Chimpanzees living in the wild spend most of their existence searching for food. Food is also central to the lives of Chimp Haven’s residents. Their diet ranges from daily staples, like primate biscuits and produce to chimpanzee gourmet items, like popcorn and rose petals.
Scientists have identified more than 80 different foods available to chimpanzees living in the wild. However, it is no one-stop, all-you-can-eat buffet. Finding food is a challenge that chimpanzees face every day.

Chimpanzees spend nearly all of their waking hours in search of something to eat. This requires spatial recall. They need to keep a year-round, mental map of where certain plants and trees are located and when they are producing seeds, fruit, leaves, and flowers. Free for the picking, these are the chimpanzees’ “fast foods.” Other menu items demand preparation and tools.

The chimpanzees create a hammer and anvil out of rocks to break open succulent palm nuts. In order to “go fishing” for insects, they strip the leaves from a tree limb and use it to penetrate a termite or ant mound. As they pull the stick out, they gobble the swarming insects, chewing them quickly to avoid being stung. Sticks are also used to extract honey from beehives.

Chimpanzees eat meat. Small pigs, monkeys, rodents and even small antelope are prized by chimpanzees. Recently, scientist Jill Pruetz has observed chimpanzees in Senegal making spears to hunt bush babies, small nocturnal monkeys. Fortunately for the chimpanzees’ prey, meat is a small part of their diet. It is a special occasion when meat is on the dinner menu!
Chimp Haven goes to great lengths to create a diet similar to what is available to chimpanzees living in the wild. Fresh produce is a mainstay of the Chimp Haven diet. Some of it is grown in Chimp Haven's garden or donated by local supporters. However, the demand is so great that a local produce distributor sends its trucks, filled with lettuce, kale, cabbage, apples, bananas, oranges, squash, and a host of other types of produce to Chimp Haven three times a week. Additionally, the California Raisin Marketing Board donates hundreds of pounds of raisins at a time, and Rio Grande Organics donates pallets of pecans.

In addition to food provided to the chimpanzees by staff, there is a seasonal selection of tasty, wild forest items to nibble on. Among a variety of possibilities are Muscadine grapes, persimmons, briars, and water oak and elm leaves. The more resourceful chimpanzees who know how to use sticks as tools get an insect bonus from fire ant mounds that pop up in the habitats.

Chimp Haven does not give the chimpanzees meat as a protein source. Instead they get nuts, seeds, and primate diet biscuits that are specially formulated to provide the necessary protein.

Chimpanzees in the wild spend most of their time looking for, obtaining, and processing foods. To simulate this “wild” food gathering experience, the behavior staff provides creative menu items that require problem solving, processing, and tool use. Chimpanzee favorites are juice buckets hanging out of reach and requiring plastic tubing to suck out the liquid, fire hoses stuffed with treats, and plastic balls filled with frozen bananas or nuts that must be extracted through holes in the surface. Wild chimpanzees also never know, from day to day, what new edibles they might discover. So, Chimp Haven offers novel foods like herbs, flowers, popcorn, baked potatoes and frozen yogurt. Of one thing you can be sure: Mealtime at Chimp Haven is never boring!

Diabetic Chimpanzees

With unpredictable mealtimes and unreliable food sources, it is unlikely that a diabetic chimpanzee could survive in the wild. However, two diabetic chimpanzees, Nicky and Ruby, reside at Chimp Haven. Nicky is trained to accept daily insulin injections and glucose monitoring. Ruby requires only oral medication. With monitoring, medications, and a regulated diet of healthy foods, they are thriving.

Nicky Ruby
Food Etiquette

You can often hear staff at Chimp Haven making loud, breathy, high-pitched sounds to communicate with the chimpanzees. The message they convey is, “Food is on the way.” This is the same vocalization, or food bark, that chimpanzees use when they want to signal to their group that they have found a food source.

