



**CITY OF CENTERVILLE BACKYARD CHICKEN PERMIT**

Applicant Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

PID#: \_\_\_\_\_

Lot dimensions: \_\_\_\_\_  
(Must be a minimum of 10,000 square feet)

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

**PERMANENT PEN:** Attach a diagram indicating pen dimensions and location, including distance from adjoining structures and property lines.

**MOVEABLE PEN:** Size: \_\_\_\_\_

**NUMBER OF HENS - LIMIT four (4)**

**\$75 PERMIT FEE**

I am the owner of the property listed above. I will at all times keep the chickens in accordance with the City Code and understand failure to obey such conditions will constitute a violation of the provisions of this ordinance and be grounds for cancellation of the permit. If I will no longer be keeping chickens, any pen or coop must be removed upon expiration of the permit or within 30 days of ceasing to use the pen or coop, whichever is earlier and surrender my permit to the City. Premises subject to private restrictions and/or covenants that prohibit the keeping of fowl shall void any permit issued.

This permit may be revoked or suspended for violation of City Code, following written notice and allowing applicant opportunity to appeal the revocation to the City Council.

Signature of Applicant: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

\*\*\*\*\***FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY**\*\*\*\*\*

Permit Fee Paid: \_\_\_\_\_

Approved \_\_\_\_\_ Denied \_\_\_\_\_

Check: \_\_\_\_\_ Cash: \_\_\_\_\_

**CITY OF CENTERVILLE  
COUNTY OF ANOKA  
STATE OF MINNESOTA**

**ORDINANCE #63  
(Second Series)**

**AN ORDINANCE AMENDING THE CENTERVILLE CITY CODE, CHAPTER 90, SECTION 90.03 RELATING TO ANIMALS**

THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF CENTERVILLE ORDAINS:

**SECTION 1.** The City Code, Chapter 90, Section **90.03** is hereby amended to read as follows:

**90.03 FARM ANIMALS**

A. Farm animals shall only be kept in an agricultural district of the city or on a residential lot of at least ten acres in size, and provided that no animal shelter shall be within 300 feet of an adjoining piece of property. Animal feedlots as defined in MN Rule 7020.03 are prohibited.

B. Backyard Chickens. Notwithstanding other provisions of this chapter, a person may keep up to four (4) female chickens on a parcel that they own that is less than ten acres in size, provided that the owner has a lot with a minimum of 10,000 square feet, and obtains a backyard chicken permit from the City. No permit shall be issued except in compliance with this section.

1. Definitions

a. Coop means the structure for the keeping or housing of chickens permitted by the ordinance.

b. Hen means a female chicken.

c. Rooster means a male chicken.

d. Run means a fully-enclosed and covered area attached to a coop where the chickens can roam unsupervised.

2. Any person desiring to obtain a backyard chicken permit under this subdivision must make a written application to the City Clerk on a form provided by the City and pay an application fee. Fees to be charged for the permit to keep chickens shall be set by City Council on the fee schedule. The application must include a scaled diagram or site plan that shows the location of the chicken coop including the distance of the coop from adjoining structures and property lines and the coop's dimensions.

3. All initial permits will expire on December 31<sup>st</sup> of the following year after their issuance unless sooner revoked. Renewal permits shall expire on December 31<sup>st</sup> of the second year following their issuance unless sooner revoked.

4. The City may revoke a permit for failure to comply with provisions of this section or any of the permit's conditions.

5., The city may inspect the premises for which a permit has been granted in order to ensure compliance with this subdivision. If the city is not able to obtain the occupant's consent to enter the property, it may seek an administrative search warrant or revoke the permit.

