



Table of Contents

	<u>Page</u>
Introduction	4
Chickens Are Pets, <i>Not</i> Livestock	5
Our Proposed Ordinance Amendment	6
Chickens & The Economic Crisis	7
Backyard Coops Are Attractive and Clean	8
Nuisance Issues	9
Code Enforcement & The City Budget	10
Water Quality Issues	11
Chickens Play an Important Role in Sustainable Living	12
Chickens Do Not Reduce Property Values	13
Lot Size Doesn't Matter	14
Chickens Are Educational	15-16
Chickens Give Consumers Some Control	16
Chickens Do Not Increase Methane Gas Emissions	17
Chickens and Emergency Preparedness	17
Chickens Do Not Pose a Public Health Risk	18
The Urban Chicken Movement	18

Appendices

	<u>Page</u>
A: Letters of Support	19-28
B: Salem Revised Code Section 146.020 (Permitted Uses in the Single Family Residential Zones)	29
C: Salem Revised Code Section 146.030 (Special Uses / Miniature Swine)	30-31
D: Salem Revised Code Section 111.130(e) (City's Definition of Livestock)	32
E: Oregon Department of Agriculture's Definition of Livestock	33
F: The Cost of Eggs Leaves Consumers Clucking (Washington Post Article)	34-36
G: Collage of Attractive City Coops	37
H: Letter from OSU Extension Poultry Specialist	38-39
I: Complaints in Eugene & Madison	40-41
J: Correspondence Regarding Chicken-Keeper in Madison	42
K: Correspondence Regarding Portland Property Values (used in Fort Collins, CO)	43-44
L: Salem City Council Minutes (4/9/07) Regarding Lot Size	45-46
M: Correspondence Regarding Methane Gas Emissions (used in Fort Collins, CO)	47-48
N: The Urban Chicken Movement	49-60

Introduction

Dear Mayor & City Councilors:

In recent years many municipalities have adopted ordinances that allow residents to keep a few backyard hens as pets and for eggs. The signatures we gathered on our petition and the letters of support we received (appendix A) indicate Salem residents would like the same opportunity.

Much of the work that has already been done by other cities is applicable here. For example, backyard hens have not decreased property values, increased methane emissions, threatened public health, or created a nuisance in cities such as Fort Collins, Portland, Madison, Denver, and Boise, just to name a few. By utilizing the packet of information we have provided and by adopting similar policies to those already implemented and working elsewhere, Salem will realize savings in work, time, money, and effort.

Currently, Section 146.020 of the Salem Revised Codes lists land uses permitted in Single Family Residential zones (appendix B). Any use *not* on this list is considered unlawful, based on its omission. Chickens are not listed, but neither are dogs, cats, rabbits, or other common pets that spend much, if not all, of their lives in the backyards of single-family homes.

Section 146.030 lists special uses that are also permitted in the RS zones. These include the keeping of a miniature pig that weighs up to 100 pounds (appendix C). We think it is unreasonable that you can keep a 100-pound pig, but not a 3-pound bird. We also think it is unfair to cite people for having chickens, but not dogs, cats, or rabbits which, according to the way the ordinance is written, are also unlawful. We believe code enforcement should not be selective.

We know that the subject of chicken keeping has come up before. We have seen the CCTV videos of your discussions on this topic on November 13th and December 11th in 2006, and again on April 9th 2007. It's bound to keep coming up until the city can find a practical solution. That is why we have thoroughly researched this subject and provided Council with packets that will help you re-address this issue in an informed manner that will ultimately save you both time and expense.

Also, it is important to note that there have been dramatic downward pressures in our socio-economic situation since this topic last came before Council. It is both prudent and timely for the Council to reconsider and support our proposal to legalize backyard hens.

Chickens Are Pets, Not Livestock

According to Section 111.130, Section (e) of the Salem Revised Code, livestock is defined as *"one or more members of any species of cattle, **swine**, sheep, goat, poultry, horse or other equine, or llama, alpaca or related ruminant, regardless of the purpose for which any of the foregoing may be kept"* (appendix D). Yet, miniature pigs (a **swine** species) are currently allowed in Salem residential zones despite the fact that according to the city's own definition, they are livestock.

