



**R.A.S.C.A.L.S.**

RATS ARE EVERYWHERE AND LOVABLE CREATURES

We Love our Rats ♡

The South African Rat  
Fun Club

## Paula's special South African Rattie Diet ©

### Water:

Whenever possible use cooled boiled water or, filtered water to feed to your Ratamuffins. Tap Water is full of chemicals that I am sure should not even be fit for human consumption.

Use a sipper bottle or a bowl that can not be tipped over during Rattie wrestling matches.

I prefer using a bowl that attaches to the sides of my cages (the metal bowls that are made and sold for Birds & Parrots).

I just found that the water bottle did not work for me.

I use the Rattie's drinking water to give them any medication or supplements that they may need and the bottle was just far too 'fiddly' for my liking. I also kept losing all the little attachments... most of them down the kitchen drain :o/ ..... and cleaning the bottle properly was a drag.

The only draw back with the water bowl is that you have to provide fresh water every day. Apart from having a drink, Rats presume that a water bowl is a rather nifty 'multi-purpose' product... a Watering Hole, Public Pool, bath and, a garbage disposal unit which is ideal for dumping any unwanted bits of food, cage litter and squishy poops.

### Food, Flabulous, Food,:

Rats are convinced that taste is directly proportionate to size, i.e. the **bigger** the portion of food, the **better** it will taste. :o)

Try to resist the temptation to feed your rats copious amounts of Pizza. (All Rats I have discovered are Fast Food connoisseurs), but just because it tastes delicious does not mean it is good for them.

The ideal Rattie diet should be low in fat, moderately low in protein and high in carbohydrates. Try whenever possible to avoid salt and sugar.

'Pet Shop' Rats/'Feeder' Rats will often initially refuse to eat any fresh foods. I suspect that this is because these poor little Rats have never before tasted anything besides Sunflower Seeds and Dog chow. :o{

Rats are generally very skeptical about a 'new' food. I have heard that this is because Rats are not able to 'bring up' if they eat something that makes them sick.

So if you give your Ratties a 'new' food, it could take them a while to try it out. Rats will often take a little bite of a 'new' food and wait an hour or two, before feeling confident that they can eat every last morsel without getting ill. So you must persevere and continue to offer your Ratties small bits of different fresh foods everyday. Your Ratties will be much happier and healthier for it.

Fresh wholesome foods should make up about 20% of your Rats diet.

### **Fruit & Vegetables:**

Rats generally love all Sweet Ripe fresh fruit and vegetables:

Berries	Melons	Cherries
Pears	Plums/Prunes	Peaches
Bananas (Ripe)	Grapes/Raisins	Papaya
Apples	Cauliflower	Broccoli
Tomato	Pumpkin(cooked)	Squash (cooked)
Peas	Carrots	Beans (cooked)
Fresh Corn	Leafy Greens	Etc. etc. etc

### **Proteins:**

Rats really do love the stuff and, if left to there own devises will dive under your furniture in search of 'rouge' Crickets, Moths and other insects!

Rats (for some reason) find insects particularly tasty treats. :o/ and nothing beats a 'crunchy Cricket feast'!!! :o/.....

Rats will eat boiled eggs, cheese, ham, turkey, smoked salmon, tuna, Fish fingers and dog biscuits like you have been neglecting their needs and starving them half to death.

With the exception of pregnancy, lactation and growing baby Rats Proteins should constitute about 18% of an adult Rattie's diet.

### **Carbohydrates:**

These are the breads, pastas, Rice and cereals.

Rats love Italian and Chinese cooking .... Nothing and I do mean nothing, beats a big bowl of Spaghetti Bolognese or a Seafood Chow Main! They will also devour plain popcorn (but try not to give them too much because of the carcinogenic qualities of corn in ratties) cream crackers and a slice of tasty seed bread.

Try to give your Rats wholewheat and multigrain products as much as possible. These products are generally higher in vitamins and minerals as apposed to the more 'refined' and 'processed' Carbohydrates.

