

# Urban Agriculture Requirements



Permitted urban agriculture in Cotati includes Market Gardens, Community Gardens, and Crop Production. Market Gardens are small-scale gardening or farming operations for sale or donation allowed on all residential properties. Community Gardens are shared gardens to grow food for personal use or donation. Crop Production is commercial agriculture that is subject to a Use Permit, public hearing process, and conditions of approval to reduce impact on neighboring properties.

## **Market Gardens:**

- ✓ The property must be residentially zoned (NU, NM, NL, RR, or RVL), with at least 1 dwelling unit as its primary use.
- ✓ The permitted cultivation area is ½ acre maximum (may be non-contiguous on the site).
- ✓ Cultivated areas must be set back 5 feet from any property line that is within 30 feet of a residential structure on another property.
- ✓ Mechanical equipment is limited to that typically used in a residential setting, and is limited to the hours of 9am-5pm. An exception is that heavier equipment may be used up to 3 days per year for site preparation activities, limited to the hours of 9am-5pm.
- ✓ Commercial egg production is allowed, with a limit of 20 hens per property, and subject to the standards of Cotati Municipal Code (CMC) Section 17.42.040.
- ✓ Market Gardens may also operate an on-site Garden Stand that meets the following:
  - Sells produce, eggs, and/or prepared “Cottage Food” items grown and produced on-site or on an adjacent site.
  - Operates a maximum of 3 days per week, between 9am and 7pm.
  - Maximum 100 square feet in size.
  - Located on private property out of the public right-of-way.
  - Removed from view of the public when not in operation.
  - Provides 2 parking spaces minimum, located either on-street adjacent to the property, or off-street out of the public right-of-way.
- ✓ Market Gardens require review and a zoning clearance from the City of Cotati, although there is no fee or planning permit required. Call the Community Development Department at 707-665-3636 for more information.

## **Crop Production:**

- ✓ Allowed only in the Rural Residential (RR) and Residential Very Low (RVL) zoning districts, with a Use Permit. The Use Permit fee is discounted by 50% to support agricultural uses within the city. Public hearing notices shall be sent to addresses within a 600’ radius of the subject property to notify interested/adjacent residents.

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### *Crop Production, continued*

- ✓ Operational standards are determined on a case-by-case basis and set forth in the Permit.
- ✓ Commercial egg production is allowed, with a limit of 20 hens per property, and subject to the standards of CMC Section 17.42.040.
- ✓ May operate Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) programs.
- ✓ May operate an on-site Produce Stand with a Use Permit and subject to the following:
  - Sells produce, eggs, and/or prepared “Cottage Food” items grown and produced on-site or on an adjacent site.
  - May sell incidental items that are not produced on-site or at an adjacent site, up to a limit of 10% of sales area or gross sales receipts, whichever is less.
  - May be up to 400 square feet in size, located out of the public right-of-way.
  - Must provide a minimum of 3 off-street parking spaces or 1 space per 150 square feet, whichever is greater. See further details in CMC Section 17.36.050.

### **Community Gardens**

- ✓ Community Gardens are allowed in all residential zoning districts. City of Cotati review and zoning clearance is required, although there is no fee or planning permit required. Please see CMC 17.42.220 or contact the Community Development Department at 707-665-3636 for more information.

### **General Standards for all Urban Agriculture Uses**

- ✓ Must adhere to standards and certification/registration requirements set by all applicable County and State departments.
- ✓ Must not adversely affect the livability or appropriate development of adjacent properties and the surrounding neighborhood in terms of noise, water runoff, pesticide runoff, equipment operation, hours of operation, odor, vermin, security, or vehicular traffic.
- ✓ Pesticides, herbicides, rodenticides, and synthetic fertilizers are strongly discouraged, and if used, shall not adversely impact adjacent properties or the surrounding neighborhood, including overspray, drift, dust, fumes, odors, runoff, soil contamination, plant contamination, or other negative impacts. Such use shall also not be allowed to contaminate the soil of the subject property or any adjacent properties.
- ✓ Water conservation practices must be followed, in accordance with CMC Section 13.30 and State of California Water Efficient Landscape Ordinance (WELo) standards.
- ✓ Compost piles and containers must be set back at least 20 feet from dwellings on adjacent properties.

*The above is a summary of requirements and standards for Urban Agriculture uses. For more details, refer to the Cotati Municipal Code or contact the City of Cotati's Community Development Department at 707-665-3636.*

*Updated 3/27/25*