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Needs-based supply for more growth and vitality

WHAT DO FEMALES NEED DURING PREGNANCY AND LACTATION?



The new breeding year has already begun. Rabbit breeders are already looking forward to the birth of many rabbits. In order to make the start in life easier for the young animals and to promote their development in the best possible way, it is important to provide the female rabbits with all the important nutrients they need. The choice of food plays a key role here. In the following article, you will learn how to boost the quantity and quality of milk in your doe with the right feed.

Feeding the doe according to her needs is the linchpin of healthy and vital young animals. The feeding of pregnant animals has a direct effect on the health and vitality of the young animals - already in the womb. After birth, the type and amount of feeding has a direct effect on the milk yield of the doe and thus on the growth of the young rabbits. The greater the quantity of milk and the better the quality of the milk, the stronger and more resistant the young animals will be later and the greater their chance of surviving the difficult weaning phase safely.

Colostrum: The key to maintaining young animal health

Young animals get all the nutrients and energy they need for growth from their mother's milk. The first milk of the doe is also called foremilk, colostrum or colostrum. Besides proteins, fats, lactose, vitamins and minerals, it also contains immunoglobulins (synonym: antibodies), which strengthen the immune system of young rabbits.

Since rabbits are born without a fully developed immune system and the ability to absorb immunoglobulins decreases only a few hours after birth, they depend on an appropriate immediate supply of breast milk. Only a sufficient intake of colostrum makes the young rabbits robust and resistant to diseases.

High milk quantity and quality through adequate feeding

In order to produce enough colostrum, it is important to feed female heifers a balanced and sufficient supply of nutrients. Feeding only coarse feed is not sufficient to meet the high demand of the doe. This is extremely

important because undersupplied dams "melt down" body reserves to gain the missing energy and thus supply their offspring. If the body reserves are not sufficient, the milk yield inevitably decreases. An undersupply of the young animals and the associated loss of vitality and stagnant growth are possible consequences.

However, feeding the females fat beforehand has not proven to be a viable strategy for keeping the milk yield stable in the event of an undersupply: Overweight females are often lethargic, usually consume little feed as a result and thus drop in milk yield.

Feeding with pelleted complete feed for more breast milk

A scientifically well proven method to increase milk yield is to feed lactating heifers with sufficient pelleted complete feed. It has been shown that owners can more than double the milk yield of their animals up to the 21st day after whelping (see graph). For this, the feed should be offered to the mother animals for free disposal (lat. ad libitum). In contrast, the milk yield of animals fed only coarse feed drops sharply.



Feeding pelleted complete feed doubles the milk yield of lactating heifers compared to a diet with predominantly structural feed [mod. after Schlolaut (1995)] (© Deutsche Tiernahrung Cremer).

Quality feature of high quality female rabbit feeds

In order to meet the high demands of sows during pregnancy and lactation, a specific supply of nutrients is required. Feeding with precisely adjusted and specially developed special feeds shows its strengths here. One quality feature of such feeds is the so-called Kanivital-Komplex®: feeds with Kanivital-Komplex® have a nutrient-concentrated composition that meets the high demands of lactating females. At the same time, these feeds have a precisely balanced mix of health-promoting vitamins. Kanivital feeds stimulate the digestion of the parents and prevent the colonisation of harmful germs through prebiotic additives. In this way, they relieve the liver metabolism, strengthen the immune system and promote milk production and quality.

***deukanin energy*: A performance-orientated feed for pregnant and lactating females**

The high performance feed *deukanin energy* optimally meets the high demands of pregnant and lactating females of all breeds. The energy-dense feed is intended for feeding from the second half of pregnancy. In this way, *deukanin energie* comprehensively covers the additional nutritional and energy requirements of the doe for the formation of the placenta, uterus and foetuses as well as the fat, muscle and skeletal tissue and the mammary glands.

With its nutrient-concentrated composition, it ensures optimal care of the doe for the rearing of the young. Energy and protein components are present in sufficient quantities in the tasty pellet feed and are contained in a biologically particularly high-quality form. Natural emulsifiers help to prevent constipation, prebiotic components ensure the bacterial intestinal balance, have an immunostimulating effect and thus have a positive effect on the quality and quantity of the mother's milk. This makes *deukanin energie* makes a valuable contribution to optimal breeding condition during pregnancy and lactation.

Conclusion

- The way to stronger and more resistant young animals is to supply the doe with the necessary nutrients during pregnancy and lactation.
- Only adequately supplied females produce sufficient high-quality colostrum.
- Colostrum contains all the nutrients that young animals need to survive. At the same time, it promotes the growth and health of the young animals.
- The high energy requirements of the females should be met with the help of appropriate complete feeds. Appropriate free-choice feeding can double the milk yield.
- Suitable feeds for doe contain Kanivital Complex®. One such feed is *deukanin energie*.

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