

Feeding Two-Toed Sloths

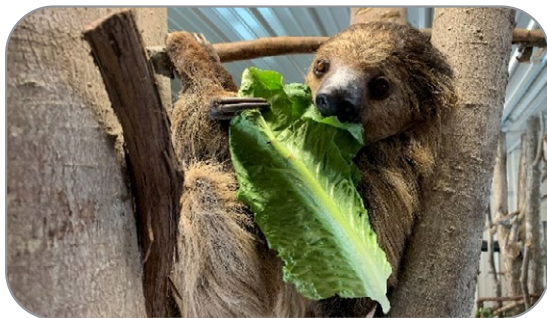
Sloths have a complex digestive system that can slowly process large amounts of plant material, but only handle limited amounts of protein or sugary foods.



A Balanced Diet

A good estimate for how much to feed your sloth is 10 percent of their body weight. For example, a 15-pound sloth should have 1.5 pounds of food each day.

The diagram to the right shows the types of foods and relative amounts in a balanced sloth diet. You can offer “browse” (small branches, leaves, and flowers) free choice, along with the balanced diet, to keep your sloth engaged in natural foraging behavior.



COMMERCIAL BISCUITS:

low-starch, high-fiber primate biscuits such as leaf-eater or browse biscuits

LEAFY GREENS:

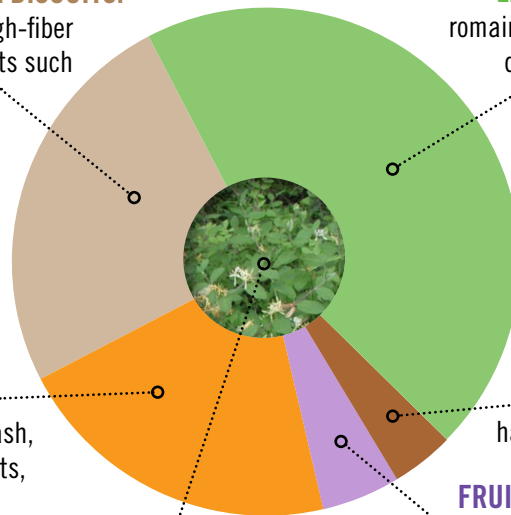
romaine lettuce, kale, dandelion, other leafy greens

NON-LEAFY VEGETABLES:

sweet potato, pumpkin, squash, zucchini, carrots, green beans

PROTEIN (optional):

dog food, hard-boiled eggs



BROWSE:

hibiscus, mulberry, fruit tree branches, zinnia, forsythia, locust, plumbago

FRUIT:

apple, pear, mango, papaya, melon

Helpful Tips

- Maintaining a sloth’s environment between 75 and 85 °F is crucial for their digestion.
- Sloths only urinate and defecate once or twice a week and may lose up to 30 percent of their body weight afterward. Weigh them after elimination to accurately monitor weight trends.
- Cut food items into long, thin pieces to help sloths grasp and eat them.
- Avoid feeding sloths seeds from fruit, pumpkin, or other items. Seeds are harder to digest and may contribute to a blockage.
- Count any “treats” for training or other activities as part of the daily balanced diet. Feeding these items *in addition* to the balanced diet can result in overfeeding or more sugar or starch than a sloth can digest.



CONSULT YOUR VETERINARIAN

for more guidance on sloth nutrition and how to maintain optimal body weight.

ANIMAL CARE AID

