh food variety. The best one available in the pet store is Hagan Tropicana pellets. We sell [Harrison's](#) pellets which are accepted by avian veterinarians to be by far the most palatable and well formulated pellet. We have to import these pellets from the States so they tend to be a little pricey but well worth it. See our links to check out Harrison's website.

Change food and water daily. Fresh fruits and other perishables should be removed after a few hours.



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