

FACT SHEET - BACKYARD CHICKENS

AGED CARE FACILITIES AND BACKYARD CHICKENS

Keeping chickens in the backyards of aged care facilities can provide many benefits for both residents and employees. This factsheet provides a summary of guidelines and information for any facilities interested in keeping chickens in their backyards.



Chickens

- Maximum 10 chickens
- Do not keep roosters as they can be very loud
- If chickens are sick, separate them from other birds (and don't use their eggs)



The Chicken Coop

- 1 per facility
- Floor area = 15 m² (maximum)
- Height = 3m (maximum)
- Must be 4.5m away from dwelling
- Do not set up the chicken coop near areas that food is prepared, eaten or stored
- Supply one nest for every 4-5 hens. Ensure the nest is clean and free of manure.
- The chicken coop should be safe from predators but easily accessible



Responsibilities

- Staff should be in charge of the chickens but residents should be encouraged to participate in looking after them, such as feeding them, cleaning the coop or collecting the eggs
- Ensure there is a sufficient number volunteers or staff who are willing to look after the chickens
- Chickens can make a lot of mess if left to roam freely! If you have a herb or vegetable garden it is recommended to keep chickens as far away from them as possible. Maintaining an adequate chicken coop should provide the chickens with enough space to live happily



FACT SHEET - HOME GROWN PRODUCE

Diet

- Chickens must be fed daily and should have access to grassy areas
- They should always have access to fresh water and food. The containers should be raised off the ground
- Pellets and laying mix should be provided in addition to kitchen scraps to ensure the chickens receive enough nutrition to produce eggs
- Uneaten feed should be removed regularly to avoid rotting
- Don't feed chickens beef or pork scraps



Safe use of eggs

- Wash your hands before and after handling eggs
- Collect eggs in the morning and afternoon
- Discard cracked eggs as bacteria can leech into the egg through cracks
- Eggs should be clean; if dirt is not easily removed, discard the egg
- Don't wash eggs with water - instead use a dry abrasive cloth or disposable towel
- Label eggs with the date they were collected (the oldest eggs should always be eaten first)
- Store cleaned eggs in the fridge in a plastic container that can be washed and sanitised
- Separate eggs from ready to eat foods in storage
- When cooking eggs make sure that they are cooked until the white is completely firm and yolk begins to thicken



WEBSITES REFERENCES

For more information, please refer to the websites below:

1. https://www.northsydney.nsw.gov.au/Waste_Environment/Sustainability/At_Home/Keeping_chickens
2. http://www.foodauthority.nsw.gov.au/_Documents/industry/egg_cleaning_procedures.pdf
3. <https://www.agric.wa.gov.au/livestock-biosecurity/keeping-backyard-chickens>