According to the Oregon Department of Agriculture (ODA) website, livestock is defined as *"cattle, horses, mules, donkeys, asses, sheep and goats, and all swine except potbellied pigs"* (appendix E). The ODA does not list pot-bellied pigs **or chickens** as livestock.

Chickens are by definition, domesticated fowl.

We maintain that hens, for the purpose of this amended ordinance, are pets because we do not intend to sell, breed, or slaughter them.

They are friendly, social, intelligent, affectionate, entertaining, low-maintenance, small and inexpensive to keep.

They have distinct personalities and come when you call them, like to be petted, and will eat right out of your hands.

They are also quieter, cleaner, and safer than most other common pets:

The American Bird Conservancy reports that domestic cats have a significant negative affect on native wildlife populations, including songbirds.

The U.S. Humane Society reports that dogs bite 4.7 million Americans, mostly children, each year.

An Internet search for injuries caused by chickens resulted in no statistics. It appears that chickens do not cause a significant number of injuries to make the news.



Proposed Ordinance Amendment

We studied ordinances from Portland, Denver, Madison, Seattle, Boise, Fort Collins, and New York and used them to draft a proposed ordinance amendment regarding the keeping of chickens in Salem residential zones. We believe that the keeping of chickens should be regulated, but we also believe it should be allowed, just as it is in many cities across the nation.

Since the Oregon Department of Agriculture does not consider pot-bellied pigs or poultry to be livestock, and because pot-bellied pigs are already permitted in Salem residential zones, we think it makes sense to combine these two species by simply amending the current ordinance.

Therefore, we propose that under SRC Chapter 146, Section 030 Special Uses Permitted in the Residential Single Family (RS) District, Item #13 "Keeping of a Miniature Swine" be amended to read "Keeping of a Miniature Swine and Domestic Chickens" and that Chapter 119, Section 070 "Keeping of Miniature Swine" be amended to include the following:

KEEPING OF DOMESTIC CHICKENS

- (a) Single family residences within the City of Salem shall be permitted to keep up to five hens without a permit. A permit issued by the City is required to keep more than 5 hens. Such permit shall be applied for within 30 days of acquiring the chickens and will require a one-time application fee of \$25.
- (b) Roosters are strictly prohibited in the city.
- (c) Fowl may not be kept in front yards where they can be easily seen from the street.
- (d) Selling, breeding, or raising chickens for meat is prohibited.
- (e) Chickens must be kept in an enclosure at all times and have access to shelter from the rain. It shall be unlawful for any person to allow any fowl owned by him or her to escape or roam at large.
- (f) Feed will be secured in a manner that will prevent access by rodents or other pests.
- (g) Any coop, pen, or other enclosure in which fowl are kept must be at least 25 feet from any residential structure on adjacent property.
- (h) Chicken owners must keep the animals in a clean and sanitary condition. Any coop, pen, or other enclosure must be maintained in a manner that is free of insects and rodents, offensive odors, excessive noise, or any other conditions that constitute a public nuisance.

Chickens & The Economic Crisis

Most citizens have become painfully aware of our nation's economic crisis. Experts, including the new President, warn that the crisis will likely get worse before it gets better.

While gas prices have dropped lately, the cost of food, utilities, property taxes, and other services have risen dramatically.

It's no secret that many local citizens are having a difficult time making ends meet. According to the President of The Marion-Polk Food Share, approximately 15,000 Salem households needed emergency food assistance in 2008, an increase of 26% from the previous year.

The unemployment rate in Oregon has reached 9%, the highest since 1976 and one of the highest in the country (http://www.oregonlive.com/news/index.ssf/2009/01/oregon_jobless_rate_shoots_up.html).

Your constituents *need* this because times are tough and hens can help reduce financial hardship.

A readily available source of eggs saves money, gas, and time. A chicken coop takes up no more space than a garden tool shed and hens cost very little to feed:

Four hens require about 5 bags of commercial feed per year at \$11.49/bag. This totals about \$60 per year. The same four hens will lay about 120 dozen eggs per year. According to the Washington Post, the average cost of eggs in the U.S. is \$2.17 (appendix F). Therefore, four hens would save the consumer about \$260, plus the cost of fuel. In addition, fuel costs to transport eggs to the store would be reduced.

