

Mazuri, The Tortoise Diet That Does It All

Like all foregut and hindgut fermenting herbivores, tortoises will sooner or later get into trouble on a diet that does not contain a high enough level of good quality dietary fiber. Since the vast majority of pet turtle feeds on the market today contain very little fiber, people often jump to the conclusion that it is impossible to make such a diet and so you should never use a pelleted or extruded feed to feed your tortoise.

Luckily this conclusion is far from correct. Both Mazuri[®] Tortoise Diet 5M21 and Mazuri[®] Tortoise Diet 5E06 have more than enough dietary fiber to serve as either the main or the sole food item of your tortoise's diet.

If you look at the specifications for these two diets on the Mazuri[®] web site (www.mazuri.com) you will see that the acid detergent fiber (ADF) level (which nutritionist consider the best measure of dietary fiber for a hindgut fermentor) is 17.5%. This is higher, for example, than the ADF level in the diets fed to most zoo ruminants, or is generally recommended as the nutritional requirement for rabbits and guinea pigs.

It is true that the ADF level in most grass hays is somewhat higher (variable, but typically in the 25% or so range), but 17.5% is far higher than the ADF of leafy greens such as collard greens, turnip greens, mustard greens, etc.. In short, the fiber in Mazuri Tortoise Diet is quite high, and probably considerably higher than in the overall combined diet you are using now.

More importantly, the use of a formula feed extruded particle, coupled with a thorough understanding of the nutritional contents of ingredients, enables Mazuri to carefully balance important mineral levels (including the Calcium/Phosphorus/Vitamin D3 triad), to add very strong levels of vitamins necessary for a healthy and long life, and to make sure there are adequate levels of essential amino acids. This cannot be done with a grass hay diet, and is extremely difficult to do with any home made diet.

Mazuri[®] Tortoise Diets were developed for zoos, tested in zoos, and have been used successfully by zoos for years as the sole or main diet for a wide variety of land tortoises.

Few, if any, other diets are formulated properly for the nutritional needs of tortoises, and fiber can be a very real concern. But when you are looking around to decide what to feed your exotic animal, please remember that while commercial feeds may sometimes LOOK the same, they most certainly are NOT all the same.