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Leafy Greens Nutritional Guide for Your Pet Reptile!
(A.K.A. The Leafy Greens Grocery Shopping Guide for Your Reptile!)

Many species of pet reptiles in captivity are herbivorous to omnivorous, and require the proper diets, and nutritional supplementation and ratios, in order to remain happy and healthy throughout their lives in order to thrive. Many species of lizards, such as iguanas, bearded dragons, uromastyx, and other lizards, as well as many chelonians (i.e. turtles and tortoises) will consume leafy greens readily as all, or portions, of their overall diets. There are many different types of leafy greens which are available at one's local grocery store, supermarket, or other sources which can, and should be incorporated into a healthy diet for these reptiles.

However, some types of vegetable leafy greens are better and more nutritional than others for your pet reptile, and it is always helpful to know which types to choose for your reptile that are the healthiest and most suitable. These are the reasons why this reference guide will hopefully serve as a useful and practical resource for choosing the best leafy greens for your reptile! There are several nutritional components to look for and compare that one should become aware of. **Ca:P** refers to the ratio of calcium to phosphorous in the food item, and in order to provide a properly balanced diet, this Ca:P ratio must be taken into account as high or imbalanced levels of these ratios can lead to an inability to convert calcium, among other health problems.

Many calcium supplements and multi-vitamins that are commercially available contain **Vitamin D3**, which is essential to calcium metabolism, and is developed in your reptile's skin from contact with sufficient UVB wavelengths. Other nutritional components to be aware of, and compare include the percentages or ratios of **Proteins, Fats, Fibers, Sugars, and Water**. Some types of leafy greens or other vegetables tend to carry less nutritional value due to their high percentage of water and low percentage of other nutrients, or contains high levels of **Oxalic Acid**, or Oxalates, which bind and remove calcium from these foods.

It is also important to consider, that freezing leafy greens or other vegetables may also oftentimes cause nutrients such as **Thiamine** (or Vitamin B1) to become lost and thereby reducing their nutritional value.

When these frozen leafy greens or other vegetables are fed over a long period of time, and no supplementations are made to add this Thiamine back into their proper diets, Hypothiaminosis, and other nutritional disorders can likely occur. More information can be found on the USDA Food Nutrient Database, <https://fdc.nal.usda.gov/> as well as the Beautiful Dragons Reptile Rescue website: <http://www.beautifuldragons.com/Nutrition.html>

It should also be noted that each animal may be an individual, and may prefer or dislike some of these foods over others. Trying variety is key in finding out what your individual animal may like most. Without further a-due, here is a guide for the most recommended, staple leafy greens, and their nutritional ratios and percentages which should be included in many species of pet reptile's diets, as well as which types may be suitable once in awhile with moderation, and which ones should usually be avoided.



Alfalfa (Lucerne):

**Yes, Recommended Staple*

Data Not Available.



Artichokes (No Data Available on Leaves)

**Yes, but Best in Moderation*

Data Not Available.



Arugula (Raw):

**Yes, Recommended Staple*

Ca:P: 3.1

Protein: 2.6%

Fat: 0.7%

Fiber: 2.1%

Water: 92%



Beet Greens/Tops:

**Yes, but Best in Moderation*

Ca:P: 3.1

Protein: 1.8%

Fat: 0.1%

Fiber: 3.7%

Water: 92%



Bok Choy (Chinese Cabbage):

**Yes, but Best in Moderation*

Ca:P: 2.8:1

Protein: 1.5%

Fat: 0.2%

Fiber: 1%

Water: 95%



Brussel Sprouts:

**Yes, but Best in Moderation*

Ca:P: 1:1.6

Protein: 3.4%

Fat: 0.3%

Fiber: 3.8%

Water: 86%



Cabbages (Red and Green); Napa Cabbages:

**Yes, but Best in Moderation*

Ca:P: 2:1 (Green), 1.2:1 (Red)

Protein: 1.4% (Both)

Fat: 0.3% (Both)

Fiber: 2.3% (Green), 2.0 (Red)
Water: 92% (Both)



Cactus Pads/Prickly Pear Leaves (Spineless):

**Yes, Recommended Staple*

Ca:P: 2.3:1
Protein: 0.8%
Fat: 0.5%
Fiber:
Water:



Carrot Tops:

**Yes, Recommended Staple*

No Data Available.



