



## Backyard Poultry and Livestock Density Recommendations for acreage & housing requirements

### *Small Backyard Animals*

**Rabbits** – No minimum acreage requirements as rabbits are kept in hutches. As stated below; hutches should meet minimum floor space requirements as noted by The Animal Welfare Act specifies that, for each rabbit housed in a primary enclosure shall be provided a minimum amount of floor space\*, exclusive of the space taken up by food and water receptacles:

Individual rabbits

Size (lbs.)	Space (sq. ft.)
3-5	1.5
6-8	3
9-11	4
12+	5

Females with litters

Size (lbs.)	Space (sq. ft.)
3-5	4
6-8	5
9-11	6
12+	7

\*All hutches are advised to have a minimum of 14-inch height from floor to ceiling.

### **Poultry**

- Outdoor Access: Keep in coop until 7AM. ½ acre for 12 birds or less; one acre for 13-20 birds. Over one acre no limit. Providing a fenced yard for birds to reside in to prevent “straying” birds from entering neighboring properties.
- Indoor Housing: Coops should provide adequate floor space for poultry: minimum of 2 to 3 sq. ft. per bird is recommended. Example: twelve birds, a floor with 24 to 36 sq. ft. of floor space is best. Adding perches and nest boxes will allow the birds to use more area throughout a shed and may be counted into the “available” floor space requirements.

### *Large Backyard Animals*

*It is recommended livestock should be stocked at one Animal Unit per acre. An Animal Unit is equivalent to a 1000 lb. non-lactating cow.*

### **Sheep & goats**

- Two to 5 adult animals per acre.
- Most standard 4 ft. high fences are generally adequate for sheep and goats, boundary fence should consist of at least five strands of electrified High Tensile wire or woven/welded mesh wire.
- A three-sided shed or other shelter is recommended for inclement weather. Permanent barns should provide 15-20 sq. ft. of space per adult sheep/goat. A minimum of 1.5-2 sq. ft. of feeder space per animal.

### **Alpacas & llamas**

- Three to 4 adults per acre.
- Fencing should be 4-5 ft. high, barb wire fences are not recommended.
- A three-sided shed or other shelter is recommended for inclement weather. Permanent barns should provide a minimum of 20 sq. ft. of space per alpaca and 40 sq. ft. per llama.



## Pigs

- Finishing/market hogs (235-270 lbs.) - 3 to 4 pigs per acre. Adults (300-500 lbs) - 2 to 3 pigs per acre. One or two sows with litter per acre.
- Open air housing: a sleeping and loafing area for shade during hot weather and protection from cold drafts during cold weather; also allowing natural ventilation air to flow through the rear wall and open front of the building. To prevent hogs from rooting out of the lot, the fencing at ground level must be strong and secure. Minimum recommended space for this type of facility is 6-8 sq. ft. of space per pig under roof and 8-12 sq. ft. per pig in the attached lot. More lot space will facilitate manure drying.
- Permanent barns should provide floor space as follows:
  - Finishing/market hogs (235-270 lbs.) in pens with slotted flooring is 7.5 to 8 sq. ft. per pig
  - Adult pig individually housed (300-500 lbs.) – 15 sq. ft. per pig
  - Recommended Space Requirements for Sows and Gilts Housed in Groups
    - Breeding gilt (250-300 lbs.); Solid floor – 40 sq. ft.; slotted - 24 sq. ft.
    - Breeding sow (300-500 lbs.); Solid floor – 48 sq. ft.; slotted - 30 sq. ft.
    - Gestating gilt (250-300 lbs.); Solid floor – 20 sq. ft.; slotted - 14 sq. ft.
    - Gestating sow (300-500 lbs.); Solid floor – 24 sq. ft.; slotted - 16 sq. ft.

## Cattle

- One adult animal unit per acre.
- Housing varies depending on breed size of cattle. Ideally, a minimum 50 sq. ft. per animal unit is recommended for enclosed structures without an exercise lot. A minimum of 2-2.5 ft. per animal for trough space is suggested.
- Good fencing is a must, preferably electric.

## Horses

- One adult animal unit per acre.
- Space recommended in an enclosed structure is a minimum of 50 sq. ft. per animal including run-in sheds. Minimum stall size for light horses is 10 x10 feet.

**Miniature equine** – 2 to 4 adult animals per acre and stall (follow animal unit weight),

## **\*\* Some other measurements to consider in managing livestock properties include:**

- Forage density and availability
- Paddock rest time
- Animal body condition, health, and physiological stage
- Stocking rate and stock density
- Manure management
- Pasture and property monitoring
- Constant availability of clean, fresh, unfrozen water.
- **Good fences make good neighbors**

**\*\*Check with Local Zoning Laws**