



Guinea Pig Helpline Factsheet

Fresh Veg, Herbs & Fruit for Guinea Pigs

Guinea pigs need fresh fruit and veg at least once every day. This is not only to provide Vitamin C, which guinea pigs are unable to create themselves, but to provide stimulation, interest and variety in their lives.

The keywords for achieving a good diet are **variety** and **moderation**, but it is important to understand exactly what this means; the two words used alone don't mean a lot!

Variety – a minimum of three or preferably four different vegetables/herbs/fruits daily. Aim for a combination of veg and herbs, with an occasional piece of fruit; do not stick to all fruits or all herbs as this does not constitute enough variety. Aim to feed fresh foods at least once or twice a day.

Moderation – feed a minimum total of one large handful per pig, per day. Feed approximately equal weights of each veg. For “chunky” foods like pieces of apple, cucumber or carrot, the ideal size is no more than a 1 inch wide slice/3 inch square chunk. For herbs, a small handful/around 10 small-medium sprigs is plenty. For leafy veg, one very large leaf or 3-4 small-medium leaves is good.

From the chart below, select at least one food from each column for a reasonable, nutritious variety.

<u>Leafy / Crunchy Veg</u>	<u>Herbs</u>	<u>Fruit</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lettuces – any except iceberg. • Cabbages – savoy, red, chinese leaf, “fresh greens”, “spring greens”. • Watercress • Carrot / Parsnip • Green Beans • Broccoli / Cauliflower • Courgette • Sweetcorn • Celery • Beetroot 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coriander • Parsley – curly or flat • Dill • Mint • Basil • Tarragon • Thyme • Fennel • Chicory 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Apple / Pear • Banana • Cucumber • Strawberry / Raspberry/ Blackberry / Blueberry / Cranberry • Summer Squash/ Winter Squash • Melon – cantaloupe, honeydew, watermelon • Tomato • Peppers – bell/sweet peppers, all colours

You can go one step further when you are ready to understand a more in-depth analysis of guinea pigs diets by addressing the Calcium: Phosphorus Ratio, which can be potentially very beneficial for pigs prone to renal/bladder stones or chronic bladder problems (inflammation, cystitis). For more information on this, please visit Guinea Lynx: http://www.guinealynx.info/diet_ratio.html