

February 15, 2015

To Whom It May Concern:

My purpose in writing this letter is to support the effort of Aaron Rosensweig to avoid killing his roosters and to keep them as part of his flock within city limits. Aaron has discovered a technique of muting the crowing sounds of his rooster by applying a Velcro collar around the voice box.

I have Bachelors, Masters, and Doctor of Philosophy degrees in Poultry Science. I conducted numerous scientific experiments with chickens and turkeys during my 50 years of work experience with the University of Arkansas, Texas A & M University, and U.S. Food and Drug Administration. I currently own more than 60 breeds of fancy chickens on my farm in Damascus, Maryland. I provide fertile eggs to the Frederick County School House Chick program in ~90 Elementary Schools and Middle Schools in Frederick County, Maryland. I show my fancy chickens at Montgomery, Howard, and Frederick County Fairs, and Damascus Community Fair. I provide fertile eggs to 4-H members, home schooled children and other families who enjoy chickens and eggs.

I enjoy chickens as a hobby, and enjoy hearing my roosters' crow. I have about 150 roosters, and consider their crowing sounds to be music – not noise! Many people take great pleasure in watching hens and roosters act as they should in Mother Nature's paradise. Watching chickens is very enjoyable, even therapeutic to most people, and provides a sense of calm, happiness, and normality.

To own a flock of hens without a male rooster in the flock, it can be argued, is cruel and abnormal. To not enjoy the sound of a crowing rooster is abnormal in my view. The action that certain municipalities have taken to prohibit rooster sounds within the city limits is unbelievable. One wonders why city council men and women believe barking dogs should be permitted, but crowing roosters should not be permitted. Dogs can kill people, chickens pose no harm.

So, Councilmen and Councilwomen, I ask you to take corrective action and allow people who want roosters to keep them. The right thing for the council to do is to revoke the prohibition against crowing roosters. If you can't do what is right, at least permit folks to keep roosters who don't crow. Aaron Rosensweig discovered a novel way to mute the sound of a crowing rooster, by applying a collar to alter the sound. This approach is not inhumane as some animal rightists may argue. The rooster is not in pain or discomfort. Another acceptable option would be to remove the voice box, but this requires surgery which few people are trained to do.

I encourage the council to take appropriate action to accommodate Mr. Rosensweig's request to keep a rooster in his flock.

Sincerely,

Lonnie W. Luther, Ph.D.

Poultry Scientist