Keep in mind, store-bought eggs are not equivalent to home-grown eggs. To purchase the equivalent in quality (120 dozen organic, fresh, local eggs at the Farmer's Market) would cost over \$600!

It's also important to remember that during the Great Depression, families with chickens fared much better than those without. Given our current socio-economic situation, keeping a few backyard hens has never been more practical.

Backyard Coops Are Attractive & Clean

Unlike commercial poultry operations or rural farms, people in the city who keep chickens as pets tend to keep them in very attractive enclosures (appendix G). In fact, they treat them like pets and tend to spoil them. They take such great pride in their pampered pets and backyard coops that they often hold annual tours to show them off. In cities like Portland, Seattle, and Madison, chicken enthusiasts participate in tours, classes, and clubs, adding fabric and educational opportunities to their communities.

Attractive and inexpensive chicken coop kits are also available on Craig's List for those who are not able to build their own.

Restrictions in our proposed ordinance amendment used wording similar to Madison's, which requires chicken coops be attractive and well maintained.

Below are pictures of the types of coops commonly found in the city.



Nuisance Issues

Odor - Chickens themselves do not smell. Any possible odor would come from feces, but 5 small hens generate less manure than one medium-sized dog. The feces are not likely to accumulate because it's a source of free fertilizer that can be used in the garden. According to OSU Extension Poultry Specialist, small flocks do not present an odor problem and once tilled into the soil, chicken feces no longer cause objectionable odors (appendix H). Whereas, dog and cat feces cannot be used as fertilizer or composted because of pathogens they contain that can infect humans. Therefore, dog and cat waste is more likely to accumulate and smell. Unsanitary conditions can result in a buildup of ammonia in large operations, which is why commercial poultry facilities often smell bad. This is not the case for small backyard flocks.

Noise - Hens are quiet; it's only roosters that are known for their loud crowing. Fortunately, you do not need roosters to get eggs and our proposed ordinance amendment permits up to 5 hens and absolutely no roosters. This is typical of what other cities have done. Jim Hermes, OSU Poultry Extension Specialist, states in his letter (appendix H), "As urban pets go, a barking dog is far more annoying than cackling hens."

According to the Marion County Dog Control, to lodge a valid noise complaint a dog must bark for at least 15 minutes non-stop and this must occur on three separate days within a 10-day period. A few hens are extremely unlikely to create enough noise to qualify as a valid noise nuisance using the city's criteria.

Hens remain inside their coop, perching at night in complete silence. During the day they venture out into their enclosed pen to scratch at the ground, hunt for bugs and munch on weeds. They occasionally cluck to announce the arrival of an egg but this noise is short-lived and much quieter than barking dogs, lawn mowers, wild crows, children playing, and other common neighborhood sounds.

Pests - Chickens do not attract insects; they eat them! They love to eat all types of bugs, including those that can carry human diseases like mosquitoes and ticks. They also eat slugs that would otherwise harm garden crops, especially here in the northwest. They do not attract flies. In fact, they eat fly larvae (maggots) before they can grow up to become adult flies (appendix H).

Rodents and other animals - A chicken pen is not likely to attract rodents or wildlife unless chicken feed is spilled or not stored properly. This same thing holds true for dog or cat food (appendix H).

Code Enforcement & The City Budget

We know the city is experiencing a budget deficit, but so are its citizens! Our proposed ordinance amendment will not only save your constituents money, but it will result in fewer complaints and less cost to the city.

Eugene, a city comparable in size to Salem and where hens are allowed, received just 11 chicken-related complaints in 2008 (appendix I). The City of Madison receives just 10 complaints a year and describes the enforcement burden as minimal (appendix I). According to our code compliance office, Salem received 29 chicken-related complaints in 2008. We believe Salem receives nearly three times as many complaints as Eugene and Madison because our current ordinance is ambiguous.

