



The Importance of Feeding a Variety

Article

Small herbivores such as rabbits, guinea pigs and chinchillas all require unlimited amounts of hay in their diet. Feeding grass hay is one of the most important steps pet owners can take in providing a healthy foundation for their small herbivore's overall health and wellbeing. Among hay's many nutritional benefits, it prevents obesity, dental disease, boredom and diarrhea. The long-strand fiber in grass hay facilitates healthy gastrointestinal function of small herbivores and should be the foundation of every such animal's diet.



Hay should be offered "free choice" to small herbivores such as rabbits, guinea pigs and chinchillas. Hay should make up at least 75% of a small herbivore's diet.

Variety is the Spice of Life

Much like their human caretakers, small herbivores can benefit from a certain amount of variety in their daily diet. Every animal is unique, and many will develop favorites when it comes to different varieties of hay. Because all hays are essentially the same nutritionally (with the exception of alfalfa), it's safe to mix and match amongst hay varieties. Experiment to find out which combinations of hay your pet enjoys best. By keeping your pet's mealtime interesting, you can help ensure the necessary intake of hay, thereby helping prevent potential health problems (such as gastric stasis and dental disease) which may arise as a result of decreased consumption.

Your Guide to Variety

The Taste & Texture guide makes choosing the perfect hay easy. Whether your pet enjoys a sweet, hearty, soft, or crunchy hay, the Taste & Texture guide offers useful, easy to interpret information about each of Oxbow's unique hay varieties. Choose from Western Timothy, Orchard Grass, Botanical Hay, Organic Meadow Hay, Oat Hay and Alfalfa. For a new, enriching option that saves on space and creates less dust, choose from Oxbow's three varieties of Harvest Stacks compressed hays.

taste & texture	sweet	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	hearty
	soft	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	crunchy

Mix it Up!

When it comes time to mix a small herbivore's favorite selections, all you need is a clean plastic tub and your chosen varieties. Empty the desired portion of each variety into the tub, mixing by hand. Don't be afraid to experiment! Observe your small herbivore as he eats to determine which combinations he enjoys the best. Most of all, have fun and feel good knowing that you are providing the foundation for good health for your pet.



For more information about any of Oxbow's premium hay varieties, visit www.oxbowanimalhealth.com or call (800)-249-0366.