



# Barn Cat Information Sheet

## **Barn cat considerations:**

The cats need to acclimate with the new environment; they should be able to see people and other animals coming and going. The cat(s) need fresh air and light; their cage should be next to a window or in a center aisle/space. **Declawing a “barn cat” is strongly discouraged as that would be removing their first line of defense as an outdoor cat and their safety is greatly compromised. Also consider if you move, who will provide continued care for the cat(s).**

## **Supplies needed for acclimation process:**

- Cat food – dry is essential; wet food is a bonus
- We recommend Purina brand dry and Friskies/9-Lives wet
- Large water bowl
- Food bowls – separate bowls for wet and dry are ideal
- Litter – any kind
- Smaller litter pan, needs to fit within the containment door size for easy cleaning
- Soft blanket or cat bed
- A little house for the cat to hide in; a small cat carrier may fit in the cage. It is also helpful to cover the top of the cage with a blanket.

## **Acclimation process:**

- The cats need a regular feeding schedule; morning and night. The litter box needs to be cleaned every day.
- The water needs to be changed every day.
- Some people feed their cats wet food, specifically in the evening during the acclimation process, and continue that practice after the cage door is open to help ensure that the cat will return to the barn for the evening feeding. Then they close the cats into the barn or building at night to protect them from predators.
- Because cats can be highly allergic to seafood-flavored cat foods, and the high levels of phosphorus and magnesium cause urinary tract infections and kidney disease, it is highly recommended to only feed poultry and beef-flavored foods to your cats.
- The owners can usually tell how well the acclimation period is going by how the cats react when they open the door to feed them. If the cats are settling in comfortably, they will brush up against the feeder’s arm. (But this may *never* happen with “true” feral cats, even though they may decide to stay forever.)

## **Time to let the cat out!**

- After 3 to 4 weeks, tie open the door of the cage in the morning after feeding the cats.
- Continue to feed the cat(s) using bowls in the cage, and continue to change the water and the litter regularly.
- If you can get the cats into a safe place at night, like the barn or building where they’re fed, it will help protect your cats from predators.