

## "BOX TURTLE CHOW"

~ Sandi Jackson

Mix together equal parts\*, IAMS dog kibble (7+ Active Maturity) and Whiskas cat kibble (Meaty Selection, Chicken & Turkey). Moisten with enough hot water to soften, but not soak the kibble so that you're still able to make out the individual shapes of the kibble. Cover and set aside.

Wash vegetables and remove ends, seeds, pulp, etc. In a food processor, grate equal amounts of zucchini and yellow squash, 1 small cored red apple, 1 large carrot. Mix well. The quantity of shredded vegetables should equal the quantity of kibble.

Add the vegetable mixture to the kibble and mix well. Store in reusable plastic tubs in the freezer until needed.

### Greens

Wash, dry and chop any of the following dark leafy greens. (May be stored in a paper-towel-lined baggie in the fridge for 2 or 3 days.)

Romaine lettuce, Turnip Greens, Collards, Endive, Red and Green Leaf Lettuce, Dandelions. Avoid broccoli, Brussels sprouts, cabbage, cauliflower, kale, mustard and spinach. These may be fed on occasion to provide variety but not part of a regular diet. Slightly cooked yams are also good to offer occasionally for the beta carotene and fiber content.

### Fruits

Most seasonal fruits, berries and melons are well received by box turtles. Most seem to enjoy blackberries, cantaloupe, grapes, peaches, pears and strawberries. Use apple sparingly.

### Feeding

Box turtles prefer to eat live bugs and worms as their source of protein and are known to eat carrion. There is no "right" supplemental diet for turtles but variety is the key to maintaining their interest and health.

I mix some chopped greens with their kibble mixture and top that with chopped fruit then dust with Rep-Cal Calcium for each feeding. Once a week I also dust with Rep-Cal Herptivite. MinerAll is also a good brand. Calcium is added to MinerAll so additional calcium is not needed.

For picky eaters, I mix the fruit in with the rest of the food.

I offer night crawlers on a regular basis and all turtles have access to a dish of clean fresh water daily. The dish (plastic plant saucer) should be large enough to hold the entire turtle at rest and deep enough for it to completely submerge its head but not deep enough to drown.

\*Any good kibble can be substituted or you may use Purina Trout Chow for one-half the mix.