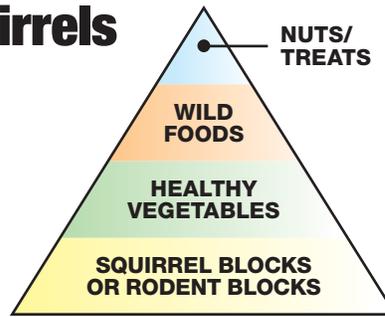


# Healthy Diet for Pet Squirrels

Your squirrel needs a balanced diet containing the right amounts of protein, fat, vitamins and minerals. A healthy diet should include the following:

- Squirrel Blocks or Rodent Blocks
- A variety of healthy vegetables
- Wild foods from outside
- Limited nuts and treats



## IMPORTANT TIPS:

1. Clean out your squirrel's food caches. He won't eat healthy foods if he's got a handy stash of nuts and treats.
2. Feed blocks, and no other food, in the morning when he's hungry.
3. Offer healthy vegetables and wild foods during the day.
4. No treats or nuts until your squirrel has eaten his healthy foods.

**SQUIRREL BLOCKS OR RODENT BLOCKS** provide essential vitamins, minerals, and protein.

Captive squirrels are much less active than wild animals, so they need a concentrated food such as Henry's® Healthy Blocks or other quality rodent block.\* It's the only way for your squirrel to get the nutrients he needs to stay healthy. A diet of nuts, seeds,

and vegetables alone is deficient in calcium, protein, B vitamins, vitamin D, and other nutrients. This can cause dull or patchy fur and may lead to *Metabolic Bone Disease* (MBD), which is fatal in squirrels.

\* Feed blocks according to directions: 2 Henry's Healthy Blocks per day, or a small handful (around 50g) of rodent blocks per day.

**HEALTHY VEGETABLES** provide fiber, fresh vitamin C, and micronutrients. Variety is key! Feed vegetables from Groups 1 and 2 freely. Feed vegetables from Group 3 in limited amounts (high in fats, starches, oxalates, or other compounds).

### Group 1: Vegetables

Arugula, bok choy, broccoli, brussels sprouts, cabbage (red or green), chayote, Chinese cabbage, cauliflower, mushrooms, purslane, watercress

### Group 2: Lettuces

Boston, bib, chicory, endive, escarole, iceberg, loose leaf, radicchio, romaine, etc.

### Group 3: Other

Artichokes, avocado, asparagus, carrots, celery, cilantro, cucumber, dandelion greens, fennel, corn (fresh), green beans, kale, parsley, radish, squash (all kinds), sugar snap peas, sweet potato, tomatoes

### AVOID:

Bell peppers (red/green/yellow), eggplant, collard greens, okra, rhubarb, spinach, Swiss chard, turnips, white potatoes

**TIPS:** Vegetables may be fed fresh, frozen, or lightly cooked. Avoid canned. Wash all vegetables before feeding. Some seeds and pits can be toxic.

**WILD FOODS** provide extra nutrients, amusement, exercise, and help keep teeth worn down.

### Safe Trees\*:

Apple, aspen, birch, black walnut, bottlebrush, cherry, dogwood, hickory, locust, magnolia, maple, mulberry, oak, orange, palm,\*\* pear, pine (3-needle and 5-needle pines), poplar, raintree, spruce, walnut

### Safe Plants:

Dandelion greens, hibiscus, lambsquarters, natal plum, lawn grass, plantain, purslane, red clover, rose hips, white clover, wood sorrel

### Safe Flowers:

Bottlebrush, camelia, carnations, chrysanthemum, daisies, marigold, moss rose, petunia, primrose, portulaca, roses, torenia, tulips/crocus (avoid other bulb flowers, like daffodils and lilies)

### Other:

Clean rocks, sea shells, antlers, or a clean box of dirt\*\*\* provide exercise, trace minerals, and help keep teeth worn down

### TOXIC:

Acorns\*\*\*\*  
Wild mushrooms  
Cardboard palm  
Sago palm  
All members of the cycad palm family  
Florist flowers†

\* Feed all parts: leaves, branches, buds, flowers, seeds/cones. \*\* Certain palms (cycad family) are highly toxic. \*\*\* Do not use bagged potting soil. Dirt may be sterilized by baking in a 250 degree oven for 30 minutes. Avoid dirt from areas where raccoons frequent, as their feces contain a deadly parasite. \*\*\*\* Acorns can contain aflatoxin, a deadly poison. It is impossible to detect which acorns may be affected. † Florist flowers may be dyed or treated with pesticides or other chemicals.

**Note: Before feeding any unfamiliar wild food, check to make sure it is not toxic. Gather items from areas that have not been sprayed with chemicals. Wash before feeding.**

**TREATS** are fun and can help with bonding, but should always be fed in small amounts after healthy foods have been eaten.

### Fruit\*:

Apple, apricot, banana, blackberries, blueberries, cantaloupe, cherries, crabapples, cranberries, grapefruit, grapes, honeydew, lemon, lime, mango, nectarine, orange, papaya, peach, pear, pineapple, pomegranate, raspberries, strawberries, watermelon

### Nuts/seeds\*\*:

Almonds, hazelnuts, pecans, peanuts,\*\*\* pumpkin seeds, sesame seeds, walnuts

### Insects\*\*\*\*:

Mealworms, crickets.

### AVOID:

Chestnuts  
Snack foods  
Sweets  
People food  
Fruit pits/seeds

### TOXIC:

Acorns†

\* Limit fruit to two pieces per day. \*\* Limit nuts to two per day. \*\*\* Roasted and unsalted only. \*\*\*\* You can buy mealworms and crickets live, dried, or canned from pet stores. Be careful with wild-caught insects as they can harbor parasites. † Acorns can contain aflatoxin, a deadly poison. It is impossible to detect which acorns may be affected.

## ALSO IMPORTANT FOR GOOD HEALTH:

**Exercise** Make sure your pet has daily out-of-cage time to run and play; a selection of branches and other things to climb and explore; and at least one active play session per day. This will help keep your squirrel healthy and happy.

**Maintaining a Healthy Weight** Being overweight causes many health prob-

lems and can lead to diabetes, especially in older animals. Healthy weights may vary, but in general, your squirrel should look sleek and well muscled and not have rolls of fat. If your squirrel is older, overweight, or less active, avoid foods that are high in sugars, starches, or fat.