

Feeding grasscutters

FACT
SHEET

Now there are fewer grasscutters

The meat of the greater grasscutter is highly appreciated in West Africa. In some regions, forest clearing and over-hunting have reduced the wild population.

Raising grasscutters is easy

It has become necessary to rear grasscutters in order to still enjoy their meat. Raising grasscutters demands little expense. Grasscutters eat fresh forage.



Rearing grasscutters is an opportunity for African farmers

Food for grasscutters

Avoid gathering fodder in the morning, because there can be parasites on the fodder when it is covered in dew. Spread the fodder inside the building before feeding it to the animals the next day, to avoid giving them diarrhoea and bloating their bellies.

Choose mature fodder. Plants that are too young can make the animals sick. Gather panicum grass only when it is in flower. Every morning, clean the cages to remove any feed that was not eaten the day before; then give the grasscutters lots of fodder.

At mid-day you can add some pieces of green papaya and mango to the feed. But fruits that are too ripe can cause diarrhoea and bloat. You can give the grasscutters some sugar cane, yam and cassava, cut into pieces. Do not give them too much sugar cane because it can cause tooth decay. Do not give them too much yam or cassava, because if the grasscutters get too fat it will be difficult for them to reproduce. And the bitter varieties of cassava are toxic.

In the afternoon, you can give them fodder again, or cassava stalks.

Grasscutters' teeth keep growing their whole life. If the teeth get too long, the animal will have a hard time eating. To avoid that, place a piece of hard wood or a stone feeding trough inside their cage, so the animals can grind down their teeth.

The grasscutter can also eat concentrate feed. You can buy it or make it at home by mixing corn, oil cake, wheat bran, broken shells and salt. Mix the feed with pieces of cassava, yam or green fruits with a little water. If the concentrate feed is too dry it can get into the animal's lungs and cause breathing problems. Grasscutters always need to have water to drink.

Watch a full video on this topic at www.accessagriculture.org or contact one of the people below to get the video on DVD.

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