

Jazzy Gerbil Diet - Include Fresh Foods

The low down on fruits and vegetables for your gerbil.

By Jessica Cordia

Some gerbil owners want to jazz up their gerbil's diet with fruits and vegetables. Gerbils get enough nutrients from a pellet rodent chow, but including fruits and vegetables will add variety to your gerbil's diet. Plus, your gerbil will look forward to these delicious treats!

Fruits and Vegetables

A good rule of thumb for picking out vegetables for your gerbil is the darker the better. Michael Dutton, DVM, DABVP, Weare Animal Hospital said, "Stick to dark green or yellow vegetables like broccoli and squash." The darker colored vegetables have more vitamins and minerals than lighter colored vegetables. Light green vegetables like iceberg lettuce don't have a lot of nutritional value.

Dutton said that most fruits are safe for gerbils to eat; however, avoid giving your gerbil too many fruits because high amounts of sugar are bad for your gerbil. Fruits and vegetables should only make up about 20 percent of your gerbil's diet. "That's about one gram a day", Dutton said.

Precautions

Don't feed your gerbil avocado or onion based fruits and vegetables. Avocado is harmful to some animals, and onions have toxic properties that cause onion poisoning.

Rinse well the fruits and vegetables before you feed them to your gerbil. Dutton said that most commercial produce contains pesticides that need to be washed off. If you are concerned about pesticides, buy the fruits and vegetables from a farmer's market or from an organic farmer.