

Responsible Livestock Survey Summary of results

Report prepared October 5, 2020

In late July 2020, Strathcona County conducted an online survey of rural residents related to livestock on rural acreages. Based on the survey results, focus groups will be held to better understand some of the key themes and responses. Together, the survey and focus group feedback will help inform a proposed new bylaw for Responsible Livestock Ownership that will replace the current Animal Control Bylaw.

The survey was made available online through both SCOOP and Survey Gizmo. It ran from July 23 to August 16, with 935 rural residents completing the survey on both survey platforms combined.

The survey included questions about the respondents' type of property and zoning, whether they owned livestock and what a *country lifestyle* means to them. They were also asked their opinions on the type of livestock most suitable for different property sizes; their experience with livestock in County subdivisions; and topics of interest for potential learning related to livestock.

Overview of results

Responses related to the type of property and livestock ownership of the respondents included:

- 64.1% of respondents had properties of 5 acres or smaller.
- 49.8% of the respondents owned some type of livestock.
 - The percentage of people who owned livestock increased as the size of the property increased.
 - Of those who own livestock, 63.8% have a provincial premise ID number.
- 72.6% said a *country lifestyle* includes the *ability to have livestock*.

Respondents were specifically asked questions related to the suitability of different types of livestock on both 1 to 3 acres and 3 to 5 acres.

- Generally, respondents felt that small animals were better suited to small acreages, while larger animals were less desirable on small acreages.
- The presence of larger animals was more acceptable to respondents for properties that were 3 to 5 acres.
- For both sizes of properties, respondents were not as supportive of the presence of swine, cattle and bison.

The survey included the current animal unit limits for each type of livestock based on the size of land, as outlined in the Animal Control Bylaw.

- Overall, it was found that 74.4% of respondents felt that the existing animal units in the current Animal Control Bylaw were correct, while 35.6% did not agree. Those that did not agree were primarily concerned with cattle, bison and swine.

Respondents were asked whether they personally had experienced any concerns with livestock in any of Strathcona County's rural subdivisions.

- Overall, it was found that 67.9% of the respondents had expressed concerns
- Most of the people who expressed concerns did not have concerns with livestock on smaller acreages of 5 acres or less, while just under 65% had concerns with livestock on acreages of 5-10 acres in size.
- Specific concerns included animal noise, manure build up, manure smell, effects on their own property (smell, noise) and neighbour relations.

Overall, 29.8% indicated that they would like to learn more about the care and raising of livestock. In terms of preferences, *chickens, horses, cattle and honeybees* were tops in the number 1 spot.

Finally, it was found that 16.9% of the respondents were interested in participating in focus groups.

Next steps

Focus groups will be held with interested participants in October to further explore the survey responses related to livestock in order to build a clear understanding of the issues and potential solutions. Input from the survey and focus groups will be considered along with other key principles to inform the new draft bylaw. This includes the goal of balancing country lifestyle with the need to minimize disease risk and support animal welfare, land stewardship and opportunities for agriculture.

For the full report on the results of the 2020 Responsible Livestock Survey, please visit the [public engagement reporting webpage](#).