



**PLANNING REPORT
for the TOWNSHIP OF GUELPH/ERAMOSA
Report # 25/01**

Prepared by the County of Wellington Planning and Development Department in our capacity as planning consultants for the Township

MEETING DATE: January 13th, 2025
TO: The Mayor and Members of Council
Township of Guelph/Eramosa
FROM: Meagan Ferris, Manager of Planning and Environment
County of Wellington Planning and Development
SUBJECT: **RECOMMENDATION REPORT**
Township Initiated Zoning By-law Amendment (04-24) – Domestic Poultry
ATTACHMENTS: 1. Chart of Proposed Changes
2. Proposed Amending By-law
3. Summary of Comments and Responses
4. Written Comments - (i) Wellington Federation of Agriculture and (ii) Wellington-Dufferin-Guelph Public Health

RECOMMENDATION

THAT the Council of the Township of Guelph/Eramosa receive Report 25/01;

THAT the Council of the Township of Guelph/Eramosa approve Zoning By-law Amendment Application ZBA 04/24 to the allow a domestic poultry coop on lots not less than 0.4 ha (1 ac) in size in the Agricultural (A) and Rural Residential (RR) Zone; and

THAT the Council of the Township of Guelph/Eramosa direct staff to issue the Notice of Passing of Zoning By-law Amendment Application ZBA 04/24 in accordance with Section 34 (18) of the Planning Act, R.S.O. 1990, c.P.13.

INTRODUCTION

The intent of this report is to provide Township Council with a planning recommendation on a proposed amendment to the Township's Zoning By-law 40/2016 to allow domestic poultry to be housed on smaller lots (0.4 ha or 1 ac in size) for personal use. This proposal, if approved, would allow the housing, keeping and raising of domestic poultry as an accessory use to a dwelling and permitted only in the Agricultural (A) and Rural Residential (RR) Zones.

A chart containing the detailed summary of the draft proposed changes to the By-law can be seen in **Attachment 1** and the proposed amending By-law for Council's consideration can be seen in **Attachment 2**.

BACKGROUND

The proposed changes are not in relation to a specific property as it is a municipally led change to provide more flexibility for residents of the Township to have domestic poultry on their residential properties, subject to certain criteria. This proposal does not affect the Urban Centre of Rockwood.

Prior to this report, Township staff brought forward information reports on this topic to the Committee of the Whole in 2023 and 2024.

A Public Meeting was held in the fall of 2024 and this meeting was accompanied by a Public Meeting Report and presentation from Planning Staff. A companion report with a draft municipal by-law related to regulating the keeping of domestic poultry was also presented by the Township's Clerk's Department as the same Council Meeting. Although the proposed municipal by-law does not form part of this report, it is directly related to this proposed amendment.

PUBLIC CONSULTATION & COMMENTS

The Public Meeting for this application was held on October 7th, 2024. Four (4) members of the public spoke and provided comments, primarily in opposition to the proposed amending By-law or elements of the proposed amending By-law (or specific to the municipal by-law). Written comments were received prior to the Public Meeting with additional written comments also being received after the Public Meeting.

The comments received were reviewed and responses have been prepared by Planning staff, where appropriate. A summary chart of the comments and responses from Planning staff can be found in **Attachment 3**.

PLANNING ANALYSIS & DISCUSSION

Provincial Planning Statement (2024)

The Provincial Planning Statement (PPS) provides policy direction on matters of provincial interest related to land use planning and development. The PPS acknowledges that settlement areas are the focus of growth and development and provides broad policies seeking to protect the agricultural land base for the long-term, including identifying that new land uses are subject to Minimum Distance Separation (MDS) formulae.

The PPS policies do not speak directly to accessory uses to residential uses; however, as this proposal would introduce a use in the prime agricultural area, planning staff have assessed the proposal as it relates to Minimum Distance Separation (MDS). It is noted that the Minimum Distance Separation (MDS) Document (Publication 853) identifies that: MDS I and II is not applicable to livestock structures that are 10 m² (approximately 106 ft²) or less (Guideline #3); that MDS does not apply to any structures that are accessory to a dwelling (Guideline #13); and MDS is not applicable within settlement areas such as Hamlet's (Guideline #36). Planning staff are satisfied that Minimum Distance Separation has been considered. Further, through the related municipal by-law, the care of domestic poultry and the maintenance of their coops and waste are being addressed.