### **Treats:**

Treats should only be fed to Rats in moderation.

Rats are greedy little gluttons. You will soon be struggling to differentiate between the family cat and the fat rats that are bursting at the seams. (I have two rats that like their owner are in serious need of a 'weight management program').

Even if your sweet, charming, little Ratties insist on begging for treats all day, everyday, resist the temptation..... and try your very best to ignore them when they hang off the cage bars, beg and stare at you with those pleading, soulful little eyes and cute flapping ears.

Keep Rattie treats 'relatively' healthy or as healthy as possible.

The consensus is mixed as to whether you can/cannot feed Rats chocolate. So I would have to suggest that you don't feed chocolate to your Ratties. (They really don't need it anyway!)

Don't feed your Rats sweets or **any carbonated/fizzy drinks as rats cannot 'bring up' or burp and it could make them feel ill or bloated!**

Rats will grab treats with both hands and, eat them while glaring at you and his cage mates..... Do not EVER even try to suggest or expect your Rattie to share his fabulous treat. :o)

These are some treats that my Ratties LOOOVE:

Nuts in shell but beware of mouldy nuts that can "poison your babies)	Granola Bars (Little bits)	Yoghurt lopped rice cakes
Banana or Bran Muffins	Philadelphia Cream Cheese	A little lick of my cappuccino ;o)
Special K bars (Little Bits)	Avocado	Purity First Food Rice porridge

\* Also look out for seed treats sold especially for birds but beware of too much corn and mouldy nut products – My Rats love 'KAYTEE' healthy bits for parrots.

Those in the know, don't really seem to know if rats **need** 'chew' treat's. Some say that Rats will or should automatically grind their teeth and wear them down. Whatever the case is, Rats sure do enjoy a bit of 'recreational' chewing!

Chew treats might just help to deter your Ratties from occasionally chewing on their cage bars, their hammocks, your new outfit, best bra, and your antique furniture. ;o/

It is my personal experience that Rats will never chew the expensive wooden chew toys that lie around discarded and neglected in their cage. New Chew Toys will be sniffed and thoroughly splashed with that rather special Rattie 'Parfum', but I Kid you not!! Chew Toys will never be chewed on.... Not even once.....not even for effect....!! :o/

Try these:

Fresh Greenies	Raw (uncooked) pasta	Dog Biscuits
Rusk's	Nuts in shell but not peanuts and watch out for mould	Cardboard boxes

\* My Rats love chewing on Wine Bottle corks .... Umm! Wonder why ;o)

### Supplementation:

It is a good idea to give your Ratties a Vitamin & Mineral supplement – I give my Ratties half a teaspoon – 'Vital Choice' Children's multivitamin syrup in their water every 2/3 days. (It tastes great and my girls think its cooldrink) ;o)

### **CAUTION!!**

If your rats are out their cage and running around be aware of what is lying around!

Rats insist on 'taste testing' everything they can possibly get their teeth stuck into and, will eat Lead and other Poisonous substances or chemicals and Toxic Plants. They will chew on and eat Tobacco, used Teabags, Furniture you inherited from your Grandmother , ridiculously expensive Sunglasses and that fabulous pair of Shoes you just bought ;o)

**As a general rule**, if it is Toxic/Poisonous, Expensive, Precious or Valuable to you, your rats will find it, and they will eat it. These things are best kept out of Rattie reach!

### Breakfast:

Our Ratties usually end up eating whatever my son is having for breakfast.

Yoghurt with Fresh Fruit and a slice of toast.	'Pronutro'. (With Soya Milk or regular Cows milk)	'Jungle' – Oats o' Easy
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### Dinner:

Our Rats eat whatever we are having for dinner. I also give them a little bowl of Frozen Mixed Vegetables that I warm slightly by pouring a little boiling water over, and then drain.

Uneaten fresh food should be removed everyday. Rats will stash and hide everything they can get their little hands on.

