

The Birds, the Bees and the Beasts **Fact Sheet on Backyard Farm Animal Rules in Unincorporated Pima County**

Many Pima County residents are interested in *raising* animals as a food source on their residential property. This fact sheet provides information about the rules that govern raising farm animals in residential areas of unincorporated Pima County. Incorporated areas, including the City of Tucson, South Tucson, Marana, Oro Valley, and Sahuarita, have rules that supersede the rules for unincorporated Pima County. If you live in a community that has CC&Rs, you need to be sure to follow those rules as well. Additional rules apply for the *slaughter, process, and sale* of meat, dairy and eggs.

The rules for raising animals for consumption in residential areas of unincorporated Pima County are found in the Pima County Municipal Code. Most of the rules appear in Title 18, the Zoning Code (PCZC). The PCZC can be found at: <http://www.pima.gov/cob/code/>. Please note that if you live in a community that has Covenants, Conditions and Restrictions (CC&Rs), you will need to adhere to those rules as well.

If you live in a community that has Conditions, Covenants and Restrictions (CC&Rs) you will need to adhere to those rules as well. Contact your Homeowners' Association for more information.

The PCZC establishes land use zones throughout the unincorporated portion of the County. For each zone, the PCZC sets forth the following:

- Permitted uses: what you can do on your property
- Conditional uses: what you can do on your property if you get special permission
- Development standards: specific rules for the use of your property, which may include minimum site areas, building limits, setbacks, fencing, or parking requirements.

The rules governing land use are meant to promote and protect the public health, peace, safety, comfort, convenience, and general welfare of the citizens of Pima County. These rules also provide social and economic advantages related to an orderly, efficient use of land. This fact sheet summarizes the rules that relate specifically to raising poultry, hogs, **RATITES** (emus, ostriches), livestock (goats, sheep, and cattle), and bees. Words in **BOLD CAPS** are defined or explained at the end of the document.

What kind of animals can I raise on my property?

Animals that make a lot of noise are not permitted in any zone! The Municipal Code states that "... owning, possessing, harboring or controlling any animal or bird which frequently howls, barks, meows, squawks or makes other sounds is prohibited if they produce clearly audible sound beyond the **PROPERTY LINE** of the property on which they are conducted and they disturb the public peace and quiet or comfort of the neighboring inhabitants (PCMC 06.04.160).

Table 1 shows the number and type of animals that are allowed as permitted or conditional uses in various residential zones, as long as they do not create a noise nuisance. *To determine the zone of your property, call Planning and Development Services 520-740-6800.*

Table 1: Number and Type of Farm Animals Permitted in Residential Zones

Zone	# Birds (poultry, small animals)	Bees	Beasts		
			RATITES (emus, ostriches)	Hogs	Cattle, Goats, Sheep
IR:	No restriction (18.12.020.A.10)	1 colony per 2,500 square feet (18.07.030.E.1)	No restriction (18.12.020.A.25)	5 hogs over 6 months of age. More are permitted if the project is sponsored by the 4-H Club, Future Farmers of America or a similar nonprofit organization (18.12.020.9)	No restriction (18.12.020.A.8)
RH	No restriction (18.13.020.A.10)	1 colony per 2,500 square feet (18.07.030.E.1)	No restriction (18.13.020.A.25)	5 hogs over 6 months of age. More are permitted if the project is sponsored by the 4-H Club, Future Farmers of America or a similar nonprofit organization (18.12.020.9)	No restriction (18.13.020.A.7)
GR-1:	No more than 40 per acre (18.14.020.A.10)	The number of colonies is based on LOT size as follows: ¼ acre or less: 2 >¼ acre - < ½ acre: 4 ½ acre - <36,000 sq ft: 6 36,000 sq ft - 1 acre: 8 >1 acre: 8, plus 1 colony for each additional 2,500 sq ft of LOT area above 1 acre (18.07.030.E.1)	Minimum site area: 1 acre Ostrich: Not more than 1 over 14 months of age for each 10,000 sq ft of site area Emu: Not more than 1 over 14 months of age per 5,000 sq ft of site area If more than one type of ratite is kept, a prorated combination of the area required for each animal. Two ratites six to 14 months of age may be substituted for each ratite over 14 months of age. (18.14.020.24)	1 hog over 6 months of age per acre. More are permitted if the project is sponsored by the 4-H Club, Future Farmers of America or a similar nonprofit organization (18.14.020.A.8)	1 animal per 10,000 square feet of LOT area (18.14.020.A.7)
SR:	No restriction (18.187.010.B.1.b)	The number of colonies is based on LOT size as follows: ¼ acre or less: 2 >¼ acre - < ½ acre: 4 ½ acre - <36,000 sq ft: 6 36,000 sq ft - 1 acre: 8 >1 acre: 8, plus 1 colony for each additional 2,500 sq ft of lot area above 1 acre (18.07.030.E.1)	Ostrich: No more than one ostrich over 14 months of age for each 10,000 square feet of site area, Emu: No more than one emu or similar ratite over 14 months of age is in a 5,000 square feet of site area, If more than one type of ratite is kept, a prorated combination of the area for each animal. Two ratites six to 14 months of age may be substituted for each ratite over 14 months of age (18.17.020.A.8.a)	1 hog over 6 months of age per acre. More are permitted if the project is sponsored by the 4-H Club, Future Farmers of America or a similar nonprofit organization (18.14.020.A.8)	1 animal more than 6 months of age per 10,000 square feet of LOT area (18.14.020.A.7)