Planning staff are satisfied that the subject proposal is consistent with provincial policy and are of the opinion that this use should be subject to a regulatory by-law that establishes consistent requirements for the keeping of domestic poultry.

County of Wellington Official Plan

Within the Official Plan, the Rural System includes lands that are designated as Prime Agricultural and Hamlet. Within both designations, single detached homes are generally permitted. The intent of the subject proposal is to allow an accessory use and associated building and/or structure to the main dwelling. The proposed amendment, coupled with a related, municipal by-law to regulate the keeping of domestic poultry, incorporates regulations that will assist with mitigating any land use compatibility concerns with sensitive land uses and other agricultural uses.

Planning staff are further satisfied that Minimum Distance Separation has been appropriately considered and are satisfied the subject proposal maintains the intent and purpose of the Official Plan.

TOWNSHIP ZONING BY-LAW

As highlighted in the previous Public Meeting Report (#24/32), the Zoning By-law is required to be amended to clearly allow the proposed use on lots less than 0.8 ha (2 ac), within both the Agricultural (A) and Rural Residential (RR) Zone, and to ensure a domestic chicken coop is not characterized and subject to zoning regulations applicable to a livestock facility.

Included within **Attachment 1** is a copy of the proposed changes in a chart format and **Attachment 2** includes the proposed amending By-law for Council's consideration. The comments received through the planning process were considered when preparing this report, with the primary concerns raised being related to the minimum lot area proposed, health and safety and the overall concern with biosecurity to the poultry industry.

This subject amendment is seeking to add permissions for a use that is generally permitted, but only if the use is proposed in the Agricultural (A) Zone and the lot is 0.8 ha (2 ac) or larger. The intent of this proposal is to allow the keeping of domestic poultry on lots used for residential purposes. The minimum lot size in the A Zone (for lots used solely for a residential use) and in the Rural Residential (RR) Zone is 0.4 ha (1 ac). It is noted that the Zoning By-law does identify legal non-conforming situations as it relates to lot areas; however, in planning staff's opinion, establishing a minimum lot size of 0.4 ha (1 ac) will assist in alleviating any potentially perceived off-site impacts from other residential uses and will allow more flexibility for the placement of a new domestic poultry coop that will also be able to meet the requirements proposed to be established in the companion municipal by-law (i.e. setbacks from lot lines, other uses, well, septic etc.).

Public Health and the Wellington Federation of Agriculture (WFA) have expressed health and biosecurity concerns and these comments can be seen in **Attachment 4**. It is noted that Public Health speaks to the benefits of a registry and the WFA has provided several recommendations, one of which is to consider the subject Zoning By-law amendment as a pilot project. The recommendations by Public Health and WFA are not appropriate for zoning regulations; however, the Township may wish to consider these comments and evaluate if there are opportunities to apply these recommendations, where appropriate.

At this time, planning staff are not proposing that this amendment be considered on a temporary basis. As mentioned in previous Township staff reports, there are several communities within the County of Wellington that allow the keeping of domestic poultry on residential properties and that this use is permitted by other communities outside of the County. It is also understood that through the creation of the companion municipal by-law, that Township staff have assessed best practices within other communities outside of the County.

Based on the above comments, the chart in **Attachment 1** has not resulted in any significant changes with only minor clerical adjustments being identified.

Summary of Proposed Amendment

The intent of the Zoning By-law amendment continues to include the following changes: a definition of a "Domestic Poultry Coop"; clarification that the definition of "Livestock Facility" does not include a "Domestic Poultry Coop" and adding the following to a new section in the general provisions:

- allows the use in the Agricultural (A) and Rural Residential (RR) Zones
- establishes a minimum lot area of 0.4 ha (1 ac)
- the housing, keeping, raising of domestic poultry (including manure storage) shall not exceed 10 m²
- clarify that MDS is not applicable; and
- that the use is subject to a separate municipal by-law that regulates the keeping of domestic poultry in the Township.

It is emphasized that although the Township’s Zoning By-law has regulations for the use, size and placement of accessory structures established in Section 4.2 *Accessory Uses*, the proposed amendment links to provisions in the Township’s proposed municipal by-law and the municipal by-law establishes setbacks including from property lines.

