

Keeping of Backyard Poultry in the Municipality of Meaford

Zoning Permissions:

The Municipality of Meaford's Zoning By-law allows for the keeping of Backyard Poultry as an accessory use on a residential property.

Backyard Poultry is defined by the Zoning By-law as:

"a pullet or hen kept for companionship as a pet or for the purpose of providing food for the personal consumption of occupants of a dwelling on the same lot"

A *hen* is a domesticated female chicken that is at least four months old. Roosters are not permitted.

A building, shelter and/or animal enclosure for keeping Backyard Poultry must meet the standards of the Zoning By-law. The following table summarizes the requirements, though applicants should check the Zoning By-law (or talk with Planning Staff) to confirm the zoning on a lot.

Table 1 - Zoning Requirements for Poultry Shelter and Enclosure

Standard	What is this?	Requirement To Be Met	Notes	
Front Yard	The setback from the lot line you share with the street in front of your lot.	Be setback at least the minimum required for the dwelling on the lot and where in a settlement or shoreline area, be behind the front wall of the house.	Part 6 of the Zoning By-law gives the yard setbacks for each specific zone. Staff are happy to help you confirm the zoning and setbacks that apply to your lot.	
Exterior Side Yard	The setback from the lot line you share with the street beside your lot (i.e. on a corner lot)	Be setback at least the minimum required for the dwelling on the lot.		
Rear Yard Setback	The setback from the rear lot line (i.e. opposite the 'front')	Be setback at least 1.2m from the rear lot line – in the case of a through lot (where there are streets at both front and rear) this setback must be 5m.		
Interior Side Yard	The setback from a lot line you share with a neighbour	Be setback at least 1.2m from the interior side lot line.		
Lot Coverage & Floor Area	The amount of space on the lot that can be occupied by buildings, structures and enclosures.	The maximum lot coverage of all detached accessory buildings and structures on a lot less than 2.0 hectares in area is 5%, except on lots in the R1,R2,R3 and R4 zones where the maximum is 10%	A building, shelter or enclosure for keeping backyard poultry must not exceed 10m ² , inclusive of outdoor enclosure. This floor area counts towards the total 5% (or 10%) lot coverage maximum.	
From Adjacent Dwelling	The setback from a house on another lot.	Shall be setback not less than 10m from a dwelling on an adjacent lot.		

Registration and Permit Required:

By-law 77-2014 requires that Backyard Poultry be registered by the Municipality of Meaford and be authorized by permit. A short application form must be completed and submitted to the Municipality by the applicant

Prior to completing the form, an applicant must review:

1. The requirements of the Zoning By-law
2. The OMAFRA Factsheet entitled “Biosecurity Recommendations for Small Flock Poultry Owners” available online¹
3. The Resource Kit entitled “Keeping Your Birds Healthy” distributed by the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs, available for direct order from OMAFRA online² or by calling the Agriculture Information Contact Centre 1-877-424-1300.

Both OMAFRA publications are available for loan from the Meaford Public Library, or for viewing during business hours at the Municipal Administration Office at 21 Trowbridge Street West (519-538-1060).

Standards for Care & Maintenance:

Section 2.4 of By-law 77-2014 outlines sixteen standards that must be met by a person keeping hens as Backyard Poultry.

Table 2 - Standards for Care & Maintenance

A person who keeps one or more hens as Backyard Poultry shall...	
Provide each hen with at least 0.37 m ² of coop floor area, and at least 0.92m ² of covered outdoor enclosure	
Provide and maintain a floor of any combination of vegetated or bare earth in each outdoor enclosure	
Provide and maintain, in each coop, at least one roost giving 15cm of space per hen and also one nest box per four hens	
Keep each hen in an enclosed area at all times	
Provide each hen with food, water, shelter, light, ventilation, veterinary care, and opportunities for essential behaviors, all sufficient to maintain the hen in good health	
Maintain each hen enclosure in good repair and sanitary condition, and free from vermin and obnoxious smells and substances	
Construct and maintain each hen enclosure to prevent any rodent from harbouring underneath or within its walls, and to prevent entrance by any other animal	
Keep a food container and water in each coop	
Keep each coop locked from sunset to sunrise	
Remove leftover feed, trash, and manure in a timely manner	
Store manure within an enclosed structure, and store no more than three cubic feet of manure at a time	
Remove all other manure not used for composting or fertilizing	
Follow biosecurity procedures recommended by the Canadian Food Inspection Agency	
Keep hens for personal use only	
Not slaughter, or attempt to euthanize, a hen on the property	
Not dispose of a hen except by delivering it to a farm, abattoir, veterinarian, mobile slaughter unit, or other facility that has the ability to dispose of hens lawfully	

¹ <http://www.omafra.gov.on.ca/english/livestock/poultry/facts/12-039.pdf>

² <http://www.omafra.gov.on.ca/english/livestock/poultry/facts/hbresourceorder.htm>