With few exceptions, alerting friends to the source of food is where chimpanzees’ altruism ends. They do not share food unless they have an ulterior motive. Males are particularly adept at using food as currency. They may share it with certain chimpanzees who they are courting as future allies for potential conflicts. They also find food a handy incentive for females from whom they are seeking sexual favors.

Two exceptions to this manipulative use of food are often observed at Chimp Haven. The chimpanzees will share food with a friend who is ill, and they have a soft spot for three-year-old Tracy. All she has to do is ask, and an adult chimpanzee will usually give her a bite of whatever they have. She should enjoy this attention while it lasts. In a few more years, she will be on her own.

The Overeaters

There are a few chimpanzees at Chimp Haven who are notorious for grabbing as much food as they can during meal time. Their waistlines show it. This is a concern for the care staff, but perhaps not as much as you might think. Unlike humans whose fat can put undue pressure on their internal organs, chimpanzees’ fat is subcutaneous and not as stressful on their vital organs, according to Chimp Haven’s veterinarian. She adds that, because the chimpanzees get exercise and an excellent balanced diet and they do not have bad habits like using tobacco or alcohol, there is less concern about threats to their health than with overweight humans.
I prefer to make a one-time gift of:  
- $75  
- $100  
- $200  
- Other $ ___________________________

Please send me the following Chimpanzee Meal ticket denominations:

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Total</th>
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<tr>
<td>x one week @ $25</td>
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<tr>
<td>x one month @ $100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>x one year @ $1,000</td>
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MY TOTAL CONTRIBUTION IS: $ __________________________

My check is enclosed.

Please charge this gift to my credit card:
- Visa  
- MasterCard  
- AMEX  
- Discover

Card Number: ___________________________  
Exp. Date: ___________________________

Signature: ___________________________

Each week, Chimp Haven distributes 1,500 pounds of primate biscuits and nearly a ton of produce to the chimpanzees. The cost to feed a single chimpanzee is more than $1,000 (over and above the food that is donated) annually - a considerable portion of Chimp Haven's budget. Finding the support to feed everyone is a challenge. So, Chimp Haven has created a Chimpanzee Meal Ticket program to help underwrite our food bills and to offer a great gift solution to you.

A Chimpanzee Meal Ticket is the perfect gift-giving answer. You can purchase a meal ticket in one-week ($25), one-month($100), or one-year ($1,000) denominations. You decide the amount, and allow Chimp Haven to choose the chimpanzee you will be supporting. Simply place your order on the attached remittance form, and we will send your Meal Tickets to you right away.

Become a monthly contributor to Chimp Haven.

Make your donation go further and help the environment by giving us permission to charge your credit or debit card account once a month.  
(The minimum monthly credit or debit card gift is $10.)

ONLINE GIVING: It’s Safe. It’s Secure. It’s Easy.

Visit us at www.chimphaven.org to make a gift online. For more information, call 888.982.4467 or visit us on the web.

Contributions to Chimp Haven are tax-deductible to the fullest extent of the law. Tax ID 74-2766663. You can discontinue payments at any time, simply by calling our pledge office at 318.925.9575, e-mailing us at information@chimphaven.org, or writing to: Chimp Haven • 13600 Chimpanzee Place • Keithville, LA 71047
Chimp Haven relies on donations of all kinds. Among the food items currently needed are:

**Pretzels**

**Pudding cups**

**Granola bars**

**Graham crackers**

**Goldfish crackers**

**Nuts in the shell (other than peanuts)**

**Mustard**

**Ketchup**

**Salad dressing**

**Animal crackers**

**Juice boxes**

**Trail mix in sealed bags**

**Peanut butter**

**Low-sugar cereal**

**Sugar-free drink mixes and Jell-O**

**An Easy Way To Help Chimp Haven**

Put your old, unused cell phones to good use by sending them to Chimp Haven. We have partnered with an environmentally responsible company that pays organizations for collecting used cell phones. The more phones you send, the more money Chimp Haven earns. Please ask your friends to donate their old phones too!