A citizen who looks into the legality of chicken-keeping in Salem will probably be confused. They will most likely know that other cities throughout the state allow chickens. They will see that the Salem Revised Code does not mention chickens just as it does not mention dogs, cats, or rabbits, yet they seem to be everywhere. They will be further confused when they see that a 100-pound pig is permitted. Given this, citizens are likely to assume that keeping chickens is probably okay. This results in people keeping chickens illegally and without guidance, resulting in complaints that the city must respond to.

We've already established that chickens do not smell and only generate small amounts of feces that is easily composted or used as fertilizer. We have also established that a few hens are not capable of making enough noise to lodge a valid complaint according to the code compliance criteria. And you can see from the pictures we've provided, that urban coops tend to be attractive and well maintained. That leaves just the zoning issue. If our proposed ordinance amendment is adopted, citizens will have a clear understanding of the regulations and non-compliance complaints will be minimal.

The city spends money in wages, gasoline, and vehicle maintenance to respond to each complaint it receives. Furthermore, each time a citizen brings this topic before Council it costs the city time and money. It was brought before Council twice in 2006, again in 2007, and now in 2009 because it's what your constituents want and need. It's bound to come up again and again, especially given the growing popularity of raising urban chickens.

We believe that by specifically adding chickens to the Salem Revised Code as we proposed, you will be providing clear guidance for Salem citizens. Less confusion and specific regulations will ensure that chickens are kept in a manner that results in fewer complaints, ultimately costing the city less time and money.

When clear and specific chicken policies are available, cities experience fewer problems. Madison, Wisconsin reports "The chicken keeping community does a good job of caring for and restraining their chickens" (appendix J). Commissioner Randy Leonard in Portland states "We have not experienced any significant problems relating to reduced property values or threats to public health as a result of hens co-existing with city residents" (appendix A).

Water Quality Issues

A 4-pound laying hen produces 0.0035 cu ft of manure per day whereas a 100-lb pig (the size currently allowed in the City of Salem) produces 0.109 cu ft per day (<http://extension.oregonstate.edu/catalog/pdf/em/em8649.pdf>).

According to the FDA, an average dog generates 3/4 of a pound of manure a day that cannot be composted because of the harmful bacteria and parasites (hookworms, roundworms, and tapeworms) that can infect humans. This waste is considered a major source of bacterial pollution in urban watersheds (<http://www.pacshell.org/projects/petwasteinfo.htm#facts>).

Dog waste contains higher concentrations of nitrogen and phosphorus than cows, chickens, or pigs and is a major contributor of excessive nutrients that flow into ground and surface waters through runoff from city sidewalks and lawns (www.csld.edu/Downloads/Sussman_2008_DogParks.pdf).

Not only do chickens produce less waste, most people who keep chickens in the city also have a garden and therefore compost their chicken manure. If composted and added to the garden, the water quality impact would be virtually nothing. Chickens also reduce the need for pesticides because they eat bugs and weeds, further reducing the potential for water pollution.

Chickens Play an Important Role in Sustainable Living

More and more people are interested in living a sustainable life style. Local government and neighborhood associations are encouraging citizens to reduce their consumption of resources. A small number of backyard chickens allow us the opportunity to reduce our carbon footprint and support the local food movement.

People who have backyard hens are less likely to use harmful chemicals and pesticides in their gardens. Instead, they desire their yard to be healthy and environmentally friendly. They consider chickens a natural extension of their garden because they eat weeds and bugs and provide fertilizer.

Organic gardeners seek natural fertilizer to enhance their garden soil as they grow fresh fruits and vegetables. Chicken manure is one of the most efficient natural fertilizers providing essential nutrients to build the soil. Backyard hens provide a very local source of fertilizer that is easily composted, without any transportation costs. According to Jim Hermes, OSU Extension Specialist, chicken manure is a great addition to sustainable urban gardens (appendix H).

Backyard chickens eat grass clippings and food scraps, thus keeping these products out of the local landfill by reusing them on site.



We are encouraged to eat locally, reducing the need to transport food long distances. What better place to start than the availability of food right in the back yard! National and local news media has given the *100 mile diet* (eating only food grown within a 100 mile radius of your home) substantial coverage over the last year.

Backyard hens can help promote a 100 yard or even a 100 foot diet! Imagine the lowered gas consumption as trips to the store are made less frequently.

