

Laws and Restrictions



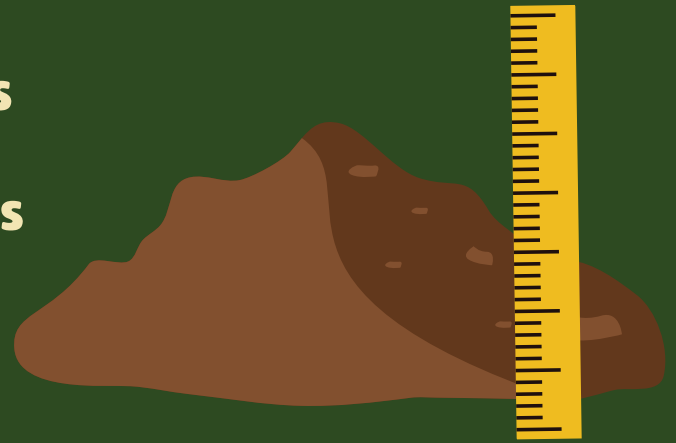
Rules and
regulations about
community
gardening in Solano
County



Statewide Compost Rules & Regulations

In California, a community composting program's compost pile cannot exceed either 100 cubic yards, or a 750 square foot area according to CalRecycle's guidelines.

Some cities and municipalities in Solano County defer to California's statewide rules on composting, which are very permissive. Many cities rely on CalRecycle to set the rules and regulations about composting.



Any business or family can participate in a community composting program, so long as their local regulations allow such a facility to be established.



The California Code of Regulations says
"...Nothing in this section [18984.9] prohibits ... preventing or reducing waste generation, managing organic waste on site, or using a community composting site."

Cal. Code Regs. tit. 14 § 18984.9

Solano County Rules

Chickens are permitted in every city in Solano, and each city requires that an owner treats the chicken humanely and provides it with sufficient food, water and space to live comfortably. Roosters are prohibited in most cities.



There is a countywide provision in all municipal codes regarding letting fowl "run at large" (i.e., wander around the street): *"No person shall suffer or permit any ... fowl or rabbits owned or controlled by him to run or fly at large or go upon the premises of any other person..."*



All gardens that wish to use their produce in kitchens or restaurants will need to complete the Solano County Department of Resource Management's "Garden Registration" (tinyurl.com/3fbhh2zh). In 2025 you can find this document by following the directory to *Consumer Protection Program > Food Program > Permanent Food Facilities*



Benicia



Benicia has no explicit restrictions on community gardens in their municipal code. Rooftop gardens are permitted and are exempt from the city's public nuisance law. Parks and Recreation has the ability to install community gardens as "park facilities."

Chickens are permitted with the following restrictions:

- A single family home in a residential area may keep up to 10 chickens. These fowl must be at least "20 feet from any neighboring house" or home**
- For multifamily residences "a maximum total combination of six birds, fowl" are allowed, also subject to the 20-foot restriction.**
- Roosters or other fowl "which constitute a nuisance by their loud cries" are not allowed in the city.**

	Municipal Code
Fowl	§6.32.040
Garden	§17.62.040, §8.04.030

Maximum Chickens?

10

Dixon



Four chickens are permitted in Dixon, "so long as said premises are maintained in a manner that the animals kept on said premises are not declared to be a public nuisance" at which point a hearing will be held to determine if the offending party can keep their chicken(s). See code for more details.

Commercial hauling of organic waste is restricted, but for community compost sites the restriction on transporting waste is waived if the material is being transported safely. See code for more details.

City law reinforces the existing state requirements that the total sum of organic waste on site does not exceed 750 square feet or 100 cubic feet.



	Municipal Code
Fowl	§7.02.050
Compost	§9.06

Maximum Chickens?

4

Fairfield



Fairfield allows up to three chickens to reside on any lot. The birds must be kept in clean and sanitary conditions, and can be removed from the property if declared a public nuisance.

Residents are allowed to compost their waste and may transport it to a garden, but are not allowed to "employ or engage" any other waste hauler in collecting organic waste.