Table 1: Number and Type of Farm Animals Permitted in Residential Zones (cont.)

Zone	Birds (chickens, poultry)	Bees	Beasts (LIVESTOCK)		
			RATITES (emus, ostriches)	Hogs	Cattle, Goats, Sheep
SR-2:	No restriction (18.18.020.B.1.b)	The number of colonies is based on LOT size as follows: ¼ acre or less: 2 >1/4 acre - < ½ acre: 4 ½ acre - <36,000 sq ft: 6 36,000 sq ft - 1 acre: 8 >1 acre: 8, plus 1 colony for each additional 2,500 sq ft of lot area above 1 acre (18.07.030.E.1)	Ostrich: Not more than 1 over 14 months of age for each 10,000 sq ft of site area Emu: Not more than 1 over 14 months of age per 5,000 sq ft of site area If more than one type of ratite is kept, a prorated combination of the area required for each animal. Two ratites six to 14 months of age may be substituted for each ratite over 14 months of age. (18.19.01.A.1.a)	None	1 animal more than 6 months of age per 10,000 square feet of LOT area (18.18.020.B.1)
SH:	No restriction (18.19.010.A.1)	The number of colonies is based on LOT size as follows: ¼ acre or less: 2 >1/4 acre - < ½ acre: 4 ½ acre - <36,000 sq ft: 6 36,000 sq ft - 1 acre: 8 >1 acre: 8, plus 1 colony for each additional 2,500 sq ft of lot area above 1 acre (18.07.030.E.1)	One acre site area minimum. Ostrich: Not more than 1 over 14 months of age for each 10,000 sq ft of site area Emu: Not more than 1 over 14 months of age per 5,000 sq ft of site area If more than one type of ratite is kept, a prorated combination of the area required for each animal. Two ratites six to 14 months of age may be substituted for each ratite over 14 months of age. (18.18.01.B.2.a)	1 hog over 6 months of age per acre. More are permitted if the project is sponsored by the 4H Club, Future Farmers of America or a similar nonprofit organization (18.19.010.A.1)	1 animal more than 6 months of age per 10,000 square feet of LOT area (18.19.010.A.1)
TR:	Not more than 24 per 8,000 sq ft. of LOT area. No roosters (18.31.010.A)	The number of colonies is based on LOT size as follows: ¼ acre or less: 2 >1/4 acre - < ½ acre: 4 ½ acre - <36,000 sq ft: 6 36,000 sq ft - 1 acre: 8 >1 acre: 8, plus 1 colony for each additional 2,500 sq ft of lot area above 1 acre (18.07.030.E.1)	None	None	None

Table 1: Number and Type of Farm Animals Permitted in Residential Zones (cont.)

