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Barn Cats

The term "**barn cats**" refers to any cats that do not adapt to indoor homes. Sometimes the cats are **feral**, which means they were born and raised in the wild with little or no human contact. Others are **strays**, cats that were once domestic but reverted to unsocialized behavior after long periods of surviving on their own. Still others are **indoor/outdoor cats**. Indoor/outdoor cats may be friendly but cannot be litter-trained because of medical conditions or other problems.

Appropriate homes for barn cats

Barn cats need safe, permanent outdoor homes with one or more areas of weather-proof shelter and a continual source of food and clean water. They thrive on rural or semi-rural properties where they can put their natural hunting abilities to good use. Owners of dairy farms, stables and other properties where grain is stored will confirm that cats are a must to avoid rodent infestations! Those that tolerate human companionship also do well in homes where they can spend most of the time outside but can come indoors for food and warmth in severe weather.

Barn cat adoption process

Barn cat adoptions require an application and a small fee of \$25 is asked, simply to cover the microchip fees. (Of course, your tax deductible donations are always gratefully accepted!) The cats must be adopted during the spring or summer so they have sufficient time to develop the extra layers of fat and fur needed for outdoor life during the winter. We ask that you take two or more because they provide each other with companionship and snuggle together to keep warm. Like all animals adopted through the Nine Lives Foundation, barn cats must be spayed or neutered. Usually the procedure will already have been performed prior to adoption.

We usually do not allow callers to select the cats they will adopt and we cannot accommodate requests for specific colors, gender or other characteristics.

Care and handling

We recommend confining the cats to an enclosed area for several days following adoption. This helps them learn to recognize their new home and know where to return for food and shelter.

Most barn cats are extremely timid and fearful of people. Unless you have experience handling wild cats, do not attempt to touch them. Call a veterinarian or shelter volunteer for advice if a barn cat becomes sick or injured.

Indoor/outdoor cats may be friendly. Our volunteers can tell you if specific animals are able to be handled. Some feral cats learn over time to accept human attention. However, most animals that the Nine Lives Foundation adopts out as barn cats are unlikely ever to become household pets.