



\*Please give your chinchilla 7 days to adjust in its new environment before handling and taking it out of the cage. That means no handling whatsoever. They may bark or seem scared, but it does take time to acclimate to the change in temperature, sounds, smell and environment in general. Play music to calm them down as I play it 24/7, and you can talk to them through the bars of the cage. Do not panic if your chinchilla starts barking, they are just adjusting.

\*It can take some time before the animal begins to drink from the bottle that you are using. We use glass tipped bottles, which are not carried by pet stores, so adjusting to a metal tip with a ball inside is new and different. Make sure that when you touch the end of the bottle that water comes out of it. Dripping is normal for gravity fed bottles and you're not going to stop it. The first day or two, the chinchilla may not drink a lot. Make sure the bottle is placed low in the cage so that it can reach it. Use fresh filtered water (reverse osmosis, bottled drinking water, PUR filtered or Brita filtered against giardia & cryptosporidium and coccidia). Please use water bottles only, not food bowls for the water.

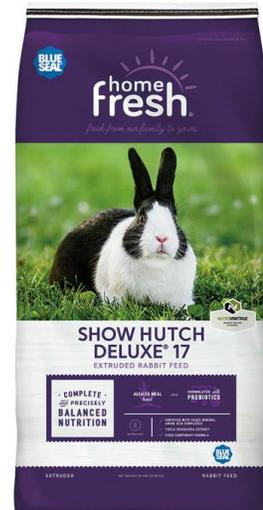
\*Do not change the feed that I provide to you immediately. It is provided so that the animal can transition to a feed that you choose. Use the feed for the first week and then begin mixing with the food you choose to use. A safe list of feed can be seen below. Food should not be weighed; it should be free fed at all times. Please do not limit the food your animal eats! They need more than a couple tablespoons a day! They will not overeat. They must have unlimited feed at all times.

Safe pelleted foods include:

**Pet Store Brands** – Oxbow Essentials (Red Bag ONLY), Mazuri, Manna Pro Chinchilla ONLY. Please avoid anything Kaytee brand, All Living Things brand feed or treats. No other pet store feeds are healthy.

**Farm & Feed Stores** - Blue Seal Rabbit Show Hutch Deluxe (This is what we use), Purina Rabbit Show, Manna Pro Show or Manna Pro Pro Rabbit, Small World Chinchilla (This is Manna Pro rebagged for Wal-Mart).

**Specialty** - Sherwood Chinchilla, Brytin Chinchilla, Tradition (Hubbard Life), Kline, Shoots Dr. Koch's if you can find them.



\*Chinchillas should never eat any fruits or vegetables, not even if they're dehydrated. Chinchilla diet consists of fresh pellets (alfalfa or timothy based seen above, no colorful pellets or fruits/vegetables or treats in feed), grass hays (such as timothy, bermuda, orchard). You can use alfalfa hay cubes as well to cut down on mess.



\*Do not introduce new chinchillas to your chinchillas for the first month, they need a month quarantine time. Separate cages are required. Do not allow your chinchillas around any other species ever - interactions with cats, dogs, rabbits, guinea pigs, rats - can be very dangerous and deadly!

\*Do not use cedar shavings, towels, corn cob or Care Fresh (which has been known to cause blockages and has a warning on the side label). Kiln dried pine, aspen or fleece liners are the only chinchilla safe beddings that I allow.



\*Animals under 6 months old should not have out of cage play time. You can handle your animals after the first week, but only for short periods of time. Play time after 6 months should be limited to 10-15 minutes at a time, 2-3 times a week max. Playtime is not required! Chinchillas can get hurt and overheat outside of the cage. Their blood sugar also can drop easily. Do not allow your chinchilla to free roam in any room. They must be supervised for short periods of time in a safe space such as a bathroom or in a playpen.

\*Plastic cages should not be used. Plastic pans should be 100% reinforced with fleece to prevent any chewing (such as the Ferret Nation cage). You can also purchase metal pans from Bassequipment.com under Ferret pans to fit them. Edges of the pans can be covered with 2x6 boards to keep the chins from chewing as well. We prefer all metal cages with wooden ledges for chewing and easy cleaning. Melamine custom built cages are also safe. Ledges should be made of kiln dried pine only. A baby chinchilla does not need an entire 2 level FN / CN cage, they will need to be shut off to one section for at least a month.

