

## Insectivore Diet Recommendations



1. **Crickets:** these can be easily gut-loaded with great vitamins and nutrients that benefit your reptile. They are not high in fat so they make a great staple diet. If they are not gut-loaded, they have little to no nutritional benefit. (Gut-loading info follows below)



2. **Dubia Roaches:** high protein food choice and easy to keep. With gut-loading, these can also be a staple diet for many reptiles.



3. **Silkworms:** Silkworms are soft bodied and are a high source of Calcium, Protein, Iron, Magnesium, Sodium, and Vitamins B1, B2, and B3. They are not always available and usually have to be ordered from an online vendor. Chameleons love them and they are a great diet option.



4. **Hornworms:** Hornworms are similar to silkworms but they grow much faster and get larger. They are more readily available and are soft-bodied. They have much less protein and calcium than silkworms. Due to the speed of growth and adult size, hornworms are better for larger reptile species.



5. **Calciworms:** Calci-worms/ repti-worms/phoenix worms are black soldier fly larvae. They have a great calcium: phosphorus ratio and small in size. They are active but cannot get out of most dishes. These are great for smaller reptiles.



6. **Superworms:** Superworms are very active and readily accepted by most reptiles. They are larger than meal worms and have less chitin, which makes them easier to digest. It is suggested to feed the worms that have shed recently, since they are softer. These should only be given in moderation and should always be gut-loaded and calcium dusted prior to feeding.



7. **Mealworms:** Mealworms are a poor staple feeder on its own because their nutritional value is low and the exoskeleton (chitin) is very hard. These should only be given in moderation and should always be gut-loaded and calcium dusted prior to feeding.



8. **Waxworms:** Wax worms (waxmoth's larvae) are high in Fiber, Protein and Fat. Due to the fat content, this should only be fed in moderation and used as "treats".

	Fat (%)	Calcium:phosphorus ratio	Protein (%)
Crickets	6	0.13:1	18
Dubia Roaches	8	0.33:1	36
Silkworms	10	0.77:1	64
Hornworms	3	0.33:1	9
Superworms	17	0.05:1	22
Mealworms	13	0.14:1	18
Waxworms	25	0.1:1	14
Calci-worms	9	1.52:1	17

A great online vendor for insects is "Rainbow Mealworms"

<https://www.rainbowmealworms.net/>

## Safe and Healthy Plants and Vegetables for Veggie Eaters

Green = daily staple option    Blue = feed rarely    Black = feed occasionally

-Basil	- Clover	-Carnations	-Dandelion Greens
-Sage	-Impatiens	-Oregano	-Maple Leaves
-Rose petals	-Thyme	-Chives	-Mint Leaves
-Rosemary	-Collard Greens	-Turnip Greens	-Plantain
-Hibiscus	-Red clover	-Artichoke heart	-Bell Peppers
-Butternut Squash	-Celery	-Carrots	-Endive
-Mustard Greens	-Cabbage	-Cucumber (peeled)	-Acorn Squash
-Bok Choy	-Alfalfa	-Summer Squash	-Yams
-Kale	-Okra	-Asparagus	-Spaghetti squash
-Cactus	-Escarole	-Red leaf lettuce	-Brussel Sprouts
-Broccoli	-Cauliflower	-Parsley	-Romaine lettuce

### Safe Fruit (fed in moderation)

-Apples	-Blackberries	-Grapes	-Pears	-Banana
-Prunes	-Watermelon	-Cranberries	-Melons	-Pineapple
-Raisins	-Blueberries	-Figs	-Peaches	-Plum
-Strawberries	-Prickly Pear			

Bearded Dragons are omnivores, so they need a balanced diet of insects and vegetable matter. Hatchlings eat mostly small insects. As they grow, they will start to eat more vegetable matter. The diet of a juvenile dragon (2-4 months of age) will consist of approximately 80% insects and 20% greens. Young dragons should be fed 2-3 times daily. Feeding pinkie mice is NEVER recommended due to the high fat content and difficulty of digestion.

### NEVER FEED

-Avocados	-Fireflies	-Pinkie Mice	-Rhubarb
-Wheat Bran	-Beet tops		

## Reptile Supplementation



### **REP-CAL Calcium supplement (no phosphorus or Vitamin D)**

This will be your staple supplement. Contains no added starch, sugar, soy, preservatives, artificial coloring, flavoring, or fragrance.

**Use 3x weekly**



### **REP-CAL Herptivite multivitamin**

Contains precise levels of vitamins and minerals combined in perfect balance to ensure correct utilization of protein and other essential nutrients for growth, reproduction, maintenance and many aspects of your reptile's bodily functions. **HERPTIVITE is the first reptile vitamin without Vitamin A. Instead they use Beta Carotene** which is an antioxidant that is converted into Vitamin A in a regulated way, so there is **no threat of Vitamin A toxicity**.