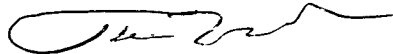
6. All chickens must be kept in an enclosed coop or enclosed run. The chicken's living area must be maintained in a clean and sanitary condition, devoid of all rodents and vermin and free from objectionable odors. Waste must be disposed of on a weekly basis. Grains and feed must be stored in rodent and raccoon-proof containers inside of a structure. The enclosed coop must be built to protect the chickens from extreme

heat or cold. The enclosed coop must be maintained in good condition and be sufficient in strength and size to allow the chickens to move about, but also able to prevent escape. The enclosed coop must have a minimum size of four square feet per animal and must not exceed forty (40) square feet in total, with a maximum height of twelve (12) feet. The enclosed coop must be located in the rear yard and set back at least 25-feet from any residential dwelling and at least 15-feet from all property lines and may not be located in a utility or drainage easement.

7. Enclosed runs shall be attached to the coop. Fencing shall be adequate to keep chickens in and predators out. The coop and attached run shall be a maximum of 40 square feet each and set back at least 25 feet from all neighboring residential structures and 15 feet from the property line.
8. Chickens must not be raised or kept for the purpose of fighting. No permit will be granted by the city to keep any chickens within a dwelling or garage, nor on a property which contains two or more dwelling units. No outdoor butchering of chickens is allowed. No roosters are allowed.
9. No person shall allow any chicken under his or her ownership or control to violate Chapter 7, Nuisances.
10. Persons that intend to no longer keep chickens on their premises shall notify the City. The coop must be removed upon expiration of the permit.
11. Dead chickens must be disposed of according to the Minnesota Board of Animal Health rules which require chicken carcasses to be disposed of as soon as possible after death, usually within forty-eight (48) to seventy-two (72) hours. Legal forms of chicken carcass disposal include offsite burial, offsite incineration or rendering, or offsite composting.

**SECTION 2. EFFECTIVE DATE.** Effective Date: This ordinance shall be effective immediately upon its passage and publication of the summary attached as Exhibit A, according to law.

PASSED AND ADOPTED this 8th day of May, 2013 by the City Council of the City of Centerville.



Tom Wilharber, Mayor

ATTEST:



Teresa Bender, City Clerk

Summary Published: Quad Community Press on May 21, 2013.

## Exhibit A

### Summary of Ordinance 63, Second Series

Notice is hereby given, that on 8<sup>th</sup> day of May, 2013, Ordinance Number 63, Second Series, entitled "AN ORDINANCE AMENDING CITY CODE, CHAPTER 90, was adopted by the City Council of Centerville, Minnesota.

**Notice is further given** that due to the lengthy nature of the ordinance, the City Council has directed that this title and summary be prepared for publication pursuant to Minn. Stat. 412.191, Subd. 4.

**Notice is further given** that a complete printed copy of the ordinance is available for inspection by any person during normal business hours of the City Clerk, 1880 Main St., Centerville, MN, or will be mailed to anyone requesting it by telephone (651) 429-3232.

**Notice is further given** that the general purpose of the ordinance is to amend the code to allow up to four chickens on residential lots in the city, subject to conditions.

Section 1. This section adds language to Chapter 90, section 90.03 that allows up to four chickens to be kept on lots in residential areas by permit and establishes the conditions for issuing a permit.

Section 2. This section provides that the effective date shall be upon publication of this summary.

**Notice is further given** that the Council has by a minimum 4/5 vote approved this public notice on the 8th day of May, 2013.

Teresa Bender, City Clerk

Published in the Quad Community Press on May 21, 2013

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# The Dark Side of Backyard Chickens

By Joyce Slaton, published on Wednesday, February 1, 2012

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Every wannabe urban homesteader dreams of having a small flock of chickens in the backyard, hens that leave a daily gift of superfresh organic eggs. Backyard birds bestow something else, too: the satisfaction that comes from knowing they weren't doomed to suffer in the battery cages of an industrial egg farm. But there's also a dark side to urban coops, as Mary Britton Clouse, founder and president of Minneapolis-based Chicken Run Rescue, knows all too well.

