

Can't eat hay or won't eat hay?



Fussy rabbits explained.

In the wild rabbits will have a diet that is made up almost entirely of grass, leaves and other forages, but quite often our pet rabbits miss out on that variety. To make up for that we can feed them a variety of different hays and allow them to have access to grass in our gardens or by picking it from safe, pollutant free areas. Sometimes rabbits appear to be fussy and won't eat the hay we are offering. It can be very frustrating as hay is vital for good dental health. There is always a cause for this fussy behaviour.

Dental health.

The main cause of fussy eating habits is poor dental health. Some rabbits are genetically predisposed to bad teeth and others develop problems related to age or a poor diet early in life. Diagnosing dental problems is fairly easy. A good, rabbit-savvy vet will be able to examine your rabbit's mouth and decide if treatment is necessary and how frequently treatment will be required. With a comfortable mouth the rabbit may be more willing and able to eat foods that require plenty of chewing. It will just be a matter of finding out which type of forage they find most palatable!

Types of tasty forage

Timothy hay - a lovely green, soft leafy hay with plenty of seed heads.

Meadow hay mix - often a blend of rye and timothy grass with rose or marigold.

Compressed forage blocks - hard blocks of compressed mixed grasses.

Readigrass - soft, green and fragrant dried ryegrass that is extremely palatable.

Alfalfa - fragrant, green legume with tasty leaves and stalks. This is suitable as a treat only; however it is not suitable for rabbits with bladder issues due to having higher calcium content.