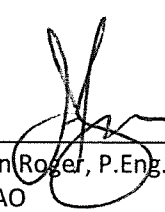
RECOMMNDATIONS

Planning staff are of the opinion that the proposed amending by-law is consistent with the Provincial Planning Statement (2024) and maintains the intent and purpose of the County of Wellington Official Plan and the Township’s Zoning By-law. The proposed By-law allows for a new use, accessory to a residential use, in the Agricultural (A) and Rural Residential (RR) zone with regulations to limit the scale, provide a clear distinction from a livestock facility and provisions that will address compatibility concerns that potentially could arise between uses. The subject amendment is appropriate provided it is coupled with a regulatory municipal by-law that establishes requirements for the care of domestic poultry, including appropriate maintenance and management of the domestic poultry coop to assist in reducing concerns surrounding public health, disease and biosecurity.

Respectfully submitted by
 County of Wellington Planning and Development
 Department



Meagan Ferris, RPP MCIP
 Manager of Planning and Environment

<p>Reviewed by Township of Guelph Eramosa</p>  <hr/> <p>Ian Roger, P.Eng. CAO</p>

Domestic Poultry – Housekeeping Amendment Proposed Zoning By-law Provisions

January 6th, 2025 - Clerical Changes
Identified in **Red**

#	Zoning By-law 40/2016	Existing Provision/Section	Proposed Provisions
1	SECTION 3 – DEFINITIONS	<p>“Livestock Facility”, means one or more barns or permanent structures intended for keeping or housing of livestock with livestock occupied portions, which are areas of the structure where the livestock spend a majority of their time thus allowing substantial amounts of manure to accumulate. A livestock facility also includes all manure or material storages and anaerobic digesters. For the purposes of this definition livestock includes animals identified in the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs Minimum Distance Separation Implementation Guidelines.</p>	<p>“Livestock Facility”, means one or more barns or permanent structures intended for keeping or housing of livestock with livestock occupied portions, which are areas of the structure where the livestock spend a majority of their time thus allowing substantial amounts of manure to accumulate. A livestock facility also includes all manure or material storages and anaerobic digesters but does not include a domestic poultry coop as defined in By-law XX/2025. For the purposes of this definition livestock includes animals identified in the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs Minimum Distance Separation Implementation Guidelines.</p> <p>Domestic Poultry Coop: A building and/or structure that is a maximum of 10m² in size and accessory to a main, detached dwelling in the Agricultural (A) and Rural Residential (RR) zone and used for the housing, keeping, and/or raising of domestic poultry, as defined in, and subject to, By-law XX/2025, A By-law to Regulate the Keeping of Domestic Poultry within the Township of Guelph/Eramosa, and the applicable provisions of this By-law.</p>
2	SECTION 4 – GENERAL PROVISIONS	<p>4.24.2 MDS II – New or Expanding Livestock Facilities Notwithstanding the above, new livestock facilities will not be permitted on lots less than 8,000 m² (2 acres) in size.</p>	<p>Add a <u>new</u> general provision to Section 4 as follows:</p> <p>Notwithstanding any other provisions of this By-law, within the Agricultural (A) and Rural Residential (RR) Zone, a domestic poultry coop may be permitted subject to the following regulations:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The minimum lot area shall be 0.4 ha (1 ac) 2. Any building and/or structure related to housing, keeping and/or raising of domestic poultry and their manure shall not cumulatively exceed an area of 10m² 3. The provisions under Section 4.2 Accessory Uses are applicable, except where it conflicts with any regulations identified in By-law XX/2025, as amended.

