

THE BULLETIN

BIRD

FEBRUARY 2026

HARRISON'S BIRD FOODS NEWSLETTER

You May Not Know...

Harrison's Bird Foods has renewed a \$25,000 Partnership with Texas A&M Brightsmith Lab for Wild Parrot Nutrition Research and its field research branch, The Macaw Society.



Since 2023, this collaboration has advanced understanding of wild parrot foraging behavior, clay lick use, and macaw reproduction in southeastern Peru's Tambopata region. The partnership also facilitates product efficacy work and public education on the benefits of formulated avian diets. In 2025 alone, The Macaw Society's social media posts acknowledging Harrison's reached nearly 150,000 views.

Harrison's Bird Foods looks forward to the continued insights from this partnership and its contributions to both wild parrot conservation and captive avian nutrition.



From The Doctor's Desk

By Bianca Murphy, DVM, Dipl ABVP (Avian)

Daily exposure to natural sunlight is crucial for parrots because unfiltered UVB rays enable them to synthesize vitamin D3, which is essential for calcium absorption, bone health, immune function, and over-all vitality that cannot be fully replicated by indoor lighting.



Spending time near an open window or, better yet, supervised outdoor time allows parrots to benefit from natural sunlight while also providing mental stimulation and environmental enrichment. If taking your parrot outside, always ensure they are secured in a carrier or wearing a properly fitted harness to prevent escape, provide access to shade so they can regulate their body temperature, and never leave them unattended to protect them from predators, extreme weather, and other dangers.

Behind The Scenes

Why nugget size may vary

Some degree of nugget size variation within the same size category (e.g., Fine) is normal and acceptable. Harrison's nuggets are produced using a cooked extrusion process with certified organic whole food ingredients, and natural variation can occur between production runs due to factors such as individual ingredient characteristics, moisture levels at extrusion, and cutting behavior at the die.

From a feeding perspective, our size categories (Super Fine, Fine, Coarse) are intended to guide overall suitability, not to guarantee identical nugget dimensions from one lot to the next. This is particularly true for organic, minimally processed diets, where tighter cosmetic uniformity would require additional processing steps. While such processing can produce more uniform pieces, it is not better for avian health and does not support normal ventriculus function.



An Interesting Tidbit

By Toni Kim, DVM Candidate, Class of 2027, University of Illinois College of Veterinary Medicine, Non-Traditional Species Club (President), Harrison's Bird Foods (Senior Student Ambassador)



The Wild Minds Veterinary Symposium (WMVS) 2026 was recently held at the University of Illinois College of Veterinary Medicine. Hosted by the Non-Traditional Species Club, this student-organized conference was dedicated to inspiring and educating those interested in zoological and wildlife medicine, research, and conservation, with the primary goals of broadening clinical exposure, fostering mentorship, and connecting veterinary students with others who share these interests.

Offered in a hybrid format with in-person and virtual attendance options, WMVS was accessible to over 85 registrants from across the country and abroad, with 17 veterinary schools represented. The two-day program featured a diverse lineup of expert-led lectures and interactive sessions with distinguished avian speakers. The weekend concluded with a lively wildlife trivia session, featuring categories ranging from Animals in Media to ZooMed Veterinary Techniques.

The symposium was made possible through the generous support of Harrison's Bird Foods and the Association of Avian Veterinarians (AAV) Student Chapter Grant.

Toxin Alert for Humans



Dangerous Flowers

With recent celebrations of Valentine's Day, people often give flowers as a symbol of love without realizing that those bouquets may be coated in toxic pesticides. Unlike food, flowers are not regulated for pesticide residues, meaning there is no limit to how much poison can be left on a single bouquet including chemicals banned on food crops.

These chemicals put farmworkers and florists at risk of serious health problems, including cancer and birth defects.

The Guardian - Life and Style, theguardian.com
Organic Consumers Association, OCA.org

