Bearded Dragon Diet Requirements

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meats & plants for bearded dragons

Your Bearded Dragon is an omnivore, meaning that he needs a balanced diet of meat and vegetable matter. A hatchling dragon will eat mostly small insects. As your dragon grows, he will start to eat more vegetable matter. The diet of a juvenile dragon (2-4 months of age) will consist of approximately 80% insects and 20% greens. Young dragons should be fed 2-3 times daily. If insufficient food is fed, young dragons may nip at the tails and toes of their cage mates.

Meat food sources for your Bearded Dragon can include pinky mice (for adults) and insects such as:

- Crickets; pinhead crickets for juveniles
- Mealworms
- Wax worms - high in fat, so feed sparingly
- King worms
- Earthworms
- Cockroaches

Freshly molted insects are easier for your Bearded Dragon to digest. You should coat feeder insects with a calcium supplement (powdered calcium carbonate or calcium gluconate) 3-5 times per week for adults; every day for juveniles. Feeder insects should also be "gut-loaded," which means the insects are fed nutritious and vitamin-rich foods before they are given to the dragon. Feed your feeder insects food such as: ground legumes, corn meal, carrots, sweet potatoes, collard greens, mustard greens, broccoli, spinach, apples, oranges, cereals, and rolled oats. Several commercial products, formulated to be rich in calcium and vitamins, may also be used to gut-load feeder insects. Insects may be purchased or wild-caught (without the use of pesticides).

Feed insects by placing them in a small bowl. After feeding, check that none of the insects escaped and fouled the water supply in the cage. You can also use a specially designed feeder rock, which allows insects to feed, but not escape until you're ready to feed your dragon. To improve hygiene, some owners prefer to have a separate cage for feeding the meat-based portion of their dragon's diet.

Did You Know?
Fireflies are poisonous to Bearded Dragons, other reptiles, amphibians, and birds.

Meat Food Sources

Be sure the size of food you feed is proportional to your dragon's size. Malnourishment, seizures, and intestinal blockages can occur if hatchlings and juveniles are fed insects too large for them to capture or digest.

Plant Food Sources

Plant matter should make up approximately 20% of your dragon's diet and should consist

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mainly of green leafy vegetables. You may also include other vegetables. Fruit should make up the smallest portion of the diet. Shred or tear vegetables and fruits into small pieces and mix them together to encourage your dragon to eat all that is offered, and not just pick out his favorite foods. Following is a list of some popular plant-based dragon foods.

Greens	Vegetables	Fruit
• escarole • kale • collards • parsley • clover • dandelion greens • turnip greens • mustard greens • beet greens-only occasionally • spinach-only occasionally • **NEVER** iceberg lettuce	• broccoli • okra • peas • green beans • zucchini • squash • grated carrots • sweet potato • bell pepper • frozen mixed vegetables	• figs • kiwi • papaya • melon • apples • grapes • dates • peaches • apricots • strawberries (seeds removed) • plums • bananas (peeled)

Prepared Diets

Prepared diets are fortified with optimal levels of vitamins and minerals so no other food supplements are required.

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