**Domestic Poultry – Housekeeping Amendment
Proposed Zoning By-law Provisions**

			<p>4. MDS shall not be applicable.</p> <p>5. The use shall meet all provisions identified in By-law XX/2025, as amended.</p>
3	SECTION 6 – AGRICULTURAL (A) ZONE	<p>6.2.7 Livestock Facilities New and existing Livestock Facilities may be permitted on lots larger than 0.8 hectares (2 ac) subject to Minimum Distance Separation (MDS) setbacks (Section 4.24).</p>	No change proposed. The intent is to allow domestic poultry on properties with the primary use of residential.
4	SECTION 6 – AGRICULTURAL (A) ZONE	<p>6.2.8 Regulations for Residential Uses <i>Agricultural uses and Livestock facilities are not currently permitted on reduced agricultural lots used solely for residential purposes.</i></p>	No change proposed. Domestic poultry on reduced agricultural lots used solely for residential purposes to be permitted through the general provisions section.
5	SECTION 7 – RURAL RESIDENTIAL (RR) ZONE	<p>7.1 Permitted Uses <i>Agricultural uses and livestock facilities are not currently permitted in the RR Zone.</i></p>	No change proposed. Domestic poultry to be permitted on RR lots used solely for residential purposes through the general provisions section.

The Corporation of the Township of Guelph/Eramosa

By-law Number ___/2025

A By-law to amend

Township of Guelph/Eramosa Zoning By-law 40/2016

Entirety of the Township of Guelph/Eramosa

WHEREAS the Council of the Corporation of the Township of Guelph/Eramosa deems it expedient to enact this By-law to amend Zoning By-law Number 40/2016;

AND WHEREAS Council is empowered to enact this By-law under the authority of Section 34 of the *Planning Act*, R.S.O. 1990, Chapter P. 13, as amended;

NOW THEREFORE the Council of the Corporation of the Township of Guelph/Eramosa hereby enacts as follows:

1. That Zoning By-law Number 40/2016 is hereby amended as follows:
 - a) That Section 3 – Definitions, “Livestock Facility”, is amended by adding “**but does not include a domestic poultry coop as defined in By-law ___/2025**” after the word *anerobic digesters*.
 - b) That Section 3 – Definitions is amended by adding the following new definition in alphabetical order:

“ **“Domestic Poultry Coop”**, means a *building and/or structure* that is a maximum of 10m² in size and *accessory to a main, detached dwelling* in the Agricultural (A) and Rural Residential (RR) Zone and used for the housing, keeping, and/or raising of domestic poultry, as defined in, and subject to, By-law ___/2025, A By-law to Regulate the Keeping of Domestic Poultry within the Township of Guelph/Eramosa, and the applicable provisions of this By-law.”

- b) That Section 4 - General Provisions be amended by adding the following new provision:

4.33 Domestic Poultry Regulations

Notwithstanding any other provisions of this By-law, within the Agricultural (A) and Rural Residential (RR) Zone, a *domestic poultry coop* may be permitted subject to the following regulations:

1. The *minimum lot area* shall be 0.4 ha (1 ac).
2. Any *building and/or structure* related to housing, keeping and/or raising of domestic poultry and their manure shall not cumulatively exceed an area of 10m².
3. The provisions under Section 4.2 Accessory Uses are applicable, except where it conflicts with any regulations identified in By-law ___/2025, as amended.
4. MDS shall not be applicable.

5. The use shall meet all provisions identified in By-law ____/2025, as amended.

2. All other applicable provisions of By-law 40/2016 shall continue to apply to the lands affected by this amendment.
3. That this By-law shall become effective from the date of passing hereof.

READ three times and finally passed

this ____ day of **January, 2025**.

Chris White, Mayor

Amanda Knight, Clerk

THE CORPORATION OF THE TOWNSHIP OF GUELPH/ERAMOSIA

EXPLANATION OF BY-LAW #XX - XX

By-law Number XX - XX amends the Township of Guelph/Eramosa Zoning By-law 40/2016 by amending the definition of “Livestock Facility”, adding a new definition for “Domestic Poultry Coop”, and adding a new general provision – Section 4.33 Domestic Poultry Regulations.

The purpose of the proposed Zoning By-law amendment is to permit a Domestic Poultry Coop as an accessory use to the main dwelling on lots not less than 0.4 ha (1 ac) within the Agricultural (A) and Rural Residential (RR) Zone.

The general provisions include establishing a cumulative, overall area of 10 m² for the domestic poultry coop and manure storage to align with the Minimum Distance Separation (MDS) Document (Publication 853), which identifies MDS I and II is not applicable for an area of 10m² or less.

For the purpose of clarity, all terms, including those both bolded and italicized, that are also listed in Section 3 – Definitions are subject to the corresponding definitions.

