

Bearded Dragon Feeding

Bearded Dragon doesn't want to eat his vegetables.

By Margaret A. Wissman, DVM, DABVP

I have a 1-year-old male bearded dragon. He is very healthy and most of the time eats a variety of insects that are dusted with vitamins twice a week. My beardie used to love eating veggies, but when I went on vacation someone started feeding him a brand name bearded dragon pelleted diet. Now he doesn't want to eat his vegetables. Are the bearded dragon pellets better for him?

Well, in the perfect world, beardies would eat a combination of live food, appropriate vegetables and fruits, and a pelleted diet. Many breeders have shown that a pelleted diet, combined with insects and veggies, will enhance and enrich the diet of baby beardies, allowing them to grow optimally.

I hope he is just going through a phase and will decide that he likes veggies again. Technically, a pelleted diet can be balanced and nutritionally complete. Make sure you check the label to see if it is called a complete food or a supplement.

You can also try chopping the vegetables into smaller pieces and mixing in the pelleted diet. Perhaps that will entice your beardie to sample his veggies again.

If he doesn't want to eat his veggies, perhaps you should schedule a trip to see your herp vet to make sure there isn't anything medically wrong with him. I hope he is getting all the nutrients he needs from his insects and pellets, so he doesn't feel the need to eat his veggies. A physical examination, fecal parasite exam and some simple blood tests can help confirm whether he is healthy.

Make sure you are keeping him at the correct temperature range with a focal basking spot of 105 to 110 degrees Fahrenheit, and ensure everything else about his habitat is correct. Try mixing the veggies with the pellets and see what happens. If you feel uncomfortable with his state of health, have him evaluated by a herp vet.

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Need a Herp Vet?

If you are looking for a herp-knowledgeable veterinarian in your area, a good place to start is by checking the list of members on the Association of Reptilian and Amphibian Veterinarian (ARAV) web site at www.arav.com. Look for DVMs who appear to maintain actual veterinary offices that you could contact.