



## FACT SHEET 2.3

# PLANNING YOUR HOBBY FARM

Whether you are developing a new hobby farm or improving an existing one, we recommend you seek as much information as possible to help you plan successful and rewarding farm activities.

Depending on the type and scale of hobby farm activities, the development or improvement of a hobby farm requires you to collect information to judge whether you have enough time and space. Once you do, develop a site plan, and identify the Best Management Practices needed to control impacts to stormwater runoff and nearby water resources.

For example, if you want to keep animals, you will need specific information on the types of animals you intend to keep so you can determine how large an area is required for grazing and manure management without impacting nearby surface water.

You will also need information on sheltering the animals, confining them on your property, water supply and feed requirements and any other factors that would affect how you organize your hobby farm activities.

Checklist 2A contains a series of questions designed to help you gather and document information about your current and/or proposed hobby farming activities. Bear in mind that you may need to revisit each of these questions as you learn about the water resources on or near your property, regulations affecting your activities, and the physical constraints of your property. For example, you may change your mind about the type of animals you will keep when you learn more about your town's zoning requirements.

## HELPFUL LINKS

[www.ag.umass.edu/umass-extension-your-community](http://www.ag.umass.edu/umass-extension-your-community)

[www.usda.gov/topics/rural/cooperative-research-and-extension-services](http://www.usda.gov/topics/rural/cooperative-research-and-extension-services)



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## CHECKLIST 2A

# PLANNING YOUR HOBBY FARM ACTIVITIES

If you plan on **GROWING CROPS** (see Section 4)

What crops do you plan to grow?

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What are the space requirements of your selected crops?

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What type of soils do you have?

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What is the nutrient content of the soil? Have you completed a soil test?

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What types and quantities of fertilizers are required for this crop? Where will you store it?

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What types of pests are a problem for this crop, and how will you control them?

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How will you irrigate the crops? Where will you obtain water and how much will you need?

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If you plan on **KEEPING ANIMALS** (see Section 5)

What types of animals do you want to have on your hobby farm and how many of each animal will you raise?

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How much space is needed for grazing? Will you supplement with feed?

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How much water is needed to support the animals?

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How much manure are they expected to produce? Where will you store it?

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What do they need for shelter? Exercise?

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How do you plan to confine them? Fencing or other methods?

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Other **OPERATIONS AND MAINTENANCE** (see Sections 6 and 7)

What equipment will you need for your hobby farm?

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What products and tools will you need to maintain equipment?

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What facilities will you need to store and provide maintenance of this equipment?

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What wastes (including animal manure and crop residues) will you need to manage within the farm or dispose off-site?

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