You, will have to conduct and carry out regular 'health and safety' inspections, on their sleeping quarters ..... or anywhere else that they like to stash their 'stuff'

### Dry Mix:

The Dry mix is available to my Ratties all day for snacking on.

I have bought rat blocks for my rats before, but they are really hard to find in local pet shops, and the Rats refused to eat the stuff. I eventually had to throw the whole lot out. The Rats were ecstatic and threw a huge party in celebration!!!

Since Hamster, Guinea Pig or Rabbit food is not nutritionally complete or suitable for Rats, I then started mixing my own 'concoction' as many Rat owners find that they have to do.

Try and somehow encourage your Rats to eat up all of their dry food mix. Rats will pick and choose, and tend to eat only the best loved bits first, and then, they will not receive the full benefit of a complete diet.

I have tried to encourage my spoilt brat Rats to eat up all their dry mix by leaving it there for a few days (the idea was that they would have to eat it all up or starve)!!!

Needless to say the Rats were not **impressed** with my 'grand plan', and they immediately started 'protest action' by peeing in their food bowl.... When I initially failed to notice this display of disapproval and dissatisfaction, the Rats promptly proceeded to toss a few poops into their food bowl. ;o/

So that was the end of that.... Now, I change the dry food every two days, even if the brats have not eaten it all up.

I make up this mix and my Ratties love it! I hope you Ratties will enjoy it just as much.

It could take your Ratties a while to try it out and get used to it, but once they realize that they will not be getting 3 cooked, chef prepared meals a day. They will literally dive into their food bowl. (I suspect that they are trying to get hold of all the best bits before, their cage mates get a chance)

Just pop all the ingredients into a **BIG** bowl and mix it all up. It does make a quite a large amount of food that lasts my 5 Ratties anything from 4 - 5 months. Store in an air tight canister to maintain freshness.

Occasionally you may have to vary the mix a little so that your Ratties don't get frustrated with the menu. Look for cereals and products that are low in sugar and sodium (salt).

Most of the ingredients listed below are available from any local grocery store or good pet shop:

- 1 x 300g - Box of 'Kelloggs - Special K' - Red Berries.
- 1 x 300g - Bag of 'Bokomo - unsalted Puffed Wheat'.
- 1 x 300g - Box of 'Jungle Oats'.
- 1 x - Box of 'Bokomo - Natures Source' variety pack breakfast cereals.
- 3/4 - 'Bricks' of 'Bokomo' - Weetbix (Broken up into pieces)
- 3 x 40g - Bags of 'Provita Multigrain Bites'.
- 1 x - Bag 'Safari Breakfast Booster' (Nuts & Dried Fruit).
- 1 x 500g - Box 'Fattis & Monis - Wholewheat pasta shells' or 'Tri Color pasta spirals'.
- 1 x - Packet of 'multigrain rice cakes' - (Broken up in to small pieces).
- 1 x 500g - Bag 'KOO' - 'Pearled Barley'.
- 1 x 500g - Bag of Chick Peas (These can also be sprouted and served as a fresh food or they can be roasted in the oven).
- 3 x Handfuls - Of 'Natures Source' Pumpkin Seeds. (Available from Dischem, Pick n' Pay and Health Shops)

3 x Handfuls - Of 'Natures Source' Dry Soya Mince/Soya Chunks  
(Available from Dischem, and Health Shops) Soy  
has anti-cancer agents

Or

2 x Handfuls - Of a good quality dry dog food but watch protein  
content.

1 x 250g - 'Raw' Oats – still in their shell – (Pet Shops)

1 x 34g - 'KAYTEE - 'Healthy Toppings' – (Various flavors  
available from good Pet Shops)

- The 'KAYTEE – Healthy Toppings' are expensive for a tiny little bag  
but, they really are such a treat – the Rats always scrounge around  
in their food bowl with their butts in the air, looking for those little bits  
of coconut. ;o)

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