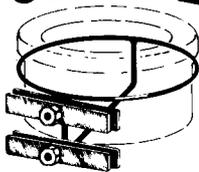


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Medicated Feed Keeps Birds Healthy During Quarantine

"I've never seen my bird look so healthy."

That's the reaction one pet bird owner had when she picked up her newly imported cockatoo at the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Miami, Fla., pet bird quarantine facility a few months ago.

"That reaction is typical of most people whose birds go through the month-long quarantine period," said Elizabeth Beckley of USDA's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service. Beckley is director of the Florida facility.

All birds and poultry entering the United States, except those from Canada, must be quarantined for 30 days to keep exotic Newcastle disease out of this country. This costly foreign viral disease of birds and poultry does not now exist in the United States.

At Mission, Texas, Wilbur Clark runs the USDA import facility for birds abandoned at ports of entry or confiscated by U.S. Customs officials. Clark has been feeding medicated pellets since that facility opened in 1980. He said all birds—several thousand to date—are in top shape when they are released for sale to the public after 60 or more days of quarantine.

"We use tetracycline antibiotic medicated pellets to protect ourselves from psittacosis, which can be transmitted to humans as well as other birds," Clark said. "The pellets maintain the antibiotic at the proper level in the birds' blood, which eliminates psittacosis effectively."

Beckley and Clark said they are happy pellets have replaced the medicated mash that USDA employees had to cook and mix each day. Pellets keep well in air-tight containers, require no refrigeration and eliminate a lot of the mess and bother of cooking and cleaning around the quarantine stations.

USDA stations had been feeding

pellets on an experimental basis because, until now, only medicated mash was authorized by the U.S. Public Health Service's Food and Drug Administration for psittacosis control. Based on the USDA experience, FDA has authorized medicated pellets for general use.

"Many people ask where they can buy the feed we use," Beckley said, "We don't recommend one feed over another, but I tell them that several formulators are turning out acceptable pelleted feed for cage and aviary birds.

"It may take some urging to make pet birds try the medicated pelleted feed," Beckley said. "Young birds are usually so hungry, they'll eat anything we give them. However, with pampered pets, it takes the addition of mashed banana or some similar treat before the birds try the new feed." •

Obituary

CALVIN D. WILSON
Sept. 26, 1983
78 years old

Graduate USC—was curator of Griffith Park Zoo in Los Angeles—founded Tracy Aviaries, Salt Lake City, Utah and was curator there from 1938 through 1975 at which time he retired.

He had his first breeding award with a Red-Vented Cockatoo—had the first cross-breeding of the Blue and Gold Macaw and the Hyacinth Macaw—collected ducks with Dr. J. Delacour—received numerous awards for PTO water fowl—and got the 1980 Gold Award for outstanding achievements in Aviculture. Will be sorely missed!