

FEEDING SPROUTED SEEDS

Providing a nutritionally balanced, diverse diet to a parrot can be challenging. The general recommendation is to feed 80% pelleted (formulated diet) with the rest of the diet comprising fruits, vegetables, nuts and a very small amount of high quality seed as treats/training rewards.

Sprouted seeds can provide a high quality protein source for your bird and also adds variety to the diet.

Almost any raw seeds can be sprouted. Examples include oats, rice and other grains/cereals, peas, beans, lentils and oil seeds such as sunflower and safflower seeds. Buy a variety from your local health food shop and see which your bird likes best. Alternatively, ready to soak mixes are available from some online suppliers (www.northernparrots.com)

Sprouting seeds can be broken down into two main steps:

1. Soaking the seeds to start the germination process
2. Rinsing the seeds to encourage healthy growth as they begin to sprout

Rinse the beans well before soaking overnight. Some will start sprouting in 24 hours, others will need 2-3 days. Rinse them a couple of times after their overnight soak then leave them in an open topped jar to start sprouting. Rinse and drain them twice daily during the sprouting process. They can be fed to your bird any time after the overnight soak and within a few days to ensure they remain fresh.

Sprouted seeds can be fed as a treat or used as enrichment for your bird, aim to feed them approximately 2-3 times per week.