



By Cheryl Johns from Liverylist

COPING WITH PEST INFESTATIONS ON YOUR YARD

LAUNCHED IN 2011, LIVERYLIST IS THE UK'S LEADING LIVERY YARD DIRECTORY AND RESOURCE FOR LIVERY YARD OWNERS, AND IN RECENT YEARS HAS BEEN WORKING TIRELESSLY TO DEVELOP AND IMPROVE THE QUALITY OF LIVERY YARDS FOR BOTH YARD OWNERS AND HORSE OWNERS

Shorter days and chilly autumn evenings are often a cue for rodents to seek shelter and food, and where better than a lovely yard full of horse rugs, bedding and feed.

Rodent infestations can cause a great issue for livery yards and

stables, causing damage to tack, rugs and equipment, and having feed bins and feed sacks ransacked.

A simple and effective way to combat this is to get yourself a yard cat!

Having a cat or two on the yard can greatly help control rodent populations, and even bugs and birds too, and farm cats normally require less maintenance than domestic cats. They will generally only need food, water, warm shelter, someone to keep an eye on them and a sufficiently large area for them to explore - with a stable yard and paddocks being ideal - and they can live all their life outdoors.

With the price of living increasing rapidly and issues with over breeding and feral cats, many rehoming centres

are seeing an increase in their intake for cats that would not suit a traditional domestic setting and are therefore much more difficult to rehome.

Projects such as Battersea Dogs & Cats Home working cats rehoming scheme can provide a new home for an abandoned cat suited to living in an outdoor environment. They are appealing to landowners, farmers, stables, riding schools and rural homes with outbuildings to come forward to help provide a safe home for cats that wouldn't be able to cope in a traditional domestic setting. Farms and stables can make a great alternative for these cats as it gives them space to explore, hunt, and exhibit their natural behaviour. It also gives them the choice and control over how

they live their lives, whilst providing a safe environment for them to live in and someone to offer the care they need. It also means they have their own territory with shelter and a food source without the stressful confines of sharing a home with people. And as rescue cats are rehomed having been neutered, there won't be the risk of uncontrolled breeding and a yard full of feral cats, and they can also help keep other feral and nuisance cats out of the area.

In return, they will help control your rodent population, and even if they don't have a huge hunting instinct, just their presence can help deter rodents. Even if the cats are not hugely sociable with humans or used to human interaction this will improve over time and who doesn't love a yard cat or two... or three!

You might think that another animal on the yard will only cost you more money, but they will save you money too. With each rodent they eat or deter, then that is one less pest that is consuming your feed or damaging items on the yard. It can also be great to have a 'communal' cat on the yard for the enjoyment of having a furry friend for your liversies and clients.

If you think you have a suitable setting to rehome a working cat, then get in touch with Battersea Cats & Dogs Home www.battersea.org.uk/rehome/cats/farm-cat or your local rehoming centre.

www.liverylist.co.uk

