



## **The New Urban Agriculture Zoning Code: What Does it Mean to You?**

What follows is a summary of the new rules for food growing and animal husbandry in Pittsburgh. Note that everything described as permitted below requires you to obtain an actual permit through the City of Pittsburgh's Zoning Division. The process and requirements for doing that are outlined at the end of this document.

### **Vegetable Sales**

The Urban Agriculture Zoning Code does not regulate the growing of vegetables and fruits. It does regulate the sale of produce. Here are some of the basic facts you need to know:

- If you own a piece of land [not your backyard] that is used primarily for vegetable production, or lease land for this purpose, you are permitted to sell the produce you grow on that parcel to the general public through an on-site farm stand.
- If you grow food in your backyard and are interested in selling that produce, you are also permitted to do that through an on-site farm stand. You are only permitted to sell food that was grown on site.
- The farm stand must have sufficient area to accommodate standing customers purchasing produce and not interfere with any public right of way or adjacent property.

### **Urban Farm**

A full-fledged urban farm must be at least two acres.

- This allows for the sale of produce grown on the property through an on-site farm stand. See Vegetable Sales for related requirements.
- Goats, chickens and bees are allowed with or without an occupied residence. Larger animals, such as cows and horses, will require a residence.
- Structures built for animals must be placed at least 50 feet from property line.
- Keep your property clean and free of animal excrement and any foul odor
- All possible vermin food sources must be kept in rodent proof containers and stored inside

### **Honey Bees**

Beekeeping is possible in a variety of circumstances:

- Bees can be kept on an occupied or unoccupied parcel that you own or that you are leasing with permission from the owner
- The parcel must be at least 2,000 sq. feet in size (including footprint of buildings)

- You are permitted up to 2 beehives, and for each additional 2,000 sq. feet, you are permitted 2 additional beehives
- Hives must be placed at least 10 feet from any neighboring property line
- Ground mounted beehives can be no higher than 6 feet from grade, and rooftops hives are permitted
- Hives are permitted in side or rear yards of occupied parcels.
- Hive entrances should face away from neighboring property and bees must gain a height of at least six feet at the property line. Barriers may be employed to redirect the bees' flight pathway and establish bee flight pathways above six feet.
  - Should the flight path not be able to be obtained as described above, then a "flyway barrier" should be placed at least six feet in height, and along the side of the hive(s) that contains the entrance to the hive(s). It should also be located within five feet of the hive(s), and extend at least two feet on either side of the hive(s).
  - A "flyway barrier" should consist of a solid fence, dense vegetation, dense hedge, or a combination of these things.
- No flyway is required for hives that are located on porches or balconies at least ten feet above grade, except where the porch or balcony is located less than five feet from a property line.

## **Chickens and Ducks**

The keeping of chickens and ducks is possible in a variety of circumstances:

- The total square footage of your property must be at least 2,000 and the house must be occupied.
- You are permitted up to 5 chickens or ducks, and for each additional 1,000 square feet, you are permitted 1 more chicken or duck.
- Structures housing chickens or ducks must be at least 6 square feet in size
- Roosters are not permitted
- If you are interested in keeping goats (see below) you cannot also keep chickens or ducks unless you have over 10,000 sf. of space.
- Keep your property clean and free of animal excrement and any foul odor. Keep feed in a rodent proof manner and inside. Protect the coop and the run from predators.

## **Goats**

Goats or miniature goats are permitted in a variety of circumstances:

- The total square footage of your property must be at least 2,000 and the house must be occupied. If you are interested in keeping chickens or ducks along with miniature goats (see above), you cannot keep goats and poultry unless your property is over 10,000 sf.
- At 2,000 sq. feet, you are permitted exactly 2 dehorned, adult female or neutered male miniature goats. No single goats allowed for the mental health of the animal.
- For property owners with at least 10,000 sq. feet, residents are permitted up to 2 dehorned, adult female or neutered male goats provided they have at least 30 square feet of enclosed housing and 400 square feet of secured outdoor roaming area.
- Keep your property clean and free of animal excrement and any foul odor.
- Materials related to the feeding and care of goats must be kept in rodent proof containers and stored inside.

