

Odds and Ends – Feeding Koi (Anecdotal)

Compiled by Joe White

Koi are bottom feeders, they have a bony post in roof of mouth to crush small bugs, crabs, etc.

Koi have no stomach, one long intestine. Feeding too much at one time causes potbelly conformation. Feed smaller amounts many times a day.

In warmer months, feed up to 2% total body weight per day.

Taper changes in amount of food fed during seasonal water temp changes.

Feed 30% color enhancement food to mature koi mixed in with normal koi diet. Slowly taper in change to more color food couple months before koi show.

Too much color food can cause white to turn yellow. Yellowed White is bad for showing koi.

Some brands of food advertise a formula to brighten or enhance shiroji or white in skin. Check brands for varying claims as to content by season or goal.

Some brands contain attractant ingredients.

Switching brands may cause koi to be slow to eat new pellet. Does not necessarily mean food is bad.

Can supplement diet with any greens. They like collard greens and romaine lettuce.

They like water melon but not much nutritional value. Just water, and red does not do anything for red color on koi.

Cheerios not recommended, goes to fat on koi, i.e., koi do not metabolize.

Fast koi by tapering amount of food off and back over several weeks in

during cooler months December to January. Andy Moo says rest from food helps color development.

Too fast growth, color may not keep up. That is, color will be stretched too thin too fast. Like color on a balloon you blow up.

Store koi indoors in dry cool container. Do not store in freezer. Keep out of sun.

Moisture in koi feed causes fat content to turn rancid.

Avoid out of date food. Small koi keepers can buy quality food in larger bags and share to save money.

Size pellet to koi. Small koi can damage jaw bone by trying to eat large hard pellet.

Chris Neaves recommends wetting koi pellets to soften before feeding.

Young, growing koi need higher protein content like around 40%. Adult koi require less protein content.

Food labeled Economy or Staple is usually less expensive but still at least minimal koi diet. I feed staple Hikari with no bad effect on color.

Food high in corn filler can cause white to have yellow tint.
Freshness in koi food is important. You want "stabilized" vitamin C.

Koi pellet is used as a secondary method of delivering medication to fish.

Hand feeding koi. Pro – get to see koi up close which may help discover sores and some parasites. Allows koi appreciation, colors and skin quality. Con – May inadvertently be placing koi more at risk for predators, birds and raccoons.