In 2001, Britton Clouse founded Chicken Run as a shelter for roosters rounded up in cockfighting busts. A decade ago, Britton Clouse was finding homes for about 40 chickens annually. In 2008, that number shot up to 150. And last year, Chicken Run rescued

almost 250 hens and roosters.

Why the massive jump? Britton Clouse blames the urban husbandry fad—a lot of backyard farmers find they just aren't set up to care for poultry. Among the things many beginners don't realize:

### Many roosters probably died for your hens.

Few backyard farmers want roosters, which are aggressive and noisy (some cities have ordinances forbidding them in backyard coops). Yet mama chickens still insist on laying boy birds.

"For a demographic so enamored with the 'natural,' people are hopelessly ignorant about basic biology and chicken behavior," says Britton Clouse. "They all apparently missed biology class when the 50-50 principle that determines sex was taught. Otherwise intelligent people assume there is a magic process by which only hens are produced. Most never stop to wonder what happened to the boys."

What *did* happen to them was death. Hatcheries and commercial egg-breeding facilities attempt to sex chicks—that is, find out if they're male or female—at one or two days of age. "Male chicks are ground up alive or suffocated," says Susie Coston, national shelter director for Farm Sanctuary in Watkins Glen, New York, which has also seen the number of rescue calls for chickens skyrocket since urban homesteading took hold.

By the way, sexing chicks isn't easy. An expensive DNA test is the only way to tell for sure, at least until the chicks are at least four months old. Many baby "hens" grow up to be roosters, a surprise to backyard farmers, who often end up dumping them on a rescue like Chicken Run. Callous hatcheries also use male chicks as "packing material." "We receive many surrender requests from people who received twice as many chicks as they ordered because males were added to the shipment to add body heat and cushioning during transport," notes Britton Clouse, a fan of roosters (she calls them "dogs with wings").

### Chickens are expensive to care for.

Pastured eggs are so expensive at the store, you think you'll save money by raising them yourself. Indeed, hatchery chicks cost only a few bucks apiece, and they'll eat just about any food you give them. But there are other costs. "Chickens attract flies, bird mites and lice, mice, yard birds, squirrels, raccoons, dogs, coyotes, fox, mink, opossum, rats, owls, bobcats, hawks, snakes,

### Videos



weasels, ferrets, fishers, martens, and vandals," says Britton Clouse. Also, a vet visit for a sick bird starts at \$50, assuming the vet even knows how to handle chickens.

Setting up a coop with maintenance, tools, cleaning equipment, heating and cooling appliances, dishes, nets, food storage, a scale, fencing, security locks, lighting, motion detectors, monitors, cameras, and a city permit to make sure the whole thing is legal costs about \$5,000. Food, bedding, supplements, utilities, and vet care cost about \$300 more per bird, Britton Clouse says.

In a previous post, urban homesteader Jennifer Reese, author of *Make the Bread, Buy the Butter*, estimated that after all of her chicken-keeping costs, she's spending \$2.12 per pastured egg. You could save on some of these costs, of course, by treating your chickens cruelly. Sadly, Britton Clouse has seen chickens kept in freezing conditions, with missing toes from frostbite, or kept in tiny coops no better than the battery cages.

**Hens don't lay forever.**

Humans have bred chickens to be egg machines. Wild hens produce a few clutches of eggs yearly to replenish the flock, but starting at about six months, domesticated hens lay an egg daily. After about 18 months, egg production slows down, and eventually stops.

That's when Chicken Run Rescue or Farm Sanctuary typically gets a call, or when the homesteader kills the hen. Chickens can live for up to 15 years, same as a dog or a cat. Any homesteader serious about being humane needs to ask herself this: Am I OK with being a retirement home for nonlaying chickens? The chickens would surely prefer a yes.

