



**TORONTO FOOD
POLICY COUNCIL**

July 4th, 2017

To City Council,

The Toronto Food Policy Council (TFPC) supports the pilot proposal to allow rearing of backyard hens in Toronto. The TFPC, a sub-committee of the Board of Health, represents diverse actors in the Toronto food movement and advises the Toronto Board of Health and City Council on food issues. Urban Agriculture is a key priority of TFPC and the demand from Toronto residents to allow the rearing of backyard hens, provides an opportunity to increase public awareness and access to local, sustainable and healthy food.

Many jurisdictions across Canada and North America have legislation and policies that support backyard hens, with certain restrictions on the number of hens allowed, required hygienic rearing practices and public education campaigns to support this. The proposed approach for Toronto addresses any concerns regarding public health, noise and nuisance. Urban hen keeping can promote increased access to local food and can serve to increase public awareness of the benefits of local food production. The practice itself can reduce household food waste through recycling of food scraps and provides a ready supply of nutritious food through fresh eggs.

The TFPC agrees with the proposal to limit the number of hens per household; to not permit roosters or the slaughter or sale of hens and/or hen eggs. We agree that a set of clear policy guidelines must be developed by the City to ensure effective management of any human health risks associated with raising hens in an urban environment. A backyard hen pilot initiative would enable the City of Toronto, in collaboration with community partners and city residents, to determine the benefits and risks (if any) plus any issues that may arise from this practice as a result of pilot implementation and evaluation.

We therefore offer our full support for the proposed Backyard Hen pilot project.

Sincerely,



Rachel Gray, Chair
Toronto Food Policy Council