

HOW TO MAKE BEANS/RICE/VEGGIES MIX FOR BIRDS

This is how I make my beans/rice/veggies mix. This makes a large bowl, and I freeze it in small portions to be taken out of the freezer as needed.

RICE: Make a batch of rice using 1 cup rice and following package directions. Brown rice is better, but white will do if that's what you have on hand.

BEANS: I vary this. I sometimes use a package of mixed dry beans, which are intended for soup. I think it's a "7 bean soup" combination. If I use this, I rinse them in a pot, then cover with water to a couple inches over the beans. Bring to a boil and cook at a low boil for about 90 minutes, till tender. You will probably have to add more water during cooking. As an alternate, I use canned beans. Pinto and black beans are great, and the birds really like both of these. For the size batch I make, two cans works out well. I rinse the beans before adding to the mixture.

VEGGIES: I buy mixed veggies that contain peas, corn, carrots, and green beans. At BJ's Wholesale Club they carry these in the freezer section in a big bag that contains 3 individual 2-pound bags. I use one of the individual bags, and microwave the veggies for about 9 minutes in a bowl (adding no water and covering with a paper plate).

Ok, so those are the components. To put it all together, I use a very big bowl. I drain the veggies, since there is usually a bit of moisture on the bottom of the bowl. I rinse the canned beans and drain them, or if using the cooked dry beans I drain those well. I also add warm water to the pot of cooked rice and then drain that. The reason for the latter is that cooked rice is rather sticky and I've found the birds don't like it as well. So even though rinsing may be getting rid of some of the nutrients, if they won't eat it they aren't getting ANY nutrients, so I've decided to go with the rinsing.

All 3 ingredients are added to the large bowl and gently mixed. It looks quite tasty when it's all done! To freeze this in manageable containers, I use small soft-margarine containers that I save for this purpose. I line up 7 of them on the counter and divide the mix up amongst them. Usually I get 6 to freeze and a partial container that goes into the fridge for immediate use. Snap the lids in place and put the containers into freezer bag(s) and into the freezer.

I feed this to all my birds, even the finches and canaries, at least a couple times a week, usually alternating with eggfood. I have quite a few birds, so one of the containers lasts me for a couple feedings, which translates to three days. When I have baby hookbills that are learning to eat or weaning, one container only lasts one day. I warm up enough for one feeding and hand pieces to the parrot babies. After handing them maybe half a dozen pieces, I place the rest in a crock on the floor for them.