*Image source: Flickr member Bob n Renee under Creative Commons*

*CHOW contributor Joyce Slaton is an editor and writer in San Francisco. She takes her tea with sugar and milk and will sew you an apron if you ask nicely. Follow her on Twitter. Follow CHOW, too, and become a fan on Facebook.*

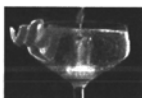
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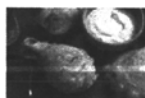
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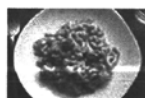
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DoctorsHealthPress.com

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COMMENT

Empty text input field for comments.

What planet are you from???!?

P Pellyrdgirl Mar 31, 2013 05:04 PM

This is SO inaccurate! Oh, male chicks get killed in hatcheries? What do you think happens to the male chicks in the commercial "farming" industry? Same thing! And you don't have to get your chickens from a hatchery. People sell them. Chickens are expensive? Less expensive than a dog and we still have those. Dogs don't give us breakfast, chickens do. Hens don't lay eggs forever? At 72 weeks (with years of egg laying ability left) battery hens are killed for ramen noodles, after a life time of suffering in a wire cage. My hen layed an egg the day she died at age seven, as she had faithfully for seven years. You think backyard

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chickens have diseases? Look at this video of a nice "farm" And we wonder why they have salmonella?  
[http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=H4\\_R5sGHIGo](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=H4_R5sGHIGo)

U **Unknown99** Feb 22 2013 02 10 PM


THEY TASTE GOOOD ! but honesty the egg farmers order way more we just get the left overs and the hatcheries have to hatch more eggs for their order of poults How Tall is your High Horse ?

T **Tammy00721969** Dec 26 2012 05 22 AM


Thank you so much for getting this information out there We have had backyard chickens for 4 years, and luckily have the good sense and ability to deal with the myriad problems that arise We had one chicken cut her foot on a nail that had come loose, had we not found her when we did, she would have died or gotten a serious infection We've had to deal with mites, bumble foot (staph infection of the foot) among other things I can't tell you how many people we talk to that tell us a possum or raccoon killed one of their hens again It's very frustrating as a responsible animal owner to hear people over and over again shocked that a raccoon got into the coop when they leave the door open or use almost useless chicken wire (which raccoons can pull apart with their "hands") or have doors with simple latches raccoons can open A coop down the street has bantams who need special accommodations, they can't handle the cold or heat as well as standard breeds, yet these hens sleep on a roost outside with no protection from the cold and wind Please if you want to get backyard chickens DO YOUR RESEARCH Are you going to be prepared if one of your hens gets injured or sick? These are sensitive and sweet animals that deserve proper care and attention, they are not egg producing machines

R **robotcandy** Mar 2, 2012 02 49 AM

You forgot to mention that chickens can get poultry fleas that will also attach to pet cats and dogs

 **paizley** Feb 25 2012 04 23 AM

I met chickens hated them Gonna try with goats when I get that house in the country

 **YAYME** Feb 21 2012 09 47 AM

One serious negative that the author missed is the disease Histoplasmosis It grows in avian feces and is a problem in some parts of this country It spreads from the feces into human lungs and is something we live with once we get it

S **shallots** Feb 19 2012 01 17 AM

One serious negative that the author missed is the disease Histoplasmosis It grows in avian feces and is a problem in some parts of this country It spreads from the feces into human lungs and is something we live with once we get it

S **shallots** Feb 19, 2012 01 11 AM

For a hilarious commentary on raising chickens look up a copy of "The Egg and I" by Betty McDonald, 1946, a best-seller of the post-WW II era I just checked---amazon has it for as little as 95 cents A hint it was the author's husband who was into chicken-raising---not her

Q **Querencia** Feb 16 2012 09 13 AM

The costs may be higher than some people anticipate, but these figures are ridiculous It puts me in mind of the equally ridiculous book "The \$64 Tomato" (<http://williamalexander.com/64dollartomato/inside.cfm?page=excerpt>) in which the author's accounting of backyard organic gardening included hiring a landscape architect and building a garden with an electric fence for \$9000 c'mon Here is a more well reasoned blog about the ins and outs of backyard chickens for those thinking of taking the plunge <http://www.jmmds.com/2010/06/the-trouble-with-chickens/>