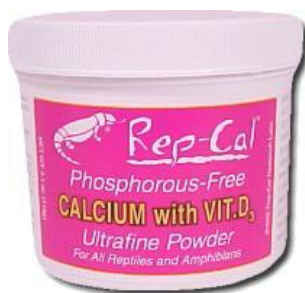
**Use every other week**



### **REPASHY Superfoods Vitamin A Plus**

Preformed Vitamin A (Retinol) is an **essential fat-soluble vitamin** that in nature comes from **animal sources only**. Plant sources of Vitamin A, such as Beta Carotene, must be converted into this active animal form to be utilized by the body. Carotenoids can be converted into Retinol by some species given optimal conditions, but it has been shown that deficiencies can develop if Preformed Vitamin A is not directly provided in the Retinol form. This Supplement provides Preformed Vitamin A in the form of a spray dried water dispersible Retinyl Acetate powder in combination with natural sources of Beta Carotene derived from algae.

Use in moderation (**every 2 weeks**).



### **REP-CAL WITH vitamin D3**

Rep-Cal Ultrafine (fine grind) is an excellent source of calcium for all reptiles and amphibians. Scientifically formulated from 100% natural Oyster Shell phosphorous-free calcium carbonate with added Vitamin D3 to aid in the absorption of calcium.

Use in moderation (**every 2 weeks**).

## Gut-Loading

Gut loading is a term used to describe filling feeder insects with a nutritious diet 1-3 days prior to feeding them to your reptile. Unfortunately, most commercially available foods are very poor in nutritional value, especially products like gel cubes or bran flakes. These are not a suitable gut-load and it can lead to health issues down the line for your chameleon. There are plenty of great diets available over the web, but are not available in pet stores. You can also add fresh fruits and veggies 1-2 days prior to feeding them to your reptile.

### Best Gut-Loading Ingredients

*Food items that are high in calcium but low in phosphorous and oxalates.*

Mustard Greens, Turnip Greens, Collard Greens, Dandelion Leaves, Hibiscus Leaves or Flowers, Mulberry leaves, Grape Leaves, Escarole Lettuce, Squash – either Butternut or Spaghetti, Papaya, Watercress, Alfalfa, Orange, Carrot, Arugula, Basil, Apple, Spirulina, Dried, Seaweed/Kelp, Flax Seeds, Sesame Seeds, Bee Pollen.

### Recommended commercially available gut loading diets

#### 1. MAZURI® Better Bug Gut Loading Diets

Protein (%): 30%  
Fat (%): 15%  
Fiber (%): 9%  
Calcium (%): 9% (need at least 8%)

<http://www.mazuri.com>



#### 2. MAZURI® HI Calcium Gut Loading Diets

Protein (%): 18%  
Fat (%): 3.5%  
Fiber: 9%  
Calcium (%): 8-9% (need at least 8%)

<http://www.mazuri.com>



#### 3. Fluker's High-Calcium Cricket Diet

Crude Protein (min) - 20.0%  
Crude Fat (min) - 5.0%  
Crude Fiber (max) - 9.0%  
Calcium (min) - 8.0% (need at least 8%)

<http://flukerfarms.com/hi-cal-cricket-diet/>



#### 4. Fluker's High-Calcium Mealworm Diet

Crude Protein (min) - 13.5%  
Crude Fat (min) - 4.75%  
Crude Fiber (max) - 8.5%  
Calcium (min) - 7.75% (need at least 8%)

<http://flukerfarms.com/high-calcium-mealworm-diet/>



#### 5. Fluker's High-Calcium Dubia Roach Diet

Crude Protein (min) - 14.75%  
Crude Fat (min) - 4.25%  
Crude Fiber (min) - 6%  
Calcium (min) - 6.5% (need at least 8%)

<http://flukerfarms.com/high-calcium-dubia-roach-diet/>



### Recommended Water Supply for Insects

Crickets: You should never place a bowl of water in the cage with the crickets. They will drown! Because of this, I recommend using water crystals. They come dry and you mix them with water. The crystals expand with water so your crickets can drink without drowning. You can get these online at many different retailers. A few links are listed below:

<http://www.beautifuldragons.com/Cricketwater.html>

<http://www.rainbowmealworms.net/cricket-and-roach-water-crystals/>

<http://www.pangeareptile.com/store/water-crystals.html>

<http://www.joshsfrogs.com/food-nutrition/feeder-insects-supplies/crickets-2/cricket-care-2/show/all.html>



The last link shows gut-loading diet and crystals.

You can also provide fresh fruits and veggies that have water content to keep them hydrated. Some keepers use large sponges (from Home Depot or Lowes) and keep them moist in the enclosure. These will become dirty easily and will need to be cleaned often.



Created by: Dr. Sarah Kaplan-Stein, Dr. Selina Zalesak, Viki Coulhoun- RVT  
If you prefer a water option more readily available at local pet stores, I suggest Flukers cricket Quencher. The same concept as the water crystals but already come in ready to use form. These end up being much more expensive in the long run.