Regarding beekeeping: a permit is required. No more than two hives are allowed on any lot or parcel. The owner's name, address and location of all hives must be registered with the Solano County Agriculture Commission office.

Additional beekeeping restrictions are listed in the city code.



	Municipal Code
Bees	§3.42
Fowl	§3.22.1
Compost	§9.12
Garden	§25.166.103

Maximum Chickens?



3

Rio Vista



A person/business has the right to send their organic material to a community compost facility.

Gardens are subject to water-use restrictions codified in the municipal code.

- **No water use is permitted between 7am and 9pm.**
- **Even-numbered street addresses are permitted to water on Tuesday, Thursday, Saturday.**
- **Odd-numbered street addresses are permitted to water on Sunday, Wednesday, Friday.**

There is no limit on the number of fowl or chickens permitted in Rio Vista, but the animal may not be allowed to "run at large" (i.e., wander around the street). All hutches or coops from chickens must be kept clean and sanitary, and all animals must be well cared for. Fowl are not permitted to defecate on city property, unless the material is immediately cleaned up.

	Municipal Code
Fowl	§6.08.090
Compost	§8.12.030
Garden	§17.68.200



Suisun City



Suisun City has a limit of three chickens per property.

Community gardens are permitted (subject to review) in spaces zoned as "Civic" or "Park", and are allowed without a permit in areas designated as "Agricultural".

Gardens are prohibited in areas designated as "Open Space" since these are set aside for conservation.



	Municipal Code
Fowl	§6.05.092
Garden	§18.28.030

Maximum Chickens?



Vacaville

Vacaville has the most extensive list of rules and regulations regarding community gardening (called "urban agriculture" in the municipal code). Vacaville's code includes:



- Each garden must designate a "manger" as a liaison for the city.
- Gardens may only operate from dawn until dusk (without a minor use permit).
- "Use of mechanized farm equipment is prohibited." There is an exception for household gardening equipment and initial site preparation.
- The garden must be maintained to be free from "weeds and debris," soil amendments and compost may not "attract nuisance flies or support growth of flies."
- Compost bins may not be visible from the street/right-of-way, and must be a minimum of 20 feet from residential structures.
- Urban Agriculture Stands are permitted on the site of an urban agriculture use subject to the following regulations (see city code for more details).
- One chicken per 1,000 square feet, 9 maximum.
- See code for more details.

	Municipal Code
Fowl	§14.09.270.070
Garden	§14.09.270.190



Vallejo



Vallejo also has an extensive list of rules and regulations regarding community gardening (see VMC Chapter 16.314). The following are some of the rules that apply to gardens that are open to the public.

- Each garden must designate a "garden coordinator" as a liaison for the garden.
- Gardens may only operate from dawn until dusk or 7am – 8pm, whichever is more restrictive.
- Compost bins may not be visible from the street/right-of-way, and must be a minimum of 3 feet from other buildings. Waste may only be collected from the site itself and active garden members.
- Tools and equipment must be screened (hidden) from view when not in use. Sheds and other structures are allowed, but may not exceed 12 feet in height.
- One street-facing sign is allowed. This sign should contain contact information for the garden's coordinator and cannot contain any advertisement or sponsored material.

	Municipal Code
Fowl	§7.24.060
Compost	§16.314.02
Garden	§16.314



Solanano Summary

City	Chickens?	Chicken Code	Compost Code	Compost Restrictions?	Garden Code
Benicia	Yes (up to 10)	6.32.040	/	None	17.62.040, 8.04.030
Dixon	Yes (up to 4)	7.02.050	9.06	Affirms state code	/
Fairfield	Yes (up to 3)	3.22.1	9.12	Explicitly allowed	25.166.103
Rio Vista	Yes (no limit)	6.08.090	8.12.030	Yes	17.68.200
Suisun City	Yes (up to 3)	6.05.092	/	None	18.28.030
Vacaville	Yes (up to 9)	14.09.270.07 0	/	None	14.09.270.190
Vallejo	Yes (up to 10)	7.24.060	16.314.02	Yes	16.314

