

two white mice could multiply to 30,000. But the Hamster, with an early maturity (45 days), a gestation period of 16 days, and litters up to 15, is theoretically capable of increasing his tribe from two to 100,000 in a year!

Having probably the most responsive constitutions of all animals, their reactions in tests are more rapid and definite than any other animals commonly used in laboratory tests. They are susceptible to more human diseases than guinea pigs. They are found to be superior in testing respiratory diseases, tuberculosis, influenza, etc. Much use has been made of them in testing serums, drugs, and diets. No other animals lend themselves quite so suitably for educational purposes in teaching the basic principles of animal life. The short gestation period and rapid maturity make it possible to study the whole life cycle in one semester in school and colleges.

The "little bears" as they are sometimes called have many interesting characteristics and habits. They are nocturnal animals, that is, they sleep in the daytime and are awake at night. They are clean to the point of being finicky and have no trace of any odor. Hamsters consume less than 1/2 ounce of food per day, averaging about 1 1/2 cents per week. Greens and high protein pelleted feed are the basic items in the diet, but nuts, seeds, and grains are welcomed by Hamsters.

Two food pouches along the throat further distinguishes the Hamster. A hungry Hamster will stuff half his weight of grain or nuts into these pouches and will disgorge the load only after a

secure hiding place is found, or the load becomes too burdensome.

The Hamster is an immigrant from Syria, the first pair coming to this country in 1938, and now that pair has millions of descendants.

By January 1, Hank will have approximately 1,000 and after that it will take a machine to keep count of them.

Hank has a very convenient set-up for housing his fast-growing family. In his garage, he has 18 boxes neatly arranged and at the rate Hamsters increase, none of these boxes has a "For Rent" sign hanging on them. Hank knows that he can't build boxes fast enough to keep up with the new arrivals, so when his Hamster population outgrows the present quarters, he will sell the surplus ones back to the man from whom he purchased his first Hamsters. He may let some males go to friends since the male, the less aggressive sex, makes an ideal pet for children.

*This is a picture of one "family" of Hank's Hamsters. The baseball was placed on the table to show the size of the little animals in comparison. It was quite difficult to get a picture of the "family" as its energetic members kept diving off the table, head foremost.*

