Nutrition (cont.)

Lucerne cubes / pellets

Lucerne is a very appealing fibre feed supplement for rabbits and the pellets / cubes that we distribute have been dried and blended with other nutritious raw materials and pelleted together, giving the feed high quality fibre.

The protein is a minimum of 15% with crude fibre being 20%. The minerals and amino acids are well balanced, making our lucerne cubes / pellets a very good general rabbit feed supplement.

Feed the lucerne cubes / pellets to all ages of rabbits as a supplement to Profeeds Rabbit pellets, mainly for its quality crude fibre - also as a treat for your rabbits!

Quantities will be minimal, depending on the availability and intake of the main Profeeds Rabbit Pellets.

Greens and Vegetables

You need to avail a consistent type and quality of greens and vegetable leaves for your rabbits in addition to the rabbit pellets.

Suggested greens are lettuce, coriander, parsley, carrot tops and kale. Avoid tomatoes, broccoli and cauliflower.

Also avoid unfamiliar greens because some may be poisonous.

Hints and Tips

1. Females with litters should have Profeeds rabbit pellets at all times with clean fresh water.
2. Always have fibre in the form of grass hay and / or greens available.
3. Always have clean and cool water available.
4. Do not change feeds suddenly, this upsets the microbial balance and can lead to digestive and other stresses.
5. Not all greens and vegetables are good for your rabbits.
6. Sexual maturity is 4 to 5 months in smaller breeds but 9 to 12 months in giant breeds.
7. Gestation is 31 - 32 days after mating.
8. If looked after well, rabbits should produce litters until 3 years old.

PROfeeds
your feed & farm professionals

Profeeds Factory Harare
82 Woolwich Road, Willowvale, Harare
Telephone +263 (4) 661048, 666960, 667173
662196, 0772 125419, 0772 125421,
0782 798266, 0782 798266.
Toll Free: NetOne 08010030, Econet 08080189,
Telecel 0731326004. www.profeeds.co.zw

Rabbit feed range

PROfeeds
The performance feed

Introduction

Rabbit husbandry or rabbitry or cuniculture is the rearing of rabbits for meat or fur.

This practice has been in existence for centuries but has recently seen a dramatic increase in Zimbabwe as households seek alternative forms of nutrition and streams of revenue. The health benefits associated with rabbit meat also make it an attraction.

Rabbits adapt to most climatic conditions and entry into this enterprise has very low barriers.

Rabbits can be bred at any level.

Rabbit breeds

Common breeds in Zimbabwe are New Zealand White, Giant Chinchilla, California, Flemish Giant, Chinchilla American, Chinchilla Standard and Nyanga.

Scales of Production

Production of rabbits can be at any scale, but here in Zimbabwe this is mostly small scale.

Production is mostly in cages which are appropriately designed and husbandry is usually not complicated.

Rabbits require comfort provided by good housing, comfortable temperatures and humidity, and of course, water and the correct food.

They also require healthcare meaning bio-security and appropriate treatment when they fall sick.

Nutrition

Rabbits are hind gut fermenters meaning they digest much of their food in the caecum and colon (large intestine). With the caecum, bacteria and protozoa aid digestion of food eaten by rabbits.

It is therefore important for rabbit feed to be well balanced in all nutrients like protein, energy, amino acids, minerals and vitamins, including fibre.

Fibre

Fibre is needed for bacteria and protozoa in the caecum to stay in balance and function properly. Fibre stimulates gut motility and enables the rabbit to keep ingested food moving properly so that normal digestion takes place. Fibre helps reduce the incidence of diarrhoea / enteritis.

Therefore rabbits require adequate fibre in their diets, this is usually in the form of hay (dried grass). Even when a ‘complete feed’ pellet is fed some long-form fibre should also be offered. Insufficient total fibre in the diet may lead to a fur chewing habit.

Diarrhoea

Diarrhoea is treated by isolating the affected rabbits and a grass / hay only diet (no rabbit pellets) until the problem clears up in a few days.

Feeding

It is important to feed rabbits at the same time everyday. If feed has to be changed, it must be done gradually.

Nutrition solutions

With all the afore-mentioned facts carefully considered Profeeds has produced a quality rabbit feed.

Rabbit Pellets (17% CP)

This feed is made up of superior quality raw materials which are included in proportions that will ensure healthy nourishment for your rabbits. This protein level is 17% and the energy is pegged at a minimum of 10.5MJ/kg DM. The crude fibre level is pegged at a minimum of 8.5% to allow for the inclusion of all the high quality nutrients. This is also to allow the producer to offer extra-long crude fibre in the form of hay for the rabbits to balance out the total nutrition.

We advise on the following feeding recommendations:
100 grams per adult rabbit per day.
50 grams per day to young growing rabbits.
Allocate more for working males and pregnant does.

Please note that these quantities will vary depending on breed, size, weather, supplements available and age.

NB. Water should be clean and cool and made available at all times