Celery (Stalk and Leaves):

**Yes, but Best in Moderation and Never as a Staple*

Ca:P: 1:6.1
Protein: 0.8%
Fat: 0.1%
Fiber: 1.7%
Water: 95%



Cilantro:

**Yes, but Best in Moderation*

Ca:P: 1:4.1
Protein: 2.1%
Fat: 0.5%
Fiber: 2.8%
Water: 92%



Collard Greens:

**Yes, Recommended Staple*

Ca:P: 14.5:1
Protein: 2.5%
Fat: 0.4%
Fiber: 3.6%
Water: 91%



Clovers:

**Yes, Recommended Staple*

Data Not Available.



Dandelion Greens:

**Yes, Recommended Staple*

Ca:P: 2.8:1

Protein: 2.7%

Fat: 0.7%

Fiber: 3.5%

Water: 86%



Endive Greens:

**Yes, Recommended Staple*

Ca:P: 1.9:1

Protein: 1.3%

Fat: 0.2%
Fiber: 3.1%
Water: 94%



Escarole Greens:

**Yes, Recommended Staple*

Ca:P: 1.9:1
Protein: 1.15%
Fat: 0.18%
Fiber: 2.8%
Water: 94%



Hibiscus and Rosella (Leaves):

**Yes, but Best in Moderation*

Ca:P: 2.3:1
Protein: 3.3%
Fat: 0.3%
Fiber: 1.6%
Water: 85%



Kale:

**Yes, but Best in Moderation*

Ca:P: 2.4:1

Protein: 3.3%

Fat: 0.7%

Fiber: 2.0%

Water: 84%



Lettuce, Boston:

**No, Generally Avoid. Reptiles can eat it, but certainly never as a staple.*

Data Not Available.



Lettuce, Iceberg:

**No, Generally Avoid. Reptiles can eat it, but certainly never as a staple.*

Ca:P: 1.1

Protein: 1.0%

Fat: 0.2%

Fiber: 1.4%

Water: 96%



Lettuce, Loose Leaf:

**No, Generally Avoid. Reptiles can eat it, but certainly never as a staple.*

Ca:P: 1.4:1

Protein: 1.3%

Fat: 0.2%

Fiber: 1.0%

Water: 96%



Lettuce, Red Leaf:

**No, Generally Avoid. Reptiles can eat it, but certainly never as a staple.*

Ca:P: 1:1.2

Protein: 1.3%

Fat: 0.2%

Fiber: 0.9%

Water: 96%



Lettuce, Romaine:

**No, Generally Avoid. Reptiles can eat it, but certainly never as a staple.*

Ca:P: 1:1.3

Protein: 1.6%

Fat: 0.2%

Fiber: 1.7%

Water: 95%



Micro Greens:

**Yes, Recommended Staple*

Data Not Available.



Mustard Greens:

**Yes, Recommended Staple*

Ca:P: 2.4:1
Protein: 2.7%
Fat: 0.2%
Fiber: 3.3%
Water: 91%



Parsley:

**Yes, but Best in Moderation*

Ca:P: 2.4:1
Protein: 3.0%
Fat: 0.8%
Fiber: 3.3%
Water: 88

Prickly Pear Leaves: See Cactus Pads.



Raddichio:

**Yes, but Best in Moderation*

Ca:P: 1:2
Protein: 1.4%

Fat: 0.3%
Fiber: 0.9%
Water: 93%



Rapini, or Broccoli Rabe:

Data Not Available. Very high in Oxalates and Vitamin A, so not a good staple. OK only Very Occasionally.

Rosella Leaves: See Hibiscus Leaves.



Sorrel/Red Veined Sorrel:

**Yes, Recommended Staple*

Data Not Available.



Spinach:

**No, Generally Avoid*

Ca:P: 2.1

Protein: 2.9%

Fat: 0.4%

Fiber: 2.7%

Water: 92%



Swiss Chard:

**Yes, Recommended Staple*

Ca:P: 1:1

Protein: 1.8%

Fat: 0.2%

Fiber: 1.6%

Water: 93%



Turnip Greens:

**Yes, Recommended Staple*

Ca:P: 4.5:1

Protein: 1.5%

Fat: 0.3%

Fiber: 3.2%

Water: 93%



Water Cress:

**Yes, but Best in Moderation*

Ca:P: 2.1

Protein: 2.3%

Fat: 0.1%

Fiber: 0.5%

Water: 95%

Other:



Bagged or Packaged, Mixed Greens; 50/50 "Spring Mixes":

**No, Generally Avoid. Reptiles can eat it, but not nutritional or varied enough as a staple. Also depends on the contents.*

Data Not Available.