

Rat Enrichment



ENVIRONMENTAL ENRICHMENT

Housing/Environment: Sani-chip bedding is used for all rat cages

Structural Enrichment: Polycarbonate tunnel (Amber color) currently used for rat cages, when adequate space allows. Rats that are too large to use tunnels (or tunnels minimize floor space significantly) may have tunnel removed or can be accommodated with a “Fat Rat Hut” (Red color)

Sensory: Eco-bedding® (crinkle paper); ~1 cup/handful at cage change

Manipulanda: Wood block for gnawing. Distributed to all new rat cages, is transferred at the time of cage change. An additional block is distributed or block replaced when the block is < ¼ it's original size.

Nutritional: Aside from standard feed (Purina Lab Diet® RMH 3500), Nutritional enrichment is not used as a standard for this species. Additional food items should be approved prior to use.



SOCIAL HOUSING

Rats should be maintained in the social groupings that they were procured in. According to space rats may be moved to larger caging. (refer to Overweight Rat Housing Guidelines). Single housing may occur for reasons justified by protocol or policy
<http://is.partners.org/aniweb/enrichment.htm>



EXERCISE

For this species, cage space provide adequate opportunities for physical activity

CCM Cage Change Standards

Polycarbonate Structure

- Structures should be moved with the rats at the time of cage change
- Structures should be changed when soil level prevent visualization of rats
- Structures should be disposed of when they become cracked or clouded (refer to disposal VC)

Wood Block

- Transferred at the time of cage change.
- An additional block is distributed or block replaced when the block is < ¼ it's original size.

According to the Enhancement Policy; No animal is exempt from all forms of environmental enrichment and any exemptions to social housing or exercise should be considered for only the minimal amount of time or restriction necessary.

If Enrichment used is out side of the standard, contact CCM Enrichment Personnel.