Here are some tips to prevent them without poison.

1. Install raptor perches and barn owl boxes. Barn owls will help control gophers naturally and other raptors will help control ground squirrels.
2. Store all horse (or other animal) feed in a metal container with a tight fitting lid. Spoiled and uneaten food should be thrown away into a metal container with a lid and disposed of.
3. Regularly inspect for rat entry points and seal them up.
4. Backfill tunnels to discourage digging.
5. Bury galvanized steel mesh along the foundation (known as a trench and screen) to block tunneling.
6. Install a layer of concrete (known as a rat slab) to block tunneling.
7. Elevate your chicken coop by 18 inches to avoid rats burrowing beneath.

**DO NOT USE:**
- Snap traps in the open landscape or in your barn. They can maim and harm other animals.
- Sticky traps or glue boards. They cause horrific suffering and other animals get caught in them, including songbirds.
- Rodenticides: Rat poison kills birds and wildlife, not just rats. When a hawk, owl, or bobcat eats a poisoned rat, they too, can become very ill or perish of secondary poisoning. Rat poison can even harm horses and other farm animals.

**O.K. TO USE:**
- Electronic traps (only in safe locations) like the Raticator or other rat “zapper.”
- Cayenne pepper sprinkled on rat trails to deter them.
- Dry ice in rat burrows, outside but not inside your barn.
- Rat Fertility Control Products like Contrapest.

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