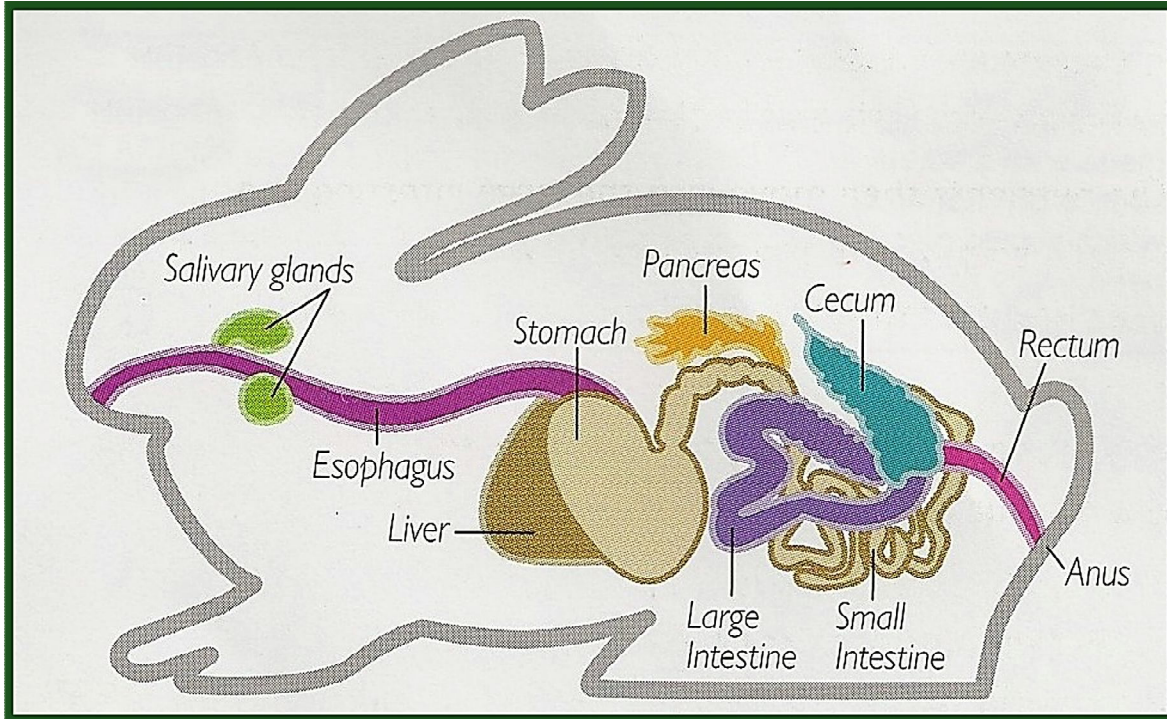


# Your Rabbit has a very special Digestive System

A Rabbit is a herbivore, just like a guinea pig or chinchilla, which means it eats only plant material. As a herbivore, the digestive system is uniquely adapted to digest a variety of both *digestible and indigestible* plant-based foods, such as high-fiber hays, leafy greens, herbs and pellets.



## There are two parts to this special Digestive System

- 1) After the foods are chewed and moved through the esophagus into the stomach, they progress through the small intestine where the high-fiber hay part of your pet's diet aids in moving the foods through smoothly and quickly.
- 2) Then things get interesting - the digestible and the indigestible foods go in two different directions:
  - a. The part of the food that has been digested in the small intestine moves in to the large intestine and is expelled from the anus as waste in the form of hard, dark feces you will see in the litter box...and maybe on the floor sometimes ;o) .
  - b. The rest of the food that has been only partially digested takes a little side trip to a special pouch called the Cecum, located where the small and large intestines join.
- 3) In the Cecum, these partially digested foods are fermented by healthy bacteria and broken down into nutrients.
- 4) The nutrients then move in to the large intestine and are eliminated from the anus in the form of soft, greenish, mucous-covered feces called cecotropes or "night feces".
- 5) Your Rabbit will immediately eat these nutrient-rich cecotropes, but you may occasionally spot one laying around.
- 6) Not only do the cecotropes provide important nutrients, they also keep the healthy bacteria in the intestines stabilized, helping to ensure good digestion.