Becoming a more sustainable community becomes easier with the availability of eggs from backyard hens. Local citizens can contribute their surplus eggs to local food banks, or neighbors, feeding the hungry with healthy, locally produced food.

Chickens Do Not Reduce Property Values

Fear that city chickens will reduce property values is unwarranted. Many cities, large and small, across the nation already allow for a few backyard hens and real estate statistics show that property values in these cities have steadily increased over the years. It is only since the recent mortgage crisis that property values have begun to decline and this has occurred equally in cities with or without chickens. Despite this, the average estimated value and sales price remains higher in cities where chickens are allowed and clearly regulated (like Portland, Eugene, Fort Collins, and Madison), compared to Salem where they are not.

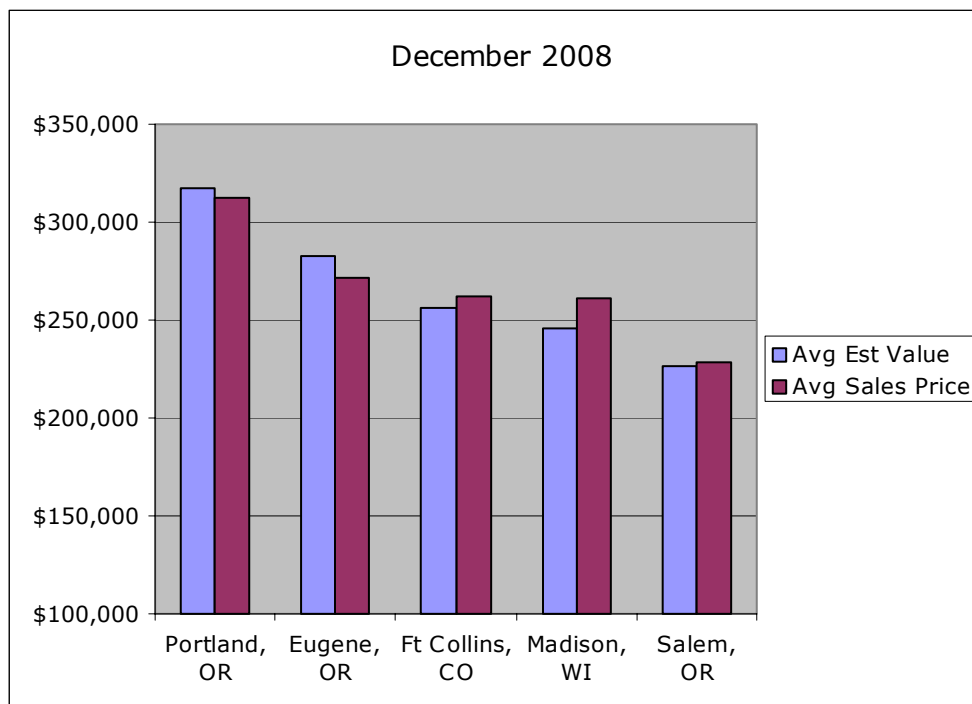
In Portland, chickens have been allowed in the city since 1968, yet it remains a popular and expensive place to live. The average sales price there in December 2008 was \$312,152. Jane Leo with the Portland Metropolitan Association of Realtors indicated that to her knowledge, city chickens have not affected property values in Portland (appendix K).

In Eugene, where backyard hens are permitted, the average sales price in December 2008 was \$271,056.

In Fort Collins Colorado, where city residents can keep up to six pet hens, the average sales price in December 2008 was \$261,937.

In Madison Wisconsin, where backyard hens have been permitted since 2004, the average sales price in December 2008 was \$261,234.

In Salem, where chickens are not allowed (but pigs are), and the ordinance is unclear, the average sales price in December 2008 was just \$228,728.



(Source: <http://realestate.aol.com>)

Lot Size Doesn't Matter

When Council looked at this issue in the past it was stated that although many Oregon cities allow backyard hens, *"Salem is unique in that both single family residential zones have a minimum lot size of 4,000 square feet while other cities have several single family residential zones with varying minimum lot sizes"* (appendix L). However, Portland allows pet hens (no roosters) in all of its residential zones, including R5 (**minimum lot size 3,000 sq ft**) and R2.5 (**minimum lot size just 1,600 sq ft**).