Attachment 3: Summary of Comments and Responses

Commentator & Comment Summary	Response
<p>County Roads – Pasquale Constanzo</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> No objection. 	Noted.
<p>Member of the Public – Chris Kumar</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Concerns with minimum lot size of 1 ac and how not everyone will have as of right permissions. Preference is to not have a minimum lot size. <p>Member of the Public – Bill Weima</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Generally supportive of allowing domestic poultry, but there should not be a minimum lot size. 	<p>Currently, the Township’s Zoning By-law does not allow the housing of domestic poultry unless the lot size is 0.8 ha (2 ac) or more. The proposed By-law seeks to allow more flexibility, but also balances concerns with other, sensitive land uses.</p> <p>Once zoning regulations are in place, the Township will be able to see how establishing a regulation may impact the domestic poultry owners.</p>
<p>Member of the Public – Gabriel Fernandes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Concerns with what authority allows municipalities to control the keeping and raising of poultry on private property. 	The <i>Municipal Act</i> and the <i>Planning Act</i> collectively give authority to municipalities to regulate animals, uses, buildings and structures.
<p>Member of the Public – Cor Vanleeuwen</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regulatory approach provided by the Township is too onerous. Abuse of animals is dealt with through other levels of government. There is no need for a lot size as it relates to 10-15 birds. Concerns with the fines outlined in the municipal regulatory by-law and other controls proposed (i.e. height, heating etc.). 	<p>The comments provided are largely related to the municipal regulatory by-law, which is not the subject of this report, but is related to this amendment.</p> <p>It is noted that comments are provided that the minimum lot size identified is not necessary.</p> <p>In planning staff’s opinion, a minimum lot size is appropriate to align with the provisions of the Zoning By-law and ensure there is more than enough space for the use/structure to be established on-site. A minimum lot size of 1 ac will ensure the regulations being applied through the related municipal by-law can be achieved along with other uses that may be permitted and occurring on-site. This minimum lot size further assists with buffering between this future use and other sensitive land uses.</p> <p>Once zoning regulations are in place, the Township will be able to see how these regulations may impact the domestic poultry owners.</p>
<p>Member of the Public – Chris Mason</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Generally supportive of allow backyard poultry but with limited restriction. 	Noted. The provisions proposed in the amending Zoning By-law seek to allow the use and establish parameters for land use compatibility.

Attachment 3: Summary of Comments and Responses

<p>Wellington Federation of Agriculture (WFA) – Barclay Nap, WFA President</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overall concern with the risk that is posed to biosecurity to the commercial poultry industry • Acknowledges some strengths of the regulation by-law such as inclusion of education resources. • Disease reporting is important as prevention • Requests deferral of a decision until a presentation from OMAFRA (Provincial Poultry Specialist) • Four recommendations highlighted based on practices in other communities: (i) mandatory training for owners; (ii) Township staff to complete on-site inspections to confirm bird welfare; (iii) voluntary registration with the Chick Farmers of Ontario; and (iv) begin as a pilot project 	<p>The potential risks to the commercial poultry industry are acknowledged. These comments largely relate to the overall concept of allowing this use within the community.</p> <p>It is noted that the recommendations provided are largely not items able to be incorporated into a Zoning By-law; however, may be able to be considered as part of a municipal by-law and/or municipal process. The Township may wish to investigate other communities highlighted by WFA to see how some of their approaches have succeeded or not as it related to municipal regulations and processes. It is noted that Township staff have reviewed resources supplied by OMAFRA and have incorporated this into the proposed municipal by-law (which is a separate but companion by-law to the proposed changes to the Township’s Zoning By-law).</p> <p>It is further noted that not all communities have restrictions or regulations on the housing of domestic poultry on rural lots. The Township is proposing to educate through the implementation of regulations that would seek to improve care as it relates to items surrounding public health and biosecurity.</p>
<p>Wellington-Dufferin-Guelph Public Health - Tyler Black, Environmental Health Specialist</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identified positive elements of the Guelph/Eramosa approach as it relates to biosecurity and protection of groundwater and surface water. • Recommends the use of a registration system to address information gap for sharing educational materials or tracing infectious diseases. Key information would be flock size and location. Examples provided are City of Guelph and Region of Waterloo. 	<p>These comments are related to the associated municipal by-law and the feasibility of introducing a registry may wish to be considered by the Township.</p> <p>Planning and Township staff can also investigate other ways to share information with Public Health.</p>