Zone	Birds (chickens, poultry)	Bees	RATITES (emus, ostriches)	Beasts (LIVESTOCK)	
				Hogs	Cattle, Goats, Sheep
CR-1	No restriction, not for retail sale (18.21.020.A.3.a)	The number of colonies is based on LOT size as follows: ¼ acre or less: 2 >1/4 acre - < ½ acre: 4 ½ acre - <36,000 sq ft: 6 36,000 sq ft - 1 acre: 8 >1 acre: 8, plus 1 colony for each additional 2,500 sq ft of lot area above 1 acre (18.07.030.E.1)	<i>Conditional Use– needs special approval.</i> Ostrich: Not more than 1 over 14 months of age for each 10,000 sq ft of site area Emu: Not more than 1 over 14 months of age per 5,000 sq ft of site area If more than one type of ratite is kept, a prorated combination of the area required for each animal. Two ratites six to 14 months of age may be substituted for each ratite over 14 months of age. (18.21.020.A.2.b)	None	Only on LOTS 36,000 square feet or more: 1 animal more than 6 months of age per 10,000 square feet of lot area (18.21.101.A.3.b)
CR-2	No restriction, not for retail sale (18.23.010.A.1)	The number of colonies is based on LOT size as follows: ¼ acre or less: 2 >1/4 acre - < ½ acre: 4 ½ acre - <36,000 sq ft: 6 36,000 sq ft - 1 acre: 8 >1 acre: 8, plus 1 colony for each additional 2,500 sq ft of lot area above 1 acre (18.07.030.E.1)	<i>Conditional Use– needs special approval.</i> Ostrich: Not more than 1 over 14 months of age for each 10,000 sq ft of site area Emu: Not more than 1 over 14 months of age per 5,000 sq ft of site area If more than one type of ratite is kept, a prorated combination of the area required for each animal. Two ratites six to 14 months of age may be substituted for each ratite over 14 months of age. (18.23.010.A.1)	None	On LOTS of 1 acre or more: 1 animal more than 6 months of age per 10,000 square feet of lot area (18.23.101.A.1)
CR-3	Not more than 24 per 8,000 sq ft. of LOT area. No roosters (18.25.010.A.4)	The number of colonies is based on LOT size as follows: ¼ acre or less: 2 >1/4 acre - < ½ acre: 4 ½ acre - <36,000 sq ft: 6 36,000 sq ft - 1 acre: 8 >1 acre: 8, plus 1 colony for each additional 2,500 sq ft of LOT area above 1 acre (18.07.030.E.1)	None	None	None

What other rules apply to raising animals at my home?

Even though your property may be in a zone that allows you to raise certain animals, there are other rules that address the facilities that are required for animals, including **ACCESSORY BUILDINGS** for housing them, setbacks of these buildings from **PROPERTY LINES** and residential structures, and requirements for corrals and fending. In some cases, your property may not be large enough to comply with these rules. Table 2 shows the rules that apply to accessory buildings. Note that rules for **RATITES** are different from the rules for other animals.

Table 2: Requirements for ACCESSORY BUILDINGS for Birds and Beasts

Zone	Reference	Maximum height	Distance from front PROPERTY LINE	Distance from rear and side PROPERTY LINES	Maximum LOT Coverage
IR	18.12.050	24 feet	50 feet	50 feet Ratites: corrals and shelter structures within corrals: 50 ft from front PROPERTY LINE and property lines that abut public maintained roads; 10 ft from side and rear property lines (18.12.020.A.25)	1500 sq ft, or 70% of the area of the largest main building on the site, whichever is larger
RH	18.13.050	24 feet	50 feet	50 feet Ratites: corrals and shelter structures within corrals: 50 ft from front PROPERTY LINE and property lines that abut public maintained roads; 10 ft from side and rear property lines (18.13.020.A.25)	1500 sq ft, or 70% of the area of the largest main building on the site, whichever is larger.
GR-1	18.14.050	24 feet	30 feet	50 feet	1500 sq ft, or 70% of the area of the largest main building on the site, whichever is larger Ratite maximum lot coverage by corrals and shelter structures within corrals: 30% (18.14.20.A.24)

