



BOSKOS



South African feed for herbivores

The Beginning of Boskos

Due to intensive grazing by cattle, large areas of the savannah ecosystems in Southern Africa are disturbed. Grasses are over-grazed, and seeds of woody plant species such as *Acacia*-species and *Dychrostachys cinerea* get good chances to develop. Subsequently grasses struggle to recover, and cannot compete with the bush for water and nutrients. During the last eras open savannahs changed into bush encroached areas with bare top soils. Also problems such as soil erosion arise. Bush encroachment is a huge problem in many wildlife ranches in Southern Africa.

The leaves, branches, and seeds of these bushes compose the natural diet of many savannah animals. With this in mind an idea arose in a South African company. They remove the surplus bushes and trees from the wildlife ranches and shred it into a fine substrate. This substrate together with ingredients such as alfalfa, maize, and a premix, is processed into a pellet, which is called 'Boskos'.

The Success of Boskos

Literally translated from the Afrikaans language, Boskos means; 'feed from the bush'. The feed is a primary source product in its own right. It is therefore significantly different from most other commercially-produced animal feeds in that it is not a by-product of a manufacturing process. Boskos is a staple diet, especially as a winter grazing supplement, in zoos, national parks and game reserves around the world. For years Boskos has been fed to the animals at the zoos of Johannesburg and Pretoria with good results. More European Zoos are feeding Boskos, as this natural diet is more healthy for their animals.

Average analysis

Crude protein	10 %	Calcium	0.75 %
Fat	3,5 %	Phosphorus	0,40 %
Crude fibre	25 %	Potassium	1,12 %
NDF	55 %	Magnesium	0,22 %
ADF	31 %	Sodium	0,49 %
ADL	8 %	Iron	450 mg/kg
Ash	7 %	Zinc	21 mg/kg
Moisture	12 %	Selenium	2,5 mg/kg
Energy value	10.5 MJ/kg	Contains: Vitamin A, D ₃ and E	

Due to the fact that Boskos is rich in fibres and in lignin, the food is particular suitable for browsing animals. Because Boskos comes close to the natural diet of herbivores, the digestive tract is stimulated in a natural way.

Recommended Feeding

Animal mass	Amount of Boskos
< 50 kg	5% of animal mass
> 50 kg	2% of animal mass

To guarantee intake of effective long fibre, Boskos needs to be supplemented with a roughage suitable for the particular species. Keep plenty of fresh, clean water available to animals at all times.

Which Animals Feed on Boskos

Zookeepers have found that herbivores in captivity instinctively appear to recognise Boskos for what it is, a foodstuff that is natural to them. Boskos can be fed to browsers such as giraffe, black rhinoceros, and kudu, to mixed feeders such as, impala, eland, and elephant, but also to grazers such as zebra, buffalo, and white rhinoceros.