

# THE BULLETIN BIRD

DECEMBER 2025

HARRISON'S BIRD FOODS NEWSLETTER

Behind the Scenes...

## WHOLE INGREDIENTS

By Bianca Murphy, DVM, Dipl ABVP (Avian)

Using whole ingredients when formulating nuggets for parrots preserves the natural nutritional complexity and bioavailability of vitamins, minerals, and phytonutrients that can be lost in heavily processed alternatives. Whole grains, seeds, and plant materials retain their fiber matrices and enzyme cofactors, supporting optimal digestion and nutrient absorption in avian digestive systems. This whole-food approach mirrors the diverse, unprocessed diet parrots would encounter in their natural habitats, promoting better long-term health outcomes and vitality.



## You May Not Know

### EGG LAYING

By Bianca Murphy, DVM, Dipl ABVP (Avian)

Egg laying in female parrots can occur even without a mate. While occasional eggs may be normal, chronic or excessive egg laying poses serious health risks, including calcium depletion, egg binding, and metabolic exhaustion that can be life-threatening. Egg production is an extremely metabolically expensive process that places enormous nutritional demands on a hen's body, requiring significantly increased calcium and energy to produce each egg safely. If your bird is laying eggs as a breeder, switching to Harrison's High Potency formula is essential to provide the elevated nutritional support needed to sustain her body through this demanding physiological process. Beyond proper nutrition, it's important to discourage chronic laying in pet birds by removing nesting materials, rearranging the cage, and consulting with an avian veterinarian about hormonal triggers and safe management strategies and helpful nutrition adjustments to ensure they are supported.



## A BRIEF FOCUS

### WEIGHT LOSS

By Jan Hooimeijer, DVM

Weight loss after switching to a High Potency formula isn't always concerning. Loss of excess fat while developing strong pectoral muscles represents positive body re-composition, not nutritional inadequacy. Working with your avian veterinarian to distinguish between unhealthy weight loss and improved body composition when evaluating formula changes is important to ensure optimal health during this process.



## An Interesting Tidbit

### MOLTING PATTERNS

By Jan Hooimeijer, DVM

Molt cycles happen twice a year and provide objective assessment opportunities for nutritional adequacy. Poor feather quality during wing and tail feather replacement may indicate inadequate dietary support, regardless of which formula a bird is currently eating. Changes in molting patterns can also indicate underlying disease.



It is crucial to monitor feather quality, as, depending on many factors, some birds may benefit from temporary or permanent High Potency feeding.

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