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October 31, 2024
Amanda Knight – Clerk
Guelph Eramosa Township
planning@get.on.ca

Re: Proposed Domestic Poultry Bylaw XX/2024

Wellington County is the hub of agricultural innovation, research, and leadership in the province. Protecting and preserving Ontario's agricultural land for the purpose of growing, harvesting, and producing food is the Wellington Federation of Agriculture's (WFA) priority. The WFA is the largest farm organization within the County of Wellington, with over 1500 members, and works in unison with the Ontario Federation of Agriculture (OFA).

Thank you for requesting comment on Guelph Eramosa Township's proposed domestic (backyard) poultry bylaw. It is noted that you have extended your commenting period to October 31 to receive more feedback. The Wellington Federation of Agriculture (WFA) is not a commodity-based organization, but we speak for agriculture in general. It is our understanding that this bylaw is to allow poultry to be kept in lots smaller than two acres. It is also our understanding that there are currently landowners located in small lots that have poultry, and this proposed bylaw would create a system to address landowner and neighbour concerns.

Agriculture is a wide sector with many layers. The challenge with backyard poultry is the risk they can pose to the biosecurity of other domestic birds.

Biosecurity is a daily concern for the commercial poultry industry and should be a concern to non-commercial poultry caretakers. Pathogens carried by wild birds can be acquired and spread amongst domesticated poultry easily. For example, Avian Influenza is easily spread by migratory wild birds; it is host-adapted to waterfowl but is very deadly to chickens. Another example is Blackhead. Chickens can acquire it but not die, but it is very deadly for turkeys. It can also last in the soil for four years. The response by the Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) to a flock found with a pathogen, are immediate and strong to keep the pathogen from spreading. This can include the **complete culling of the affected flock** and restricting an area around the outbreak (hot zone). Such restrictions would be that no poultry or poultry products would be allowed to travel from or into this zone and personnel from property with poultry would not be allowed to travel into the zone if they are from outside of it, even if they are driving past the hot spot on a roadway. This is on top of the afflicted flock being destroyed, the building sheltering them empty for at least four months and the premises are cleaned and disinfected. It does not matter to CFIA if the flock is commercial or from a backyard. These actions come from the **requirements of international trade**.

That being said, your request was for comment on the proposed bylaw. Overall, it is a well written document and goes to a greater depth than backyard poultry and animal bylaws in other municipalities. Its inclusion of educational resources is something not seen in other bylaws of this type. The details required for manure management and consideration of distance to drinking water sources (Intake Protection Zones and Well Head Protection Areas) surpasses other municipalities' requirements. Biosecurity protocols including prevention and identifying are missing the very important requirement of reporting disease. The City of Kitchener has a requirement that backyard birds be banded, similarly to dog tags.

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Wellington County is home to 205 poultry and egg producing farms, which amount to 10% of Ontario's Poultry production. Our local poultry industry is a powerhouse to feed our nation—compromising this industry is a serious threat to food security, our local economy, and farmers livelihoods. As a voice for agriculture in Wellington County, we advocate for members who produce food, fiber, fuel and drink. With a move to local food and homesteading backyard poultry is growing in popularity. Backyard flocks are intended as egg and meat production for the property owners. The poultry are not domesticated “pets” and as such should have dedicated, enclosed space and not enter people's homes. This poses a significant public health risk of bacterial and protozoa transmission. It is a very contentious and divisive issue for birds of any kind to be kept in a backyard or outside due to the concerns of biosecurity for the commercial poultry industry. If there was no risk to people and commercial flocks, we would not be having this discussion.

With the total number of hens and chickens **increasing 247.7%** between the 2016 to 2021 census from **202,207 to 703,026 in Guelph Eramosa Township** the economic loss from Avian Infuenza presents a large risk. Guelph Eramosa is a significant supplier of locally produced poultry meat and eggs and requires municipal bylaws that support and protect their industry. The recommendation of the WFA is to defer a decision on the proposed bylaw and request a presentation from Al Dam (al.dam@ontario.ca), Provincial Poultry Specialist with the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Agribusiness. WFA has contacted him, and he is available and willing to speak to Council. As part of his educational endeavors, he has presented to many municipal councils regarding backyard flocks.

