

Feeding your pet mouse

The mice we keep as pets are the same species as the house mouse. They live alongside human beings nearly all over the world, eating what they can find. Mice are opportunists and great survivors. Sometimes they invade grain stores and live entirely on stored grain or find their way into our store cupboards and larders and eat whatever they find there. Others live in stables or near aviaries, living off the horse feed or bird seed.

What should I feed my mouse?

Mice, like rats, hamsters and gerbils, are 'omnivores', which means that, like us, they have evolved to eat mainly vegetable matter, but to keep in good health require some food of animal origin as well. The best commercial small mammal mix to feed your mice would be one that is sold in sealed packets, so it remains fresh, and that contains some protein of animal origin (look at the label on the back of the packet for this information).

What about fresh food?

Your mouse will eat fresh food too; they will eat almost anything, but to keep them in the best of health feed a selection of bits of fruit and vegetables each day - try different ones to see what their favourites are. You can also feed things like dried fruits, pieces of toast, pasta and rice. Some mice like sweet things like fruit yoghurts, but these should be small amounts and only occasionally to prevent obesity.

What about cheese and meat?

Mice are famous for being mad about cheese, although people who don't like mice find that they catch more if they bait a trap with bread rather than cheese! However, you can certainly try your mice with cheese and meat. Another good source of protein is eggs.

Is there anything I shouldn't feed them?

To keep your mice in good health, you should avoid feeding too much food containing lots of sugar, for example sweet biscuits or chocolate. You should also avoid feeding anything that is high in fat.

If you want any other information on health issues concerning your small animal please contact Hampden Veterinary Hospital on 01296 423666 and we will be happy to advise you.