

FREE PRINTABLE

Degu Food List

High in fiber. Low in sugar. Practical for every day.

A quick guide to a varied, plant-based diet, based on veterinary and animal-welfare sources.



THE THREE BASIC RULES

What matters every day

1 Always

Fresh, good-quality hay and clean drinking water must be available at all times.

2 Plant-based

Introduce suitable leafy greens, herbs and grasses gradually and offer a varied selection.

3 Low in sugar

Fruit, dried fruit, molasses and sugary rodent treats should not be fed.

A simple daily routine

- **Morning** Check and replace the water, top up fresh hay and observe eating behavior.
- **Throughout the day** Keep high-fiber forage available and divide suitable fresh greens into small portions.
- **Evening** Remove wilted or spoiled leftovers; check the drinking bottle or bowl for leaks and blockages.
- **Weekly** Weigh each degu and check weight trends, teeth, coat, chin and eyes.



Keep the latest version handy

Scan the QR code or open the food list online. You will find updates and the print-friendly PDF there.

degushirts.com/uk/degu-food-list-pdf/

The degu food traffic light

The food itself is only part of the picture: quantity, frequency and gradual introduction matter too. Introduce new foods one at a time and slowly.

GREEN

Core diet & rotation

Unlimited hay and water, varied plants

- Good-quality hay: fresh, dry and free from dust and mold; available at all times.
- Clean drinking water: available at all times; replace daily and check the bottle, nozzle or bowl.
- Suitable leafy greens, fresh grasses, wild herbs and flowers - correctly identified and pesticide-free.
- Bitter and leafy salads: chicory, endive, radicchio, lamb's lettuce (corn salad), oak leaf lettuce and rocket (arugula).
- Herbs such as dandelion, parsley and chamomile.
- A small, varied selection of vegetables: cucumber, fennel, kohlrabi, broccoli or bell pepper.
- Safe thin twigs and leaves, for example hazel, willow, birch, hornbeam, apple or pear.

AMBER

Occasionally & sparingly

Small measured amounts, not every day

- Carrot and other sweeter root vegetables only occasionally, in very small pieces.
- One nut, pumpkin seed or sunflower seed at a time as an occasional treat; these are very energy-dense.
- Measure seeds and concentrated feed. The TVT specifies 1 teaspoon of a suitable seed mixture per animal per day.
- Do not offer commercial complete feed as an unlimited extra. Check the ingredients for added sugar, molasses and dried fruit.
- For overweight animals, dental problems, suspected diabetes, young animals or illness, ask a veterinarian to tailor the ration.

RED

Do not feed

Unnecessary or avoidable risk

- Fruit and dried fruit - whether fresh, dried or included in a mix.
- Sugar, honey, syrup, molasses, sugary drops, snack sticks and yogurt treats.
- Plain grain or muesli mixes and uncontrolled energy-dense feed.
- Rabbit, hamster or gerbil food, and chinchilla mixes containing dried fruit.
- Bread, baked goods, breakfast cereals, seasoned foods and other table scraps.
- Salt or mineral licks.
- Unknown or pesticide-treated plants, and spoiled, fermenting or moldy food.

IMPORTANT

Low in sugar does not mean dry food only

Degus need fiber and suitable fresh plant material. According to the TVT, a dry-only ration does not adequately support healthy tooth wear.

How to keep fresh food safe

- Use only correctly identified, pesticide-free plants and wash them thoroughly.
- Introduce one new food at a time, starting with a small amount and increasing it over several days.
- Remove leftovers daily. If stools become soft or your degu seems unwell, stop the new food and seek veterinary advice.

Change slowly, observe, act

A good list only helps if the digestive system has time to adjust and changes are noticed early.

4 STEPS

- 1 Start with only one new food.
- 2 Begin with one small leaf or piece.
- 3 Monitor stools, appetite and behavior for several days.
- 4 Increase slowly only if it is well tolerated.

PELLETS & NUGGETS

Sources take different approaches. The German TVT (2023) considers compressed pellets unsuitable and recommends a plant-based ration with measured seeds. The RSPCA and PDSA, by contrast, allow a small measured portion of degu nuggets without added sugar or molasses.

In practice: do not combine several concentrated-feed systems freely.

If in doubt, ask a veterinarian experienced with rodents to tailor the ration.

WARNING SIGNS

Do not wait if a degu stops eating

A degu that stops eating needs urgent veterinary attention. Contact a veterinarian experienced with rodents immediately.

- marked weight loss or a sudden change in food intake
- drooling, a wet chin, difficulty chewing or dropping food
- unusual or loose stools, a bloated abdomen or a marked change in behavior
- drinking or urinating much more than usual, or cloudy eyes

Evidence base

- Tierärztliche Vereinigung für Tierschutz (TVT): Merkblatt Nr. 154 - Degus, June 2023. [tierschutz-tvt.de](https://www.tierschutz-tvt.de)
- Ewringmann A., Glöckner B.: Leitsymptome bei Meerschweinchen, Chinchilla und Degu. Thieme, 2nd ed.; overview: [tiermedizin.thieme.de](https://www.tiermedizin.thieme.de)
- RSPCA: What To Feed a Pet Degu. [rspca.org.uk/adviceandwelfare/pets/rodents/degu/diet](https://www.rspca.org.uk/adviceandwelfare/pets/rodents/degu/diet)
- PDSA: Degus as pets - What do degus eat? [pdsa.org.uk/pet-help-and-advice](https://www.pdsa.org.uk/pet-help-and-advice)
- Schweizer Tierschutz STS: Merkblatt Gewöhnlicher Degu, 2019. [tierschutz.com](https://www.tierschutz.com)
- Edwards M. S. (2009): Nutrition and behavior of degus. *Vet Clin North Am Exot Anim Pract* 12(2), 237-253. DOI: 10.1016/j.cvex.2009.01.003
- Maekawa Y., Suzuki K. (2017): Preferred diets and postprandial blood glucose in degus. DOI: 10.11266/jpan.20.1_7

This guide provides general information only. It is not a substitute for veterinary examination, diagnosis or individual dietary advice. Sources last reviewed in August 2026.



Save and share the food list

Find the latest version, more explanations and the download on DeguShirts.com.

degushirts.com/uk/degu-food-list-pdf/