If Guelph Eramosa Township does decide to go forward with the domestic poultry bylaw, we would like to present four recommendations:

1. Mandate every Owner to take the Raising Backyard Chickens course offered by the Poultry Industry Council before they acquire birds. An example of a municipality that has done this is the Town of Georgina.
2. The Township conduct an on-site inspection to make sure that there will be sufficient welfare for the birds (including water, feed, ventilation, protection from weather and predators, a dust bath and bedding). The Town of Minto requires that the coop be registered once it passes an inspection.
3. Every owner not registered with Chicken Farmers of Ontario (CFO) via a Form 300 at time of bird purchase, voluntarily register their birds with CFO. The Township develop a process for registration through their website. This will support OMAFA or CFIA in the occurrence of a disease event. This is done in the municipality of Lakeshore as an example.
4. That this bylaw begins as a pilot project. This would allow the Township to see if this is a good fit and/or identify any areas of need.

Thank you again for reaching out for comment on your proposed bylaw. The WFA appreciates the ability to provide comments on the proposed Domestic Poultry Bylaw XX/2024 and thanks Council for their time and efforts in considering the view of agriculture.

Respectfully,

Barclay Nap
President, Wellington Federation of Agriculture

Cc via email: WFA Board of Directors



Review of: Zoning By-law Amendment 04-24 & Draft Domestic Poultry By-law

Date: October 29th, 2024

Review completed by: Tyler Black, Environmental Health Specialist, WDG Public Health

Thank you for providing Wellington-Dufferin-Guelph Public Health with the opportunity to comment on the proposed Zoning By-law Amendment that would allow domestic poultry on residential lots in the Township of Guelph-Eramosa.

We would like to first commend the proposed by-law for its thorough consideration of biosecurity protocols outlined by OMAFRA, for considering the health and well-being of domestic poultry flocks and the health of owners of domestic poultry flocks. In addition, we commend the by-law for considering protections to groundwater and surface water sources by limiting coops in Intake Protection Zones-1 and Wellhead Protection Areas with a vulnerability score of 10.

However, we think it valuable to have a registration system in place for residents who have domestic poultry on their property. Campylobacter and Salmonella cases have been linked to contact with backyard chickens, and the presence of backyard chickens represents an emerging factor in pathogen transmission in Ontario, particularly when risk management and biosecurity measures are not considered by poultry owners. Avian Influenza (H5N1) cases are also increasing in North America and represent an additional hazard for backyard flock owners and their neighbours. Although the proposed by-law has built-in biosecurity considerations, exposure to these pathogens may still occur.

A key gap in reaching backyard poultry owners, identified by Public Health Ontario, is with not having information on individual flocks, making it difficult to share educational resources and alerts to owners of backyard flocks, or when tracing cases of *Salmonella*, *Campylobacter*, and other infectious diseases. For more information, please visit Public Health Ontario: [Reducing Health Risks Associated with Backyard Chickens \(publichealthontario.ca\)](https://publichealthontario.ca).

Locally, the City of Guelph requires owners submit a one-time registration form and update the city if they are no longer holding poultry. The Region of Waterloo requires registration with yearly renewal. A similar registry would allow an avenue for knowledge sharing during outbreaks, also assisting with outbreak response and investigation. We strongly recommend that the Township of Guelph-Eramosa follow suit and implement a registry for backyard poultry flocks, including information on flock size and location. The registration process may also provide an avenue for sharing biosecurity resources with new flock owners.



Some other avenues for educating flock owners, facilitated by a registry, that WDG Public Health could provide support on include:

1. Providing health information at or before the point-of-sale
2. Providing hygiene and quarantine educational materials
3. Providing notice to Guelph-Eramosa emergency responders when cases are reported in the region to initiate communications with flock owners

We look forward to future discussions on how WDG Public Health can support the health of Guelph-Eramosa residents, and in future planning conducted by the township. Thank you for reviewing our comments and please reach out if you require further clarification.

On behalf of Wellington-Dufferin-Guelph Public Health,

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Environmental Health Specialist
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519-820-6642