

The Tamale Tease

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My parrots are foragers and enjoy foot toys very much. I have two cockatoos that love to forage and shred their toys and they REALLY enjoy their almonds and pistachios. But since they are also prone to fatty liver disease, I need to make sure they forage and work for their treat instead of just handing to them. Making it a foraging exercise for them cuts down on the amount they seem to want. So I came up with this “tamale package” for them.

I take tamale skins and soak them for about 20-25 minutes so they are pliable. Then I take one whole skin and peel it into ¼ inch strips in order to make the ties. Then I take an almond and wrap it in another tamale skin and then tie the “bundle” together with one of the strips that I made. Then I put the skins out to dry on a cookie sheet, never bunching them together or stacking them, making sure I rotate them a lot so that they dry fast and no mold develops on the skins. They dry overnight. Once dry, the skins are crunchy and look like little packages. Then I hide one or two in their cages and make them find the toy and then shred it. Once they do, they are pleasantly surprised with finding an almond inside! This is also a great foot toy for when they are in one of those screaming/playing modes and the phone rings. Hand them one of these “tamale packages” and you can get some quiet time!



HAPPY FORAGING!