X **xilab** Feb 16 2012 05 30 AM

Too ridiculous And insulting too If I'm not spending \$2 per egg then I'm treating the hens cruelly? Our chickens have a coop that I call the Taj Mahen (only half joking) When their egg laying days are over, they stay as pets And all that crap about motion detectors and cameras and nets and security locks would be funny if I didn't suspect the author is actually serious

B **Beauzeaux** Feb 15 2012 04 20 AM

An article this one sided, sensationalized, and incomplete deserves a short skit to match <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RSHGRpnaklc> We made the skit after having our latest rooster for dinner The eggs keep coming in My 5-year old boy loves them and is learning where is food comes from Joyce, if you want to round out your piece, maybe acknowledge some of the upside

M **mateopucu** Feb 13, 2012 08 28 PM

The person who wrote this is either A Unaware of what she's talking about, or B Being intentionally dishonest I've been keeping chickens for a couple years, and I think this person is making this crap up because she must hate the idea of anyone ever using animal products for any reason 1 Cold - Chickens have been living in northern latitudes for many hundreds of years If they have decent shelter, they don't get frostbite - extra heat is unnecessary coincidentally If you haven't noticed wild pigeons don't often get frostbite, either, and no one puts a heat lamp on them 2 Cooking old birds - Old birds aren't great if they're cooked the same way as young fryers, no, but there are ways to cook them that would be far better than a young bird would ever be... Stock, coq au vin, to name just two If you're not into cooking, you could cook and feed them meat to your dog. 3. Vets - If your chicken gets sick, you don't take it to the vet, you replace it 4 Roosters - You can raise straight-run (not sex-sorted) chicks until you can tell which is which, and cook the cockrels You generally can tell weeks before they start crowing A normal person would never even consider the "expensive DNA test" she's talking about

C **cgilson** Feb 12, 2012 02 27 AM

What kind of whack job wrote this article? Heating and cooling? Nets? Scales? Lighting? Motion detectors? And legal costs? Backyard chicken keepers aren't running commercial egg production facilities A simple call to your municipality will determine legality. If you proceed knowing you're in violation of the law, you deserve what you get And who puts in lighting and motion detectors? These are animals, not honored guests And as far as snakes, hawks, mice, bugs, owls, etc, goes. I've got those in my suburban neighborhood with or without my chickens. That's why the chicken yard has a fence on top Common sense trumps panicked hysteria every time I also do not know where that 18 month laying life comes from. I've got 2 and 3 year old birds who lay regularly in season. And vet bills? No one in their right mind would even consider paying a vet bill for a \$15 bird Common medications are available at feed stores for under \$10 generally, and if that doesn't work you get that bird gone before she infects the rest of your flock. These aren't family members, for chrissakes

R **rockycat** Feb 10, 2012 06 39 AM

Most of the comments in here are right on I've been raising chickens (and other animals) for quite a few years now You want to know what happens to all the Roosters in commercial farming? Ever eat at KFC? Ever buy your chicken in a store?? Do you really think that commercial farms are going to sell ALL their females! I allow my roosters to grow with my hens, then when they begin to crow in the freezer you go Same for the older birds, either in the freezer for human consumption or for dog food Either way it's a win-win. As for the prices quoted give your head a shake! A proper coop, with waterers and feeders and a fenced in run is plenty fine My birds DON'T suffer! Just saying think about what you are reading, research it, then make an informed choice!

