

Chicken Workshops Sold Out

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Workshop participants roam the chicken run and check Papa John's chicken coop Photo Sophie Braccini

According to Kiefer a significant portion of them will actually build a coop. "Some ask questions, others return for further examination of the coop, so it is clear they are moving forward. Some had made their decision to build a coop before attending the workshop. My estimate is 40 - 60% will build and have fresh eggs," says Kiefer.

Some participants found out at the workshop that their chicken dreams might crash against the wall of the city's regulations. "I learned during the workshop that my lot was too small to have chickens," says Rebecca Calahan-Klein, a Lafayette resident with about a third of an acre property, "We are building a front yard fruit garden, a vegetable garden for our family and neighbors and wanted to have chickens to round out our ecosystem."

In Lafayette the rules for keeping farm animals are set according to the zoning district. The closer to downtown you are, the less likely it is that you will be allowed to keep poultry. For example, the owner of a 1-acre lot in a dense neighborhood (R-10, R-12 and R-15 districts) may not be allowed to keep hens, while a resident with the same acreage will not need a permit if they live in a R-40 zone. (If chickens are in your future, it would be a good idea to check with your local Planning Department first.)

Kiefer says he plans to reach out to the city and try to help residents with smaller lots, and to work toward a change in the regulations. Calahan-Klein will participate in this effort, "In the suburbs we have a way of living together that's respectful and friendly to neighbors," she says, "Lafayette has great capacity to look at a question like this and find a way to make it work for everyone involved."

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