

Feeding and watering routines



Lesson Intent:

By the end of this section you will be able to:

- Describe the importance of having a feeding and watering routine when working with animals.
- Explain reasons for keeping feeding and watering records
- List ways to recognise the onset of ill health in animals
- Reduce the change of causing ill health through potential poisoning or poor hygiene

Feeding and Watering Routines

It is extremely important to have a routine when feeding and watering animals (especially if you are feeding more than one animal). Reasons for this include:

- Reduces stress on the animal as they know what to expect.
- Reduces the risk of forgetting something
- Helps keep the animal's digestive system stable
- Helps with bonding of owner and animal (such as pet dog)
- Allows the keeper to work quicker



Keeping Records of Feeding and Drinking Habits



A habit is something the animal does regularly, for example, eating and drinking a certain amount or eating and drinking at a certain time or even eating food in a particular order (e.g. Pigs may eat fruit first, then vegetables).

Why is it important to keep accurate records of an animal's feeding and drinking habits?

A change in an animal's eating and/or drinking habits may indicate that the animal is unwell, in pain, stressed, in season or that there may be a problem with the food/water.

Keeping records also lets other people in the workplace know that the animals have been fed, which reduces waste and prevents the animals being over or under-fed.

Spotting Ill Health

- Ill health can be spotted by:
- Carrying out regular health checks: see video →
- Observing changes in the eating and/or drinking habits
- Spotting unusual behaviour (hiding away, vomiting, aggressive...)
- Observing sudden weight loss/gain when the animal is fed a regular amount of food



You can avoid poisoning by:

- Having a separate area where food is prepared, away from chemicals, medicines or other contaminants
- Preparing meat, fish and vegetables in separate areas
- Keeping different animal's feeds separate
- Isolating sick animals, and preparing feeds and feeding separately
- Check that the food is not poisonous - e.g. Avocado will kill some birds
- Rotate food so that the oldest is used first and never feed food that has gone off.



and observing good hygiene by:

- washing your hands before and after feeding
- washing equipment before use
- Washing all fruit and vegetables etc. before use



Providing correct diets in a Zoo



Recap and quiz (see separate work sheet)

- Can you describe **three** reasons for having a feeding and watering routine when working with animals?
- Explain **two** reasons for keeping feeding and watering records in the workplace.
- List **four** ways to recognise the onset of ill health in animals
- List **four** ways in which you can reduce the risk of poisoning or making an animal unwell while feeding.
- What was the reason for altering the Spectacled Bear's diet and what are the long-term benefits?
- Lastly having watched the clip on how to health check a dog, if it is safe to do so and you have permission, why not have a go at health checking your dog if you have one at home?