D **diamond645** Feb 9 2012 10 03 AM

Unfortunately many people don't look into the lifecycle costs of many of the animals they acquire That's why we have such a problem with unwanted critters of all kinds

E **Ellen** Feb 9 2012 07 20 AM

It doesn't seem very dark to me. If you don't want to eat the old chickens, it's kind of dumb to keep them in the back garden. Of course chicken keeping may attract a certain kind of militant vegetarian, the kind that sets up chicken shelters for these dumbest of critters, but that's their problem As for Ms Clouse, \$300 to keep a chicken? And \$2 12/egg, based on an article where someone paid \$3000 for a fence to keep them in? Here's a newsflash, poor people all over the world keep chickens, and apart from a few dollars (note, not hundreds, or thousands) for chicken feed (there's a reason 'chicken feed' is slang for cheap, by the way), it costs virtually nothing

M **mikehunt69** Feb 7 2012 11 52 PM

Rebrites said it best Death is a part of life, out on the farm People have been keeping chickens for thousands of years without motion detectors or heating and cooling systems This article would have a little more credibility if it hadn't been almost entirely based on propaganda from a couple of chicken rescue groups!

**Ruth Lafier** Feb 7, 2012 07 55 AM

"fencing security locks, lighting, motion detectors, monitors, cameras " Chicken in 'da Hood!

**hypomyces** Feb 7, 2012 07 25 AM

Living where I do (Denver, where a lot of people feed their dogs raw diets with lots of offal), it would be no big effort to simply provide people with "spent hens" and young roosters for their dogs' diets if you couldn't eat them yourself I think the dark side in this article is strictly for people who might get squeamish about making the hard decisions about life and death for their chickens



H **Heatherb** Feb 7 2012 05 03 AM

The prices quoted in this article are crazy! We built our coop from supplies bought at an architectural salvage company (Second Use in Seattle ) The nest box/roost area is made of two old kitchen cabinets We spent maybe, maybe \$100 Admittedly, we do buy expensive, organic locally grown feed and scratch, but in the past we bought the conventional stuff because that is what we could afford Our "old" chickens ended up in the freezer, but only after they had completely stopped laying The factory farming aspect of raising chickens is awful, but the factory farmed aspect of any meat or dairy product is awful Most of us can't afford to only buy pasture raised At least by raising our own chickens we are taking some weight off of that system Besides, selling a few dozen eggs a week totally off sets the cost of that million dollar motion detection system : )

W **wakerobin** Feb 7 2012 03 24 AM

The 18 months thing is wrong too I have hens who are 10 years old They take the winter off for molting and regrowing feathers but otherwise are still stellar layers

H **happenstance** Feb 6 2012 01 21 PM

May I suggest a similar article on Backyard Organic, Non-GMO Gardens? It is an equally costly and dangerous endeavor Hell, raised beds, watering systems, weed eradication Lawsuits from Monsanto from saving seeds from GMO plants! Don't forget all the pests too Rats, mice, rabbits and deer come to feed and pollute your yard with feces Cat's, bobcats, mountain lions and more then invade to eat the vermin! Water wasted even Hell, that tomato you are going to grow will probably end up costing you double what the store bought ones will!

S **sicurban** Feb 5 2012 10 36 PM

The first response destroyed the article You eat the young roosters before they become a problem and you eat the old hens before they get too old Chicken soup is great for both instances Roosters don't start to crow for a while after they mature, once they crow, you eat them Hens last a few years then you eat them, too If your chickens are getting too numerous, you don't have enough friends over for dinner frequently enough

Z **Ziv** Feb 5, 2012 11 25 AM

Agreed that the costs portrayed here are overblown \$5,000? We built our own shed-style coop a couple of years ago, it probably cost a couple of hundred dollars Add in a bucket feeder & waterer and one heat lamp for when it gets below freezing No big deal No vets for chickens, there is plenty of information available for managing any maladies And even after egg-bearing days are over, our small handful of chickens will live out their days in comfort

A **anobel** Feb 3 2012 12 57 AM

This article is silly Chickens practically take care of them selves As with any "pet" they do require care, but heating & cooling? Ha! The predators are already around Chickens are very interesting, strange creatures for sure & worthwhile if you have the space and a little time

