



## INTRODUCING NEW BIRDS

### ***Does my bird need a "friend"?***

As a general rule you should only get another bird if *you* want another bird. You, as an owner, must accept the responsibility of caring for, feeding and loving additional pets in your home. There are certain species that may become more involved with each other therefore developing less of an interactive relationship with you and your family.

If you feel your bird is lonely or bored you should first consider providing more safe toys and entertainment for the bird or you may end up with two bored, lonely birds.

### ***How do I introduce the birds?***

All new birds should be checked by your veterinarian before any introductions. A physical examination including a record of the current weight will be performed. Certain tests may be recommended to help screen your new pet for evidence of possible disease. *Your veterinarian can discuss this with you.*

The new bird should be quarantined in a separate room within the house for 30 - 45 days. A new bird can have a relatively unknown history and may be carrying some disease that other birds may catch. Some people have experienced great tragedies by unknowingly introducing a sick bird without a quarantine period, only to have their own birds fall ill. Any evidence of ill health should be brought to the attention of your veterinarian immediately.

After the quarantine period, it is a good idea to put the two cages in the same room. Let them get use to the sight and sound of each other. Gradually move the cages closer to each other. Eventually, under strict supervision, the two birds may be introduced together while monitoring for bullying or fighting. *Remember*, the original pet has someone intruding on *his/her* territory. This may lead to certain challenges. Only the birds can decide who is the "boss" and establish who is to be at the top of the pecking order. Certain challenges and interactions between the 2 birds are necessary to establish the new relationship or pecking order. You must intervene if there is all out fighting and start over later slowly.

### ***Will they get along?***

You will find out. There is no way to be certain they will like each other, as they are all individuals. Some birds will never be friends and may only ever tolerate each other. Generally, most birds will accept the presence of another bird very well. *Consult your veterinarian if experiencing problems.*