

Black Gold

To compost your chicken manure you need to ensure the proper mixture of carbon and nitrogen. The nitrogen content of chicken manure is very high. For the most part, composting chicken manure with shavings or straw used for bedding will provide an adequate carbon to nitrogen ratio for composting.

Manure must be composted before using, or it will burn leaves and roots of the plants you are trying to fertilize. Manure should never be applied fresh to garden crops, and crops should be washed thoroughly before consumption.

Piles should be at least 3 feet cubed. This allows enough heat to kill pathogens. After a few days, turn the pile, placing the center material on the outside and the edge materials to the middle of the pile. After about 3 turn cycles the pile should resemble dark rich soil.

Benefits of Composting

- Kills off parasites.
- Reduces quantity of waste.
- Reduces odors and ammonia that attracts pests.
- Creates high quality fertilizer for areas such as gardens.
- Increases water holding capacity in soil
- Chicken compost is better than horse or cow manure.



City Chickens in Polk County

Will Your City Allow Poultry?*

Each city in Polk County allows residents to keep and raise chickens, with some limitations. Here is a basic overview:

Dallas: Those living in the city limits can raise up to five chickens — hens only — as long as chicken coops are on side and backyards at least 10 feet from property lines.

Independence: Owners of single-family homes in residential zones may keep up to five chickens — no roosters — on their property. Chicken coops must be located 20 feet or more from neighboring residences and built only on side and backyards.

Monmouth: Under the current ordinance, chickens can be kept in backyards in low- and medium-density zones and in mixed-residential zones. Up to five hens can be kept, housed in a chicken coop located at least 15 feet from neighboring property dwellings only on side and backyards. **On June 7, 2016** amendments were added to define an urban garden, allowing a maximum of 25 poultry fowl to be kept by a homeowners association within a designated urban garden in a planned unit development. The poultry need to be kept in a coop and run area that is a minimum of 2,700 square feet, or 108 square feet per bird for 25 birds. The amendment also establishes setbacks of 50 feet from any property line for the enclosed coop and run area, and any onsite composting of poultry waste. Poultry means chicken or ducks.

Falls City: Chickens, no more than four per acre, can be kept on properties of at least a quarter-acre in size, so long as they are not intended for resale and kept in an enclosure. Roosters are not permitted.

Salem: Permit Required. Maximum of 5 hens per residence, No roosters, chicken facility must meet structural and setback requirements of your zone and must be maintained in a condition that does not create a nuisance to nearby properties by noise or odor.

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City Chickens



A guide to having chickens within the cities of Polk County.



Polk SWCD
580 Main Street, Suite A
Dallas, OR 97338
503-623-9680
www.polkswcd.com

Promoting conservation and the wise use of natural resources in **Polk County since 1966!**

For more information about chicken regulations, contact your city of residence: Dallas, 503-623-2338; Independence, 503-838-1212; Monmouth, 503-838-0722; or Falls City, 503-787-3631.

Chicken Tips



- ◆ With the ever-growing popularity of having chickens within city limits, there becomes a need for education on chicken management. Within this brochure you will find basic information on having chickens in the cities of Polk County.
- ◆ Every city has different regulations.
- ◆ With chickens comes the responsibility to care for them and be a good steward.
- ◆ It is very important to keep your facility in good condition.
- ◆ Avoid being a nuisance to neighbors, everyone is entitled to their livability, peace, and quiet.
- ◆ There should be no excessive odors, noises, or unsightly messes from having chickens.

**For More information, please contact:
Polk Soil & Water Conservation District**

580 Main Street, Suite A Dallas, OR 97338

Phone: 503-623-9680

polk.swcd@polkswcd.com

www.polkswcd.com

What kind of chicken should I get?

There are many breeds of chickens, each bred for specific traits. Different breeds are for egg-laying, meat, dual purpose, or show. Choosing the right breed can mean not only getting the right kind of eggs, but ensuring you are happy with your chickens. Be sure to research the best breeds for urban living and your personal preference.

Housing

To have chickens in town, you must have proper housing. There are several chicken coop designs available online that can fit your situation.

- ◆ Coops can be portable or stationary, but should provide the chickens with full shelter, nesting spots, and perches.
- ◆ Bedding should be used in the coop to make cleaning easier, provide good nesting areas, and ensure a healthy environment.
- ◆ Attach a fully enclosed chicken run to the coop.
- ◆ Chickens love to dig for weeds, bugs, and dirt baths, they should have access to these things.

Health

In our climate, mites are common and should be controlled with commercial dust or diatomaceous earth for dust baths. Special attention should be paid to any unusual appearance to eyes, nostrils, or vent.

Care

The main cost of having chickens is feed. They need a balanced diet and good nutrition to lay good eggs. Use chicken scratch, commercially prepared feed, oyster shells for increased calcium, and free choice grit for digestion.

Chickens are good at supplementing their regular diet with bugs and greens from their runs. Store all feed in rodent proof containers!

Manure Management

Part of the responsibility of having chickens is cleaning up after them. Taking the necessary steps to avoid your chickens' odors from going beyond your property line is a good start to keeping happy neighbors and healthy chickens. By law, you must ensure that animal waste is not being allowed to contaminate groundwater or drainage ways. Animal waste should not be allowed to accumulate. Apply lime to control manure odor.

A small flock of chickens can produce a substantial amount of manure. When keeping your chickens confined, the manure will build up and requires regular cleaning. Bedding and manure cleaned from chicken coops can be composted to 'black gold' and used as valuable fertilizer for gardens and landscaping. Once composted, the manure looks and smells of rich soil, and does not resemble the original product.

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