



Are you killing your garden birds with kindness?

Bedfordshire is the UK capital of the bird world and we are very lucky to have the RSPB headquarters on our doorstep in Sandy. Thanks to the excellent work they do we are now able to identify and enjoy the many different species of wildlife birds that visit our gardens.

Over half of adults in the UK feed the birds in their garden and the most common item in bird feeders is peanuts, which are rich in fat and are particularly popular with tits and greenfinches.

But do we really know if the tit bits we leave out for the birds are doing them good or causing them harm? Unless they are top quality, peanuts can potentially be lethal because they contain a naturally occurring fungus, called aspergillus, which produces toxins that are poisonous to wild birds.



Peanuts are imported and there has recently been a big increase in price. So not only are we damaging the environment because of the increased carbon footprint and number of food miles, but also there is a risk that imports can be of poor quality, based on price rather than what is good for the birds.

It is vital that the birds receive a well balanced diet as well as plenty of fresh drinking water. Top grade mixed seeds and fat or suet based cakes, balls and pellets, which contains lots of energy, help birds survive during cold

winters and sustain breeding birds when they are foraging for natural food for their young.

Bedfordshire has the ideal sandy soil for maize and sunflowers, which are the main crops used for birdseed. The Parrish family farm is on the Greensand Ridge at Chicksands and has now allocated several acres specifically for growing bird food. We also make the products on-site and this year we have



developed a new type of fat ball 'the A-maiz-ing fat ball' which includes more maize and less wheat providing the birds with a high energy feed all year round. Grown and manufactured locally, it means A-maiz-ing fat balls provide guaranteed quality and a much lower impact on the environment.

When you next purchase bird products read the label carefully. Imported products that contain cheap ingredients have very little nutritional value and so much is wasted because it falls out of the feeder onto the ground below. By spending a few pence more on good quality products it is not only beneficial for the birds but in helps the environment too!

For more information on A-maiz-ing fat balls and to find out your local stockist please email James Parrish at info@parrishsfarm.co.uk. Or visit our website at www.parrishsfarm.co.uk.

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