

Nutrition of Small Mammals

Teacher's Notes

Aim

To demonstrate the requirements of small mammal nutrition.

Objectives

The student will be able to:

- Identify suitable foodstuffs for small mammals.
- Establish which food groups each foodstuff provides.
- Establish which foodstuffs are palatable.
- Recognise the importance of quantity.
- Discuss methods of presentation.

Content

This unit provides the basis for an understanding of what types of foodstuff are suitable, and palatable to the most common small mammals. The general principles are introduced, and it is intended that students can apply these to individual species of interest. This principle lends itself well to classroom discussion, independent research, or practical tasks, as applied within the suggested lesson plan:



Nutrition – suggested lesson plan

| Timing mm:ss | Activity | Indicative Content | Suggested tasks |
|-----------------|---|--|--|
| | Watch the film clip: Palatable foodstuff | What foodstuff can be fed? What individual ingredients does rodent mix contain? What food groups are being provided? What food groups must be fed with caution and Why? | Classroom discussion regarding feeding strategies. Allocate species, to group or individual, in order to carry out independent research. Discuss Modes of nutrition – carnivore, herbivore, omnivore. |
| | Watch film clip: Quantities | What quantity is required? What factors govern the quantity given? How is the feed quantified and measured? What sort of quantity is usually required? | Classroom discussion regarding the perils of over feeding. Independent research to identify suitable quantities. Discuss how age, sex, reproductive status and productivity may affect quantity fed. |
| | Watch film clip: Presentation | What are the options for presenting food? What are the options for presenting water? | Identify ways of using presentation of food to create enrichment. Discuss the advantages, disadvantages and suitability of various feeding and watering vessels. Design and produce an enrichment activity using food – implement and observe effect on behaviour. |
| | <p style="text-align: center;">Overarching Task:</p> <p>An interactive task is provided as part of this package, which requires students to match food groups to an appropriate food item; and identify what each food group is used for.</p> | | Complete the interactive task via the link provided. |