Nevertheless, minimum lot size is an irrelevant statistic here. *Average* lots size and *housing density* per square mile is what's important in this issue.

Statistics indicate that the housing density per square mile of land is 1776.7 in Portland and 1537.0 in Corvallis, compared to just 1176.8 in Salem. The housing density per square mile is actually less here in Salem, which means homes in Portland and Corvallis are closer together (www.abcrealestatedirectory.com/OR).

Still, we believe lot size is irrelevant for several reasons:

1. Shelter for five hens does not require any more yard space than a typical garden tool shed which most backyards can easily accommodate.
2. The size of homes (not just lots) varies greatly in Salem. As you know, we have large lots with small houses on them and small lots with large houses on them, and everything in between. You cannot always assume that smaller lots lack adequate backyard space or distance to adjacent property.
3. Again, the more important factor here is housing density per given area of land, not the minimum permitted lot size.

However, to ensure that chicken coops are not too close to neighbors we have set restrictions in our draft ordinance amendment that would require coops to be at least 25' from residential structures on adjacent properties. This is the same policy implemented in many cities across the country and it is also the distance at which most normal noises are not audible (www.sailzora.com/chickens).

Chickens Are Educational

Kids can purchase a chick for about \$2 and keep it in a box under a heat lamp for the first few weeks until it develops its adult feathers. Then they move the chickens to the coop they helped build and watch them grow into affectionate, entertaining pets.

Not only will they learn about the responsibility that comes with caring for a pet, they will learn where their food *really* comes from, something a dog or cat cannot teach them. Children will see first-hand how eggs are "made" and take an interest in eating healthy, nutritious food produced by their own pets.

They will also learn about sustainability and recycling. Children will see how grass clippings, bugs, weeds, and kitchen scraps fed to chickens are recycled and turned into a delicious egg that they can eat. They will also see how straw bedding and waste from the chickens improves their garden soil that, in turn, produces fruits and vegetables. Instead of just hearing the phrase "reduce, reuse, recycle" they will *experience* it.

City kids will be able to participate in 4-H or FFA programs like their more rural friends. It is not practical to raise a steer, a sheep, or a pig (although a 100-pound pig is allowed in the city of Salem) in most city yards but a 4-pound hen is very practical because it is small, inexpensive to raise, and very easy to care for.



Below is a list of chicken-related educational programs and community events available in cities like Portland where chickens are legal. We are willing to promote similar activities here in Salem.

Portland Community College: Raising City Chickens. Class is offered Jan 10 and Jan 17 for 2 hrs. Currently, the class is filled and so is the waiting list. However, the class is also being offered in the Spring Term. The registrar said the class is very popular and filled quickly this Term.

Growing Gardens Nursery: Offers the Tour-de-Coop which is a map sold for \$5 which last year listed 18 backyard coops to visit in Portland. Much fun and a good chance to see many styles of chicken keeping. Last year it was held July 26 and was very popular.

Livinglandscape Nursery: They sponsor Chicken Fest in March. For \$5 they offer workshops on Care, Selection and Coop Building. A live display of 20 breeds, a movie The Natural History of Chickens, chicken health and ask an Eggsper for those that don't have time for classes.

Chickens Give Consumers Some Control

As consumers, most of us have little or no control over what we eat. Food recalls have become common and people are becoming increasingly concerned with food safety and animal welfare.

A few backyard hens provide a free protein-rich, nutritious food source that can help feed hungry children and combat child obesity and diabetes.

Home-grown eggs taste much better than store-bought eggs and are more nutritious. A study shows they have 1/3 less cholesterol, 1/4 less saturated fat, 2/3 more vitamin A, 2 times more omega-3 fatty acids, 3 times more vitamin E, and 7 times more beta carotene than store bought eggs (<http://www.motherearthnews.com/Real-Food/2007-10-01/Tests-Reveal-Healthier-Eggs.aspx>).

It is estimated that 4.5 million eggs are infected with *Salmonella* each year (<http://www.cspinet.org/nah/eggs-ja.htm>). *Salmonella* sickens up to one million people a year and 80% of those cases can be attributed to contaminated eggs. Home-grown eggs are far less likely to contain *Salmonella* than store-bought eggs (http://www.naturalchoices.co.uk/Salmonella-levels-over-5x-higher?id_mot=7).

