

# How Much Livestock Do You Need For Farm Deferral?

Are you trying to get your property on special farm-use assessment for the first time or do you simply want your land to continue qualifying? Many factors affect the carrying capacity\* of land, including.

- Soil Quality
- Use of irrigation
- Time of year
- Topography & slope
- Type & size of livestock



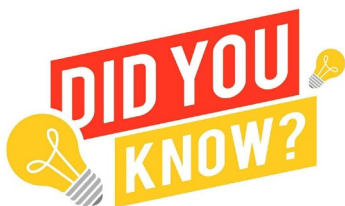
A great resource for information is the Oregon State Extension Office.

<https://extension.oregonstate.edu/>  
541.713.5000

**Because of all the different possibilities, each property is unique in how many animals per acre it can likely support. The following general guidelines have been developed. Keep in mind that the suggested number of animals varies because the size and weight of an animal depends on its breed, sex and age.**

### ***Approximate Requirements for Adult Animals on DRY Pasture***

- Horses (excluding those for pleasure\*\*) - 1 head per 2 acres
- Cattle - 1 to 2 head per 2 acres
- Llamas - 1 to 2 head per acre
- Sheep - 2 to 4 head per acre
- Goats - 3 to 5 head per acre
- Range chickens - 100 to 300 per acre by size



At a bare minimum, a typical dry pasture with average soil should be able to support ½ Animal Unit\*\*\* per acre, with many pastures being able to comfortably support 1 Animal Unit per acre or more if irrigated.

Ultimately it is up to our appraisal staff to determine if stocking requirements are being met. At the Benton County Assessor's Office, we give you only a rough estimate of how many "pounds per acre" of animals we would recommend for your farm -typically 500-800 pounds at a minimum on dry pasture and 1100- 1400 on irrigated pasture.



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## **Important To Remember!**

The fenced pasture itself must also be used fully and exclusively in an accepted farming practice with the primary intent of making a profit. This means it must contain good quality forage, free of invasive weeds and brush, and must appear to be adequately fertilized. The forage must then be grazed by enough livestock to keep it eaten down during the growing season. If a pasture has adequate livestock on it, but is full of blackberry briars, noxious weeds like scotch broom and tansy ragwort or is full of debris like scrap metal...it will NOT qualify for farm use.



**\*Carrying Capacity:** The maximum stocking rate possible without inducing permanent or long-term damage to vegetation or related resources.

The rate may vary from year to year in the same area because of fluctuating forage production.

• **\*Horses:** Acceptable uses for horses include income-generating activities such as boarding, stabling, breeding, selling and training.

... **Animal Unit (AU):** One mature cow of approximately 1,000 pounds and a calf up to weaning, usually 6 months of age. or their equivalent.

*- as defined in the 2003 edition of the National Range & Pasture Handbook  
Published by the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), a division of the  
United States Department of Agriculture (USDA)*

Use the table below to get a better idea of how many pigs you can sustain with each acre of land:

Type	Age	Average Weight	No. per Acre
Weaner	8-12 weeks	35to45 lb	75 to 150
Feeder	12-20weeks	60to 100 lb	50 to 100
Finisher (market-ready)	=/-6 months	100 to 200 lb	15 to 60
Finisher (market-ready) - no rotation	=/- 6 months	100 to 200 lb	15 to 20
Sows	6 months+	450 to 500 lb	6to 12
Hogs	6 months+	500 to 650 lb	Sto 10