

What is on Your Plate?

By far the favorite food of wild orangutans is fruit. They have been observed eating more than 300 kinds of fruit, the two most common of which are figs and durian. When fruit is unavailable, they also eat leaves, stems, tree bark, and insects such as ants and termites.

Did you know that a healthy zoo orangutan has a different diet than a wild one? That is because our cultivated fruits and vegetables can't provide a balanced diet for the apes. Our produce is much higher in sugar and lower in fiber than what they need. Orangutans need a high fiber, low sugar diet.

Their meals provide nutrition and allow these animals to naturally forage (search for food) throughout the day.



Just like humans, orangutans have categories of food that they get different amounts of in each day, but the food items in each category are different depending on what might be in season. Their primary nutrition comes from the primate biscuits. These primate biscuits (seen in the bowl in the photo) give the proper balance of protein, fat, minerals and vitamins that orangutans need.

The biggest two categories, like what would be vegetables on our plate, are regular vegetables and leafy green vegetables.

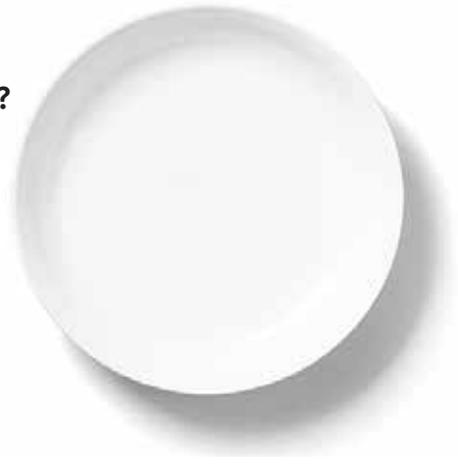
- The regular vegetable category might have celery, green beans, green peppers, broccoli, cauliflower, cucumbers and squash.
- The leafy green vegetable category might have romaine, iceberg and loose-leaf lettuces, cabbage, and kale. The things that they need less of are fruits and starches.
- The fruit category might have apples, bananas, oranges, pears and grapes.
- The root/starch category might have carrots, sweet potatoes, corn, onions and green peas.

Of course, these are not the only food items orangutans receive. Their keepers love to make sure they have a nice, well-rounded, variable diet that keeps our animals happy and healthy.

What's on your Plate?

Challenge:

Try to draw a healthy meal for a person using as many ingredients as possible from a healthy zoo orangutan diet.



BONUS ROUND: Try to make a diet using some of the wild orangutans' favorite foods.

Share your plate with us by posting on social media with the hashtags:

#OSSP

#OrangutanCaringWeek

#OrangutanAwarenessWeek

#WeCareAboutOrangutans