

# The Governing Council of the Cat Fancy

## Giving Cats Care Forever!

### Feeding Your Kitten



The breeder from whom you purchased your kitten should be asked for a diet sheet or for a list of foods to which the kitten has become accustomed. Ignore the breeder at your peril, as he/she will know the likes and dislikes of your particular kitten and which foods have upset it.

Kittens may enjoy a varied diet but you must make sure that this is also a completely balanced diet. The special kitten diets which are sold are designed to have all the dietary requirements for a kitten and do not need supplements. Too high a level of vitamins and minerals can cause as many problems as too low a level. If you are feeding your kitten on fresh food you will need to supplement it, but you will need to know what is lacking in the diet; if in doubt ask your veterinary surgeon about this. Do not feed your kitten too much of any fresh meat or offal. Changes in diet should be made gradually.

Four meals a day should be given at three months, reducing to three meals at about 6-7 months. During this period the size of the meal will increase from about a tablespoon to about two thirds of a cup, but this is only an approximate guideline; kittens will vary and should be fed according to appetite. When growth slows at about a year, two meals are usually sufficient. Your pet will often decide which meals are no longer required by leaving one of them, or showing little interest in it.

Meals may be varied, for example:-

Breakfast – Meat

Lunch - Egg or tinned food, or milky food if tolerated

Dinner - Meat or fish

Supper - Egg or tinned food, or milky food if tolerated.

Breakfast and lunch, dinner and supper can be reversed - feed what is most convenient to yourself. If you have little time, serve something quick and easy and save meals which need more preparation for when you have time to do this.

#### *Content*

Pet Foods - Commercial cat foods can be excellent; try different flavours and varieties. Good quality tinned cat foods or complete dry diets have all the necessary nourishment and vitamins in the correct proportions. However, some varieties may be too rich to be the sole diet of some individual kittens and may cause diarrhoea.

Be aware that your cat will need to drink frequently if it is eating dried foods. Some dry complete diets are a very concentrated food source and can cause obesity if too much is fed. Beware of cats becoming 'hooked' on dried food and refusing all else.

Meat - Rabbit, chicken, turkey, beef, lean mutton, good horsemeat (if available), fresh meat scraps from the table, kidney, heart, liver (lightly cooked and in moderation), raw mince of good quality. Take care to

remove bones from chicken and rabbit as these may splinter and cause damage. A larger non-splintery bone is good for a kitten to chew, especially when it is teething at 5-6 months. (A large chop bone with the splintered end removed is good and is small enough for the kitten to play with but be careful if you have a dog who could steal it).

Fish - Boned, cooked coley or other white fish, sardines, pilchards, etc. Although a good food, fish should not be fed too frequently and is quite unsuitable to be the cat's sole diet.

Eggs - Raw yolks (not whites) or cooked (scrambled) whole eggs. (if evaporated milk is fed this can be used for scrambling eggs). Scrambled eggs mixed with sardines or pilchards are often enjoyed. (N.B. avoid raw eggs whilst there is still a risk that they are a source of salmonella poisoning).

All cats enjoy chewing grass, and should be allowed to do so. If this is not available it can be grown in a pot. (Grass seed is available at some pet shops, as are cartons of 'Pussygraze' or similar products, already planted and ready to grow). In this respect watch your house plants as some are poisonous.

**Fresh clean water must be available for your cat at all times.**

Some breeds tolerate milk, for others it is unsuitable, your breeder will advise. However, it is an extra, not a substitute for water.

© Governing Council of the Cat Fancy