

# SO YOU'VE ADOPTED A GUINEA PIG... HERE'S WHAT YOU'LL NEED!

To help you start off on the right "paw", here are some things your new friend should have ready at home!

## Food

Here at the shelter we feed our guinea pigs oxbow brand pellets. We give 1/8th cup pellets in addition to unlimited timothy hay. It is best to purchase food pellets and hay without seeds, dried fruit or other additions, as those things should only be given as treats. In addition to hay and food pellets, fresh vegetables are an important part of a guinea pig's diet. Your adoption counselor can provide you with a list of acceptable fresh foods for your guinea pig. Fruit can be given in moderation as a sweet treat! Water should always be available in an appropriately sized, leak-free water bottle.

## Litter box

While it is not always possible to litter train a guinea pig, it is not a bad idea to offer a litter box. Guinea pigs poop where they hang out, and if they hang out in the litter box, you might be in luck! Keeping timothy hay and an absorbent, paper or wood based litter in a litter box is a great idea. Pooping where you eat may not sound okay to you, but it works for many small animals! Corner litter boxes or small plastic litter boxes designed for kittens work great. Keep in mind the larger the box, the more likely your pig is to hang out in it!

## Toys

Just like any other animal, guinea pigs love to play and have new and interesting experiences! Natural wood chew toys, apple branches, crumpled paper, paper towel or toilet paper rolls, hay/grass chews, cardboard boxes and tunnels all make for a guinea pig great time!

## Bedding

Here at the shelter we use reusable pee pads and fleece bedding. These are washable and reusable and keep your guinea pig's home clean, comfortable and lower the risk of urine scald. Soft, paper based bedding can be used, however it must be changed often and can get expensive quickly. Guinea pigs love soft fleece blankets, soft small fleece beds or "cuddle cups".

## Additional Items

"Critical Care" is a product that is great to have on hand. It is designed to help jump start gut health if your guinea pig has decreased appetite. Refusal to eat can be very dangerous for guinea pigs and can be indicative of bigger health problems, and critical care is able to be force fed to make sure your guinea pig has a full belly. Please note any lack of appetite should be discussed with a veterinarian. A small animal pen is another great item to have for a guinea pig to allow for out-of-cage time. Hanging out in a pen with your newly adopted guinea pig can be very beneficial to your bonding process!