

Raising Animals in Hood River County

One of the draws to rural living is the opportunity to raise farm animals, to keep horses, and to have a source of eggs, milk, meat or fiber right in your own backyard. Maybe your kids want to join the local 4-H chapter or get involved with Future Farmers of America. Or perhaps you are hoping to supplement your income by selling eggs, cheese or specialty animal products.

Keeping livestock and poultry can be fun, rewarding and challenging. And like any activity, there are some impacts and responsibilities you should understand. As a good steward and neighbor, and as a citizen and community member, you want to do the right thing. Here is some information that will help.

What goes in as food comes out as manure.

No matter the animal it came from, manure and used bedding should be gathered regularly and stored away from natural waterways. Ideally, manure should be kept on a solid surface and under cover (a tarp is fine), particularly during the rainy season, to avoid leaching nutrients and bacteria into the soil or running off into a nearby waterway. An added benefit of storing manure this way is that you can compost it at the same time and create valuable soil amendments for your garden or pastures. Through proper storage and application, you will protect water quality and be in compliance with Oregon's water quality rules. You can learn more about the rules for Hood River County in the chapter "Agricultural Water Quality Rules."

Manage grazing to increase animal health, maintain pasture vitality and protect water quality. If you plan to keep your animals in a fenced area, be sure that you have enough pasture per head. Just like you don't like to eat at an overcrowded table fighting for a limited amount of food, neither do your

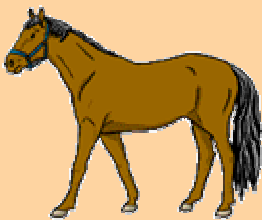


Before you acquire your animals, ask yourself if you and your land can accommodate the number and type of livestock you are planning to raise.

animals. Check with the Hood River SWCD or OSU Extension Service for guidelines on the amount of space needed per animal. With enough pasture and cross fencing, you can provide nutritious grazing for your animals without destroying the grasses. When establishing the area where you will be keeping your animals, it is important to fence the animals away from streams and provide off-stream watering facilities. This protects the streamside vegetation, maintains water quality, and once again, keeps you in compliance with Oregon's water quality laws. Check out the chapter on "Pasture Management" for more information on how to maintain healthy pastures.

If you have a lot of animals, plan to confine them in a pen or barn and feed them on a concrete surface, you may need a Confined Animal Feeding Operation (CAFO) permit. Oregon requires a CAFO permit when animals are held or fed in a confined area, such as a feedlot or barn, and wet waste is produced. An animal waste management plan and land use approval are also required. If you are planning on having a large number of animals on your property, or if you think you would be exceeding the recommended number of animals per acre, we recommend consulting with the ODA CAFO specialist at (541) 617-0055 or our ODA water quality specialist at (541) 617-0017 to find out about the requirements for your operation.

DID YOU KNOW?



8-10 TONS

OF MANURE

EACH YEAR!

ONE HORSE

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