



Why Keep Backyard Chickens?

Talking points for neighbors and town officials about the benefits of keeping chickens and responses to common misconceptions about backyard poultry

The Benefits of Backyard Poultry

- ◆ **Chickens are a great way to live a little more sustainably**
 - They provide a source of protein that comes right from your backyard. They have low “food miles”- meaning they don’t travel far to get to your plate and therefore don’t require the use of fossil fuel
 - Chicken manure can be composted and use as fertilizer in your garden
- ◆ **With backyard chickens, you know exactly where your food came from**
 - Because you raised your chicken, you know what it ate and how it was treated
 - You can eat eggs and poultry without supporting factory farming
- ◆ **You can get the freshest, healthiest eggs possible**
 - While there is conflicting information about exactly what the nutritional difference is between eggs from backyard chickens versus store-bought eggs, free-range eggs have been proven to have higher levels of key nutrients like beta carotene, omega-3 fatty acids and lower levels of cholesterol

Debunking Common Chicken Myths

- ◆ **Chickens are loud and disruptive to nearby neighbors**
 - Hens only make soft clucks generally not audible over 25 feet. Rooster are nosier, but its not necessary to have a rooster to have hens that lay eggs. Some towns have laws specifically prohibiting roosters because of the noise
- ◆ **Chickens and their manure smell bad**
 - Six hens produce the same amount of waste as one medium dog, but their manure can be composted and used as fertilizer. Chicken coops should be cleaned regularly to maintain sanitary conditions, this regular cleaning prevents the build up of waste that would cause the coop to smell
- ◆ **Having chickens in your yard will attract pests like raccoons and rats**
 - Chicken feed is most likely to attract these kinds of pests. Keeping the chicken feed in a secure, animal proof container will prevent pests from visiting the coop. Securing the chickens in an enclosure will protect the chickens and dissuade predatory visitors, like raccoons