Sq. Ft.	Bees	Goats	Ducks/ Chickens	Other Farm Animals
<2000	no	no	no	no
2000	2	2 mini - OR -	5	no
3000	2	2 mini - OR -	6	no
4000	4	2 mini - OR -	7	no
5000	4	2 mini - OR -	8	no
6000	6	2 mini - OR -	9	no
7000	6	2 mini - OR -	10	no
8000	8	2 mini - OR -	11	no
9000	8	2 mini - OR -	12	no
10000	10	2 full size	13	no
15000	10	3 full size	14	no
20000	10	4 full size	15	no
25000	10	5 full size	16	no
30000	10	6 full size	17	no
35000	10	7 full size	18	no
40,000	10	8 full size	19	no
1 acre	10	9 full size	20	no
2 acres	no limit	no limit	no limit	yes

## The Process

- You are required to submit a site plan (see below) to the City of Pittsburgh’s Division of Zoning and Development Review, 200 Ross St, 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor, Monday-Friday, 8 am – 3 pm for approval. If approved, you will be provided with a Zoning Voucher to submit with your plan to the Department of Permits, Licenses and Inspections to complete the application for the occupancy permit.
- The cost of the permit is \$70, and is due at the time of application. Payment must be check or money order only.
- Your site plan must include:
  - If you are selling vegetables, you must show the location of your farm stand and customer standing area.
  - If you are keeping bees, you must show the location of your hives and prove that they are within setback requirements.
  - If you are housing chickens, you must show the location of the coop and run.
  - If you are housing goats, you must show the location of the structure housing goats.

## Frequently Asked Questions:

*Where can I obtain an application for these activities?*

The City of Pittsburgh Zoning Departments offices, located on the 3rd Floor, 200 Ross St., Pittsburgh, PA 15222, or online at <http://pittsburghpa.gov/dcp/zoning/zoning-forms>.

*Where is the City of Pittsburgh's Zoning Department located and what are their hours?*

The office is open from 8am-3pm Monday through Friday. Representatives can be reached at 412.255.2241. See above for the physical address.

*I am interested in keeping bees, chickens or goats but my property is less than 2,000 sq. feet. What can I do?*

You can file for a variance. This will take time and money to achieve, and whatever situation is approved through the zoning variance process will stay with the property, not transfer with you should you move. You can discuss the variance process with the Zoning office.

*I would like to keep more than the allotted amount of bees, chickens or goats. What can I do?*

You can file for a variance. See above.

*I am allergic to bees and concerned about my neighbors having beehives. Is this safe?*

Honeybees are docile and will only become aggressive if they feel threatened. Beekeepers use smoke and proper management skills to minimize stings.

Less than 1 percent of the population is truly allergic (going into anaphylactic shock requiring the carrying of an Epi-pen). Any other type of reaction is considered normal.

*My neighbor has bees, chickens or goats and I don't think they are being kept properly. What can I do?*

Depending on the severity of the situation, a 311 report will get to humane officers in a day or two. Call directly 412.847.7066, and leave a message with the address of the situation.

*I found a roaming chicken, duck or goat. Who do I call to pick up this animal?*

Animal Care and Control will attempt to capture a wandering animal. Call 412.255.2036. If you have the animal captured either the Animal Rescue League or the Humane Society can accept the farm animal.

*I want to keep both chickens and bees on a 2,000 sf property, may I?*

Yes. Bees and chickens are allowed together on lots of 2,000 sq ft or more. But while goats are also allowed on properties of 2,000 sq ft, chickens and goats cannot be on the same property together unless the property is at least 10,000 sq. ft.

*I'm still confused or have questions. Who can I talk to?*

For questions on the permitting process, please contact the Division of Zoning and Development Review at 412-255-2241 or the Department of Permits, Licenses and Inspection at 412-255-8888.

For questions regarding growing vegetables or the keeping of chickens, ducks, bees, or goats, you can contact the following offices:

Burgh Bees

[info@burghbees.com](mailto:info@burghbees.com)

[www.burghbees.com](http://www.burghbees.com)

Grow Pittsburgh

[info@growpittsburgh.org](mailto:info@growpittsburgh.org)

[www.growpittsburgh.org](http://www.growpittsburgh.org)

Pittsburgh Food Policy Council

[dlw57@psu.edu](mailto:dlw57@psu.edu)

[www.pittsburghfoodpolicy.org](http://www.pittsburghfoodpolicy.org)

Pittsburgh Pro Poultry People (P4)

<http://pittsburghpropoultrypeople.blogspot.com/>

[pittsburgh.pro.poultry.people@gmail.com](mailto:pittsburgh.pro.poultry.people@gmail.com)