Table 2: Requirements for ACCESSORY BUILDINGS for Birds and Beasts

Zone	Reference	Maximum height	Distance from front PROPERTY LINE	Distance from rear and side PROPERTY LINES	Maximum LOT Coverage
SR-1	18.17.050	24 feet	100 feet	100 feet	1500 sq ft, or 70% of the area of the largest main building on the site, whichever is larger
SR-2	18.18.060	24 feet	60 feet	50 feet if abutting a rural, residential or specific plan zone; 40 feet if abutting a business or industrial zone	1500 sq ft, or 70% of the area of the largest main building on the site, whichever is larger
SH	18.19.040	24 feet	60 feet	50 feet	1500 sq ft, or 70% of the area of the largest main building on the site, whichever is larger Ratite maximum LOT coverage by corrals and shelter structures within corrals: 30% (18.19.010.A.1.c)
CR-1	18.21.040	24 feet	60 feet	50 feet	1500 sq ft, or 70% of the area of the largest main building on the site, whichever is larger
CR-2	18.23.040	24 feet	60 feet	50 feet	5% of the LOT area
CR-3	18.25.040	12 feet	50 feet	20 feet	5% of the LOT area
TR	18.31.50	24 feet	60 feet	15 feet rear	5% of the LOT area

The rules for fencing and corrals are shown in Table 3. The rules for **RATITES** are different from the rules for other types of animals.

Table 3: Requirements for Fencing and Corrals

Zone	Ratites	Other beasts
IR	Confined in a stock-tight corral that is at a minimum 6 ft high, and placed at a minimum of 50 feet from the front PROPERTY LINE and abut public maintained roads and 10 feet from side and rear property lines (18.12.010.A.25).	Stock-tight fencing and necessary cattle guards along the boundaries of any property in which livestock is pastured, herded, or cared for and which abuts either a publicly maintained road or the boundary of any zone other than IR. Does not apply to open range as specified in state statute (18.12.040.F).
RH	Confined in a stock-tight corral that is at a minimum 6 ft high, and placed at a minimum of 50 feet from the front PROPERTY LINE and abut public maintained roads and 10 feet from side and rear property lines (18.12.010.A.25).	Corrals must be 50 feet from side and rear PROPERTY LINES , or 10 feet if written consent is provided by the owner of the abutting property. (18.13.050.C.2.c).
GR-1	Confined in a stock –tight corral that is a minimum of 6 feet high. Minimum setback from front property line and 10 feet from the side and rear PROPERTY LINES (18.14.020.A.24).	Corrals must be 50 feet from the side and rear PROPERTY LINES , or 10 feet if written consent is provided by the owner of the abutting property (18.13.-5-/C/2/c).
SR	Maximum LOT coverage for corrals and shelter structures within corrals is 35%. Corrals must be confined within a stock-tight fence that is at least 6 ft high or other restraint of sufficient strength and durability to prevent roaming at large. Shelters and corrals must be 50 ft from the front PROPERTY LINE and 10 ft from the side and rear property lines (18.17.020.A.8).	Cattle, sheep, goats, or other similar animals must be confined in a stock-tight fence in an area of no less than 400 sq ft per animals. Fenced areas must be set back 10 feet from the rear where it abuts IR, RH, GR-1 , SR, SR-2, SH, CR-1, CR-2 or MU zones, and 40 feet from the rear when it abuts any other zone. Corrals must be 40 feet from the side PROPERTY LINE , or 10 feet on the side property line if the adjacent property owner submits a written record of agreement. No corral may be closer than 50 feet from any residence or living quarters in an abutting property (18.17.50.C.3.a).
SR-2	Confined in a stock-tight corral that is at a minimum 6 ft high, and placed at a minimum of 50 feet from the front PROPERTY LINE and abut public maintained roads and 10 feet from side and rear PROPERTY LINES (18.18.020.B.2).	Cattle, sheep, goats, or other similar animals must be confined in a stock-tight fence in an area of no less than 400 sq ft per animals. Fenced areas must be set back 10 feet from the rear where it abuts IR, RH, GR-1 , SR, SR-2, SH, CR-1, CR-2 or MU zones, and 40 feet from the rear when it abuts any other zone. Corrals must be 40 feet from the side PROPERTY LINE , or 10 feet on the side property line if the adjacent property owner submits a written record of agreement. No corral may be closer than 50 feet from any residence or living quarters in an abutting property (18.18.60.C.3.c).