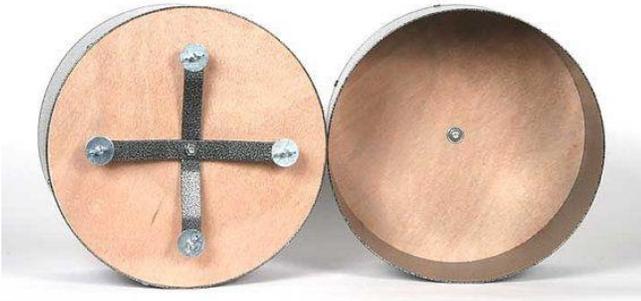


\*No treats for animals under 6 months other than oats. Safe treats that can be given after 6 months of age include a mini shredded wheat \*not frosted\*, rose hip, spaghetti noodle, old fashioned oats, rose buds, cheerio \*not frosted\*, safe woods to chew on (apple, pecan, etc). These should be given in moderation, 2-3 times a week at the max, only one at a time.



\*No death balls / run around balls - the plastic balls that they run around in ARE DANGEROUS! Chinchillas become overheated in them, covered in their own feces and urine, and they do not run naturally in these so you can harm their spine. No wire hay balls or racks – chinchillas can get their legs caught in them which could lead to amputation. No harnesses, as chinchillas don't walk, they jump. Ramps are not needed in cages, these animals can jump 6 ft, they don't walk up ramps.

\*Chinchillas purchased under 6 months should not use a wheel as they are burning off the calories they need to grow. They also should not have out of cage playtime - only to be handled for small amounts of time. Wheels that can be used after 6 months include the Leo Braun, Ed Wheel, Chin Spin and metal Flying Saucer, Pet Revolution wheel - they are not required, it's just a choice. No plastic wheels should be used, period. The mesh wire wheels are also not safe that pet stores carry. Wheels should be at least 15" so that chinchillas aren't ruining their backs running.



\*Temperature must be kept under 72 degrees at all times. I always suggest 72 degrees and under as the chinchillas here are kept between 60-65 degrees. When you move them to a higher temperature so quickly, they do get stressed out and can get sick, or even die of heat stroke. You must own an air conditioner; fans will not keep them cool enough. Air conditioning is a must in the summer or you risk heat stroke. Do not purchase a chinchilla unless you can handle these temperatures permanently and I do suggest having a backup generator for storms. Check your humidity, try to keep it under 50 percent at all times.

\*Occasionally, chinchillas will end up with fungus, or ringworm. This naturally lives on their skin and during times of high humidity and stress can pop up. Moving from one location to another is a stressful situation for your animal, so be mindful that it can happen. You may see a scaly area are the nose, eye or random other spots on the body where the fur falls out. To treat this, you clean the area with alcohol and add athletes foot powder in the dust bath (Tinactin, Lotrimin, Desenex). It can also be used in the bath as a preventative. Do not worry, the fur will grow back with time. We treat all animals with preventative here at our location to keep the risk down.

\*Dust baths can be given immediately, there is no reason to wait. I prefer to use Blue Cloud, Chill Dust or Blue Sparkle brands of dust, and I sell all of these. Dust purchased at the pet store isn't going to clean them as well unfortunately. Use a pyrex casserole dish, a metal pan, a glass fishbowl or candy jar to allow them to roll in. Do not use the plastic dust houses that you can find at the pet store; they will chew the edge of them and they are hard to get out of.

\*If your chin ends up with squishy poop – take away the feed and give timothy hay only. It can happen due to stress or change in environment. Once the fecal matter hardens again, add the feed back in. Know this can happen during a food change as well, don't panic. If you notice the poop actually smells, this could be a case of Giardia from poor water sources, so make sure you are using filtered water at least.

\*If your chin is hiding, that is normal – these are den dwelling animals that live in burrows (tiny holes) in the wild. In a new environment they can be absolutely scared of change and that is their way of hiding it. Please do not force them to come out of hiding. Leave them to get used to the cage on their own which can take a good week or so.

\*Cage cleaning – Clean your cage minimum once a week by changing out the shavings. You can use vinegar diluted water or clorox wet wipes to wipe down the cage and any urine spots. If you are using fleece, make sure that you wash pan liners 2-3 times a week and other cage accessories once a week. Do not dry fleece, leave it to hang out. Clean your water bottles every time that you fill it back up.