

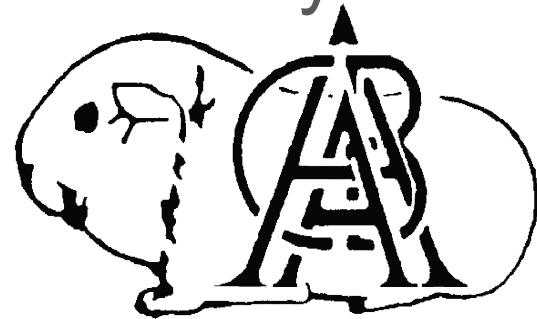
# Welcome to the World of Cavies



A Shooting Stars 4-H Cavy Presentation

# *What are Cavies?*

Cavies are what the wide public knows as Guinea Pigs. Cavies are used not only as pets, but also for showmanship and showing. An entire organization is even dedicated to the breeding and raising of cavies: The American Cavy Breeders Association.



# The Health and Care of your Cavy

For the next few slides we will be discussing the health and general care of your cavy. Facts such as what to feed it, what cage to use, and other natural behaviors.



# 1. Diet and Nutrition

What you need to feed your cavy is very important! You need to always know exactly what you are feeding your cavies. You should always look it up in certain cavy care books or on the internet or ask a friend before you feed your cavy a new food.

Appropriate foods would be:

- I. Pellets: Pellets contain important vitamins and minerals needed in your cavies diet. **DO NOT** feed your cavies rabbit pellets without an extra source of vitamin C, rabbit food does not contain vitamin C which is necessary for your cavies survival.
- II. Fresh fruits and vegetables: Fresh fruits and vegetables are always a nice treat for your cavies, but as I mentioned before always research if it is healthy for your cavy.
- III. Hay: Hay is a light snack for cavies who can get bored of the same old pellets and is normally accompanied by pellets. Always use fresh and high quality hay!
- IV. Vitamins and Minerals: Just like us, your cavy needs essential vitamins and minerals to survive. Always make sure they're getting the nutrients that they need

## 2. Cages and Homes!

Selecting the right home for your cavy can be extremely difficult. You want to select a cage that has both plenty of room to play and run around in, but also a hiding place in case they need some peace and quiet. You must also put into consideration that cavies and guinea pigs are social animals that normally need a friend. If you can, consider acquiring a second cavy so that your pet doesn't get lonely.

### 3. Feelings and Behaviors: Page 1

Cavies and guinea pigs have a lot of feelings and emotions, but unlike humans they can't express them through words. Because they can't talk cavies use sounds and body language to communicate and express feelings. Cavies make dozens of noises and each means a different thing for the next few slides we will try to cover the different noises a cavy can make and what they mean.

I. Wheeking: Wheeking is a common noise that normally represents excitement or contentment, during times such as play time or feeding time.

II. Purring: Purrs can mean different things depending how they sound. For instance a short and deep purr normally represents that your cavy is happy. While a short and high pitched purr can represent terror or pain.

## 3. Feelings and Behaviors: Page 2

III. Teeth Chattering: Teeth Chattering is a sound that means that you have one grumpy cavy. Teeth Chattering is a sound made when a cavy is agitated or angry normally when being crowded, thrown around, or touched in the wrong spot.

IV. Hissing: Like teeth chattering, hissing shows that your cavy is angry and should be left alone for a while.

V. Cooing: Cooing is a common noise that a female cavy makes that signifies her young to come to her, or follow her. It is also a noise that a guinea pig will use to tell her young that it is feeding time.

### 3. Feelings and Behaviors: Page 3

VI. Shrieking: Shrieking is a high pitched squeal that sounds the alarm that your cavy is in pain or in trouble.

VII. Whining: This sound is a soft moaning squeak that means your cavy is annoyed or dislikes something you or another guinea pig is doing.

VIII. Chirping: Chirping is a sound your guinea pig can make, what it means has a lot of speculation. Scientist believe it is a noise made when in a content trance-like-state.



## 4. General Care

In this next section we will discuss the different responsibilities that you must understand to own a cavy.

- I. First, you must always remember to feed your cavies, try to make a schedule.
- II. Secondly, annually clean your cavies cage, make sure it doesn't get too dirty.
- III. Thirdly, care for your cavies, trim their nails, brush their coat, and remember to play with them.
- IV. Finally, plan monthly trips to the vet, just like you need to get check ups, you need to make sure your guinea pig isn't sick or has any other problems.

## 5. Special Needs Cavies

Some breeds of cavies have excessively long fur, and require extra special care. Here are some tips to keep those long-haired cavy happy and healthy:

- I. Groom their hair every day and make sure it doesn't get matted underneath.
- II. If the long hair gets dirty, simply brush it out and wipe the hair with a damp paper towel or rag to get out the stain.
- III. Always check a long-haired cavies underside whenever you get them out: it can get urine stains with such long fur, and that's extremely unhealthy.

# How to Properly Carry a Cavy

It's always extremely important to know how to hold your cavy. If you don't, it can cause damage to your animal, and that's never good.



*Always support the belly  
and bottom when picking up.*



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# Cavies come in more than one breed???

Cavies don't just come in one breed; they come in 13! These breeders at the American, American Satin, Silkie, Silkie Satin, Peruvian Satin, Peruvian, Cornet, White Crested, Teddy, Teddy Satin, Texel, Abyssinian, Abyssinian Satin. All of these are showable in any ARBA or ACBA sanctioned show.



American Satin



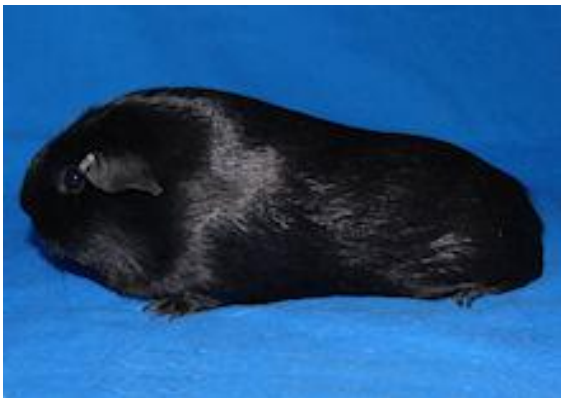
Abyssinian



Abyssinian Satin



American



Cornet



Peruvian



Peruvian Satin



Sikie



Silkie Satin



Teddy



Teddy Satin



Texel



## White Crested



# What is Showmanship?

Showmanship is another word for examination. It's a way of showing your cavy and getting judged based on how you work with the cavy and your knowledge of said-cavy. You are not required to do showmanship at a show if you don't want to, but it is a fun experience, especially if you want to win some ribbons.





## 6. Fun Facts about cavies

In this last section we will show some fun facts about cavies!

I. Male cavies are called boars, while females are called sows.

II. The reason that we call guinea pigs guinea pigs is because the latin word “guinea” means small so they are really just small pigs!

III. Another word for Cavy is Cavia Porcellus.

IV. Pups are baby cavies, they are born with fur and with eyes open.

V. In 2008 scientist estimated that they are over 1,362,000 cavies in the world.

VI. Guinea pigs originated from South America

We hope you enjoyed this presentation!