E **Erikkleiva** Feb 3 2012 12 07 AM


Heating and cooling, motion detectors? You've got to be kidding me How about a fan in the summer and no heat unless you are brooding chicks or just want to end up burning your coop down by accident (Read up there are a lot of coop/barn fires caused by people trying to heat the buildings) A well built, well insulated coop and a well built run solves both the heat/cooling and predator issues I agree that people buy all types of animals with no idea on what is involved but trying to tell people you need heat and central air for a coop is silly Our chickens have never lost toes to frostbite in our coop and it gets down to 10 degrees in the winter It's all about proper animal management

R **rosepoint** Feb 2, 2012 09 07 AM

I wouldn't want to eat an old hen or a rooster, because the younger birds probably taste better But then I would be the last person on earth to keep chickens, as pets go they have very little to offer They are stupid creatures

R **redfish62** Feb 2 2012 08 23 AM

What enzen said. I also thought this is what coq au vin was for

 **nasv** Feb 2, 2012 02 56 AM


Yea, I don't get it I ate my last rooster on Sunday. If someone is vegetarian, cool If they eat chicken, then they should eat their chickens If they won't eat their chickens, then they shouldn't eat chicken.

M **mateopucu** Feb 2, 2012 02:23 AM

When the hens are done laying you put them in a pressure cooker (after killing gutting, plucking, and taking the lower parts of the legs off) and you make chicken stew out of them. The same goes for the excess roosters - end of problem. They make yummy chicken noodle soup or cream of chicken or chicken & dumplings

M **manurehappens** Feb 2, 2012 02:09 AM

The costs quoted here are outrageously high. My family has kept chickens for years, and a vet who'd charge \$50 to look at a chicken would not be in business for long. And motion detectors, monitors, cameras, on a henhouse? Puh-LEEZE. If your neighborhood is that rough, you will do the chicks a favor not bringing them to live there. It does not sound fit for human habitation either. Also, anyone too soft-hearted to ice a vicious rooster or stop the suffering of a terminally ill hen should NOT go into the chicken biz. Death is a part of life, out on the farm.

 **rebrites** Feb 1, 2012 10:35 PM

Isn't this exactly what coq au vin is for?

E **enzen** Feb 1, 2012 09:08 PM

I lived in a large communal house in San Francisco in the Bayview District several years ago. We had a flock of chickens that got out of control because of unchecked breeding. Soon 12 chickens turned to 50 or 60. We couldn't go to the backyard because they would stalk us in a pack like velociraptors. We threw kitchen scraps and rotting fruit to them as a form of tribute or extortion payment. They got out of the backyard and into the street. We took to slaughtering three a week and making bottomless pot chicken soup. After that, no more backyard chickens for me.

M **misterkot** Feb 1, 2012 01:04 PM

If you are interested in chickens, Animal Place (<http://animalplace.org>) rescues them from factory farms to find them adoptive homes. Sadly, if you buy from a hatchery, you directly support factory farming, because hatcheries are factory farms. Breeding chickens is problematic because ideally a chicken lover would adopt a chicken to help that individual, breeding new animals prevents that space in an adoptive home from opening up.

B **b5821901** Feb 1, 2012 08:26 AM

I've been planning for a tiny companion flock for four years now, and I'm still not ready. I'm glad that there are rescue orgs to help out the hens abandoned by fare-thee-well! hobbyists. That said, I'm pretty sure that battery farms don't have a lot of places for rooster chicks either, there's just a little slant in this piece that implies that backyarders are responsible for all those male chick deaths.

 **DuchessNukem** Feb 1, 2012 07:40 AM

God bless you for speaking truth to this issue. Too many people are overly optimistic and imagine that chickens will happily give their lives to feed us. But chickens want to live for themselves, not for us. Make the compassionate choice, if you are thinking about chickens, adopt. Keep them for their natural lives and provide them with all the love and care you would a dog or cat.

B **b5821901** Feb 1, 2012 07:29 AM

What's wrong with eating the old hens and roosters?

R **rockfish42** Feb 1, 2012 07:10 AM

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