Table 3: Requirements for Fencing and Corrals

Zone	Ratites	Other beasts
SH	Maximum LOT coverage for corrals and shelter structures within corrals is 30%. Corrals must be confined within a stock-tight fence that is at least 6 ft high, or other restraint that is sufficient in strength and durability to prevent roaming at large. Shelters and corrals must be 30 ft from the front PROPERTY LINE and 10 ft from the side and rear property. No corral may be closer than 30 ft to any residence or living quarters on an abutting property (18.19.010.A.1)	Cattle, sheep, goats, or other similar animals must be confined in a stock-tight fence in an area of no less than 400 sq ft per animals. Fenced areas must be set back 10 feet from the rear where it abuts IR, RH, GR-1, SR, SR-2, SH, CR-1, CR-2 or MU zones, and 40 feet from the rear when it abuts any other zone. Corrals must be 40 feet from the side PROPERTY LINE , or 10 ft on the side property line if the adjacent property owner submits a written record of agreement. No corral may be closer than 50 ft from any residence or living quarters in an abutting property (18.19.40.C.2.c).
CR-1	Minimum setbacks for ratite corrals and shelter structures within corrals: 30 ft from the front PROPERTY LINE and ten feet from side and rear property lines; but in no event shall a corral or shelter within a corral be closer than 30 ft to any residence or living quarters on an abutting property (18.21.020.A.2.d).	Animals must be confined in a stock-tight fence in an area of no less than 400 sq ft per animal. Fenced in areas should be set back 10 feet from the rear, and 40 feet from the side PROPERTY LINE with it abuts IR, RH, GR-1, SR, SR-2, SH, CR-1, CR-2 or MU. Fenced in areas must be set back 40 feet from the rear and side PROPERTY LINES where it abuts all other zones. Side yard setbacks of 10 feet are permitted when the adjacent property owners have a written recorded agreement to this effect. (18.21.040.C.2.c)
CR-2	None permitted	None permitted
CR-3	None permitted	None permitted
TR	None permitted	None permitted

Bees

If you plan to raise bees, the State of Arizona requires that you must notify and get permission from any landowner or lessee who is engaged in commercial agriculture if your bees will forage on their property. The notice shall include the beekeeper's address and telephone number, the location of the hives within a quarter section and the exact dates that the bees will be in the area. After receiving the notice the person who engages in commercial agriculture must inform the beekeeper, before application, when a bee sensitive pesticide will be applied to the area in which the bees are foraging. (ARS 3-367.02).

Pima County zoning rules that apply to bees are set forth in 18.07.030.E and include:

- **Structures and facilities:** Bees must be kept at a minimum of 30 feet from any exterior **LOT** boundary line. In lots that are smaller than one acre, a barrier shall be erected that will prevent bees from flying through it. Such barrier must be at least six feet in height and consist of a dense plant or hedge or any opaque constructed material. The barrier must extend at least 18 ft beyond the hive(s) in both directions.
- **Provision of water:** Fresh, clean watering facilities for bees shall be provided on the premises.

Definitions

ACCESSORY BUILDING: A subordinate building on the same **LOT** or building site as a main building, the use of which is incidental to that of the main building and which is used exclusively by the occupants of the main buildings or their nonpaying guests or employees (PCZC, 18.03.020).

LOT: A parcel of land with fixed boundaries as reflected on a deed, subdivision plat, record of survey or court order (PCZC, 18.03.020).

PROPERTY LINE: the line which represents the legal limits of property (including an apartment, condominium, room or other dwelling unit) owned, leased or otherwise occupied by a person, business, corporation or institution. In cases involving sound from an activity on a public street or other public right-of-way, the "property line" shall be the nearest boundary of the public right-of-way (PCZC, 06.04.160.a.1).



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