Health experts recommend eating eggs within 14 days (<http://www.cspinet.org/nah/eggs-ja.htm>). However, store-bought eggs often come from out-of-state and can be sold when they are as old as 45 days (http://www.fsis.usda.gov/Factsheets/Focus_On_Shell_Eggs/index.asp).

Please do not underestimate the satisfaction of knowing where your eggs came from, how old they are, what went into making them, and how the chickens that laid them were treated.

Chickens Do Not Increase Methane Gas Emissions

Last summer the city of Fort Collins, Colorado changed their city ordinance to legalize backyard hens at its citizens' request. At that time, a thorough investigation was conducted which included the possibility of increased methane gas emissions. It was concluded that backyard hens would not significantly impact methane gas emissions (M). There is no reason to believe that this would be any different in Salem.

Chickens and Emergency Preparedness

Government officials encourage us to be prepared in the event of an emergency. Whether it's a fire, flood, earthquake, civil unrest, or economic crisis, having a source of high-protein, nutritious food like eggs readily available can provide critical food in a time of need.

During heavy snow/ice storms and floods like we recently experienced, there could be damage to buildings and infrastructure such as bridges and highways that could hinder transportation. As a result, it can be difficult to get to the store and scarcity of food items on store shelves can occur. Local egg-producing hens will help our community be more food self-sufficient year-round.

The American food system is dependent on centralized processing plants and transportation. A more diversified food system can provide more security by letting citizens grow crops and raise animals they know and enjoy. That way, if the food system should fail, we will be able to feed our selves and our neighbors (Backyard Poultry, vol. 3, no. 6, pg 16).

Chickens Do Not Pose a Public Health Risk

The type of Avian Influenza that is contagious to humans has not been found in North America. Bird flu is spread by contact with the contaminated feces of wild birds, primarily migratory waterfowl. Unlike rural farm birds, which might co-mingle with migratory birds or drink from a shared pond, "backyard chickens" will be kept in an enclosed pen with no contact with migratory birds. OSU Poultry Extension Specialist, Jim Hermes, states "bird flu of the type noted in the media has not been diagnosed in the whole of the Western Hemisphere and may not ever find its way here" and that "chickens are relatively healthy animals" (appendix H).

The infamous "factory farms" we've all heard about create ideal conditions for diseases like *Salmonella* and avian influenza; small backyard flocks do not. Overcrowding and stress reduce a chicken's immune system, predisposing them to infection and facilitating the spread of disease. This is not the case for small backyard flocks where chickens are kept as pets in well-maintained coops cleaned regularly (<http://birdflubook.com/g.php?id=5>).

Unlike cats and dogs which are prime vectors for rabies, parasites, and tick-borne diseases, pet chickens actually keep your yard healthier by eating ticks and other insects.

The Urban Chicken Movement

According to the Worldwatch Institute, "*... an Urban Chicken Movement has swept across the United States in recent years*" (appendix N) and it began right here in the Pacific Northwest.

Some people want organic eggs and garden compost, others are concerned about food security, others want to "eat local" to save resources, and others wish to enjoy the entertaining, fun pets hens can be. There have been lots of news articles written about this growing trend, increasing primarily in upscale neighborhoods.

Our request is not unreasonable or unusual. Cities like Portland, Boise, Denver, Madison, Seattle, and Fort Collins (just to name a few) have relaxed their zoning laws to allow for a few backyard hens. In fact, according to Newsweek Magazine, more than 65% of major U.S. cities now allow backyard hens (appendix N).

We located more than 20 additional news articles describing this popular trend and how municipalities have accommodated their citizens' requests to raise a few chickens (appendix N).

A research paper by a graduate student at the University of New Mexico who evaluated chicken-keeping policies in 25 cities can help your decision-making in the coming weeks. It can be found at:
(<http://urbanchickens.org/files/Ordinance%20research%20paper.pdf>).

This is a chance for Salem to show that it is a progressive, green city by joining the Urban Chicken Movement.