

## **Fruits and Vegetables Suitable for Rabbits**

### **A rabbit's diet**

The mainstay of a rabbit's diet should be grass and hay (preferably timothy or meadow hay), but rabbits enjoy fresh fruits and vegetables and ideally they should be fed as part of a balanced diet. Fresh water and a small amount of a good quality extruded nugget should also be fed. This should help to ensure that your rabbit receives adequate amounts of fibre, vitamins and minerals to help them stay fit and healthy. ***Supplements should not routinely be needed or offered.***

### **Introducing new foods**

Rabbits, like humans are individuals and as such some may be unable to tolerate certain fresh foods.

When introducing any new food, always do so slowly to avoid digestive upsets. We also recommend you introduce one new food at a time, so if it does upset the rabbit it can be removed from the diet. Only give a small amount (a fingertip sized amount) and wait for 24 hours, if it isn't well tolerated (i.e. if excess caecotrophs are produced) withdraw it and try with something else after everything has settled back to normal. Allow 5-7 days before making any other additions.

The exact quantities given often depend upon the rabbit, so you may need to test your rabbits' individual limits. As a general rule, the average 2.5kg rabbit should get 1.5-2.5 cups of fresh vegetables per day and up to or a mound their own body size. This is often much more than owners currently offer.

### **Fresh foods safe to feed**

The following list is divided into sub-sections of vegetables, herbs, fruits and wild garden herbs/flowers that are deemed safe to feed rabbits, but this list is not a conclusive list and other fresh foods

may also be suitable to feed to rabbits:

**Vegetables:**

- Artichoke leaves
- Asparagus
- Baby Sweetcorns (but not full size ones)
- Beetroot (care with leafy tops as high levels of oxalic acid)
- Broccoli (and its leaves, including purple sprouting varieties)
- Brussel Sprouts (leaves and sprouts)
- Cabbage (can sometimes cause digestive upsets)
- Carrots and carrot tops – (limited amounts of carrot should be offered due to the high sugar content and carrot tops are high in calcium so should be given occasionally)
- Cauliflower (and the leaves)
- Celeriac
- Celery (and its leaves)
- Chicory
- Courgette (and flowers)
- Cucumber
- Curly Kale (only occasionally due to the high calcium content)
- Fennel
- Green beans
- Kohl rabi
- Parsnip
- Peas (including the leaves and pods)
- Peppers (red, green, orange and yellow)
- Pumpkin
- Radish Tops
- Rocket
- Romaine lettuce (not Iceberg or light coloured leaf)
- Spinach (only occasionally due to the high calcium content)
- Spring Greens

- Squash (e.g. Butternut)
- Swede
- Turnip (only occasionally)
- Watercress (only occasionally due to the high calcium content)

**Herbs (often powerful tastes so may take some getting used to):**

- Basil
- Coriander
- Dill
- Mint (peppermint)
- Parsley (curled or flat)
- Oregano
- Rosemary
- Sage
- Thyme

**Fruits (should be fed in moderation, due to their sugar content. It is not advised that fruits are fed every day and should be limited to a couple of times a week in small quantities):**

- Apple
- Apricot
- Banana (high in potassium)
- Blackberries (and leaves – excellent astringent properties)
- Blueberries
- Cherries
- Grapes
- Kiwi Fruit
- Mango
- Melon
- Nectarines
- Oranges (not the peel)

- Papaya
- Peaches
- Pears
- Pineapple
- Plums
- Raspberries (and leaves – excellent astringent properties)
- Strawberries (and leaves)
- Tomatoes (not the leaves)

### **Wild Garden Herbs/Weeds/Flowers:**

- Borage
- Calendula
- Camomile
- Chickweed (astringent)
- Clover (leaves and flowers)
- Dandelion (diuretic properties)
- Goosegrass (cleavers) but may stick to coat!
- Lavender
- Mallow
- Nettle
- Nasturtium (leaves and flowers)
- Shepherd's purse
- Sow Thistle
- Plantain
- Yarrow

### **Do fruits and vegetables cause diarrhea?**

True Diarrhea (liquid, watery faeces) is not common in adult rabbits. If the rabbit is not used to a certain fresh food then it is possible for this to cause Diarrhea, but often owners are confusing uneaten caecotrophs as Diarrhea. This is a totally different problem and is

not normally caused by fresh foods. Any rabbit who isn't eating their caecotrophs may be suffering from one or more problems that needs addressing by your vet.

For further information about feeding, please visit:

[The RWF guide to feeding your pet rabbit](#)

[Feeding young rabbits](#)

**Originally compiled by Claire King and Judith Brown 2006. Revised and edited by Claire Speight (nee King) RVN 2012.** Reviewed by Richard Saunders BSc BVSc CBiol MSB CertZooMed DZooMed (Mammalian) MRCVSin Feb 2013.