



INSTRUCTIONS FOR FEEDING FERAL CATS

- 1. Feeding stations should be kept out of sight.** This is to protect the food from being contaminated or destroyed. Fresh water should be available and kept clean. Keep feeding stations out of sight, even if you are feeding in your own backyard. Only those persons feeding should know the exact location. Your neighbors may not be as friendly towards the feral cats as you are. **A front porch or the curb in a parking lot is not advisable. Improper feeding will put your cats in jeopardy. Respect for your neighbors and for the cats will have good results for the cats and their right to remain and be cared for. Think invisible!**
- 2. Dry food should be in feeding containers and covered to keep it dry and out of the elements.** This can require innovative customized special feeding stations, unless you are feeding at your home, a garage, carport or other sheltered areas. Food bowls or containers set in a solution of soapy water in a larger plate or container are good for ant control. Diatomaceous Earth is also an excellent ant deterrent. To order ORGANIC Diatomaceous Earth call 1-800-835-0123. Having dry food available will keep the cats close to their territory. The cats will not roam to beg and search for food in unsafe places if they have a permanent available food supply. Not all cats will show up for a scheduled feeding. Be sure there is enough food for everyone. When feeding wet food use the same instructions.

It is counterproductive to put wet food down and then take it up in 15-30 minutes, as has been suggested. Not all cats show up within that time period and you are just wasting your time, effort and the food. Use your common sense when feeding cats and change schedules when required. Your object is to not only feed, but be aware of newcomers so they can be evaluated and necessary steps taken. Kittens may also show up and need to be rescued along with Mom.

- 3. Have a regular feeding schedule.** If you are using dry feeders, they should be refilled, kept clean from debris and dirt. Food plates or bowls should be black or dark brown and concealed or picked up the following day to avoid exposing the feeding location and possible complaints from neighbors. If you feed at night, then the following morning would be the best time to pick up left over food and the feeding containers. Any obvious neglect could impact the ferals. **NEVER USE WHITE PLATES PAPER OR FEED OUT OF CANS.** This will create an unsightly mess and will draw attention to the feeding area. The more discreet you are in caretaking, the better for all concerned. **DO NOT be complacent when it comes to feeding. Many feral cats or kittens end up being euthanized in shelters or poisoned because of neglect in feeding and uncleanliness at their home site.**

4. **Chose the best time to feed wet food.** If the weather is hot, late in the evening would be preferable, as the food will not be exposed to the heat during the day.
5. **Be observant of those who show up for feeding.** Make sure everyone's ear is tipped. Check for injuries, appearance of illness, pregnant females, lactating females, kittens or any other unusual situations that might require trapping or vet care.
6. **Do not discuss the cats with strangers or offer information as to their numbers or where they are located.** Be friendly, and offer them the For Interested Person Document, a flyer or other information that is professional and offers you authority. If you are a graduate from our workshops, you have this information. You do not need to identify yourself to anyone you do not trust. If you have any problems, contact your local rescue organizations for assistance. Best to have a feeding partner and keep flyers and documents in the car for easy access. I cannot stress enough how important it is to keep printed For Interested Persons Document in the car has helped.

Our consulting line is available on our website at feralcatcaretakers.org or call (210)820-4122

7. **Take special care that the feeding area is kept clean from debris or cat feces.** More cats have lost their lives in shelters because of FECES. It is offensive and shows disrespect for the public and neighbors. Pay close attention to walkways, in front of entrances and so on. Keep a spray bottle with full strength white vinegar and spray all areas after pick up. No one wants to smell or step into feces and when there is no oversight, this can become a serious problem.
8. **Arrange for someone to feed if you are going on vacation or are ill.** A back up is always necessary as circumstances can change drastically in 24 hours. Do not let more than one-day go by without someone monitoring the cats and feeding arrangements.

We have an unspoken covenant with the feral cats and kittens to honor and care for them and to do all possible to see they are never abused or needlessly destroyed. Our quality of commitment will impact their lives and determine their right to be equally treated. Every choice we make should be with this in mind. They have much to teach us about ourselves. Never become complacent or let down your guard!

Dona Cosgrove Baker
President and Founder
www.feralcatcaretakers.org
Study the information under Caretaking

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