

## Johnson County Unified Development Ordinance

The process of adopting the Johnson County Unified Development Ordinance (UDO) moves to the last phase with the final two readings and adoption by the Johnson County Board of Supervisors. The Board of Supervisors' next reading of the ordinance is **December 12 at 5:30 PM**. The last reading and final adoption are expected to be on December 19 at 9:00 AM. The meetings are expected to be held in the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor Boardroom, Johnson County Administration Building, 913 South Dubuque Street. The agenda will be found before the meeting on the [county's web page](#).

The Supervisors amended their draft UDO with the recommended changes of the zoning commission. We appreciate the changes as improving the ordinance, but the recommendations did not address all of our major concerns. The revised draft UDO, without further modification, will still regulate agriculture, including livestock and small farms. Some of the key issues to consider for comment:

1. Farmers should not be required to apply to get county approval that they are a farm before building a house, constructing a grain bin or outbuilding or growing their livestock farm. (p. 2-3)
2. The county should not restrict existing livestock farms from growing, repairing or replacing existing buildings on their farms. The county should not restrict farms from raising animals again if the farmer decided to not raise livestock for a year or more. The county should also not be allowed to decide that a farm is a "nuisance" and be allowed to put them out of business. (nonconforming use provisions, pp. 144-149)
3. The county should not limit the number of animals a new or growing farm can raise. Below are examples of the limits on the number of animals that can be raised on your property depending on the size of your parcel. It would require a young or beginning farmer to purchase a lot of land in order to raise enough livestock to make a living on the farm. (pp. 73-74)

### County restrictions on the number of animals allowed on a parcel

Acres in the parcel	Cattle	Swine	Sheep	Chickens
2	30	38	150	500
5	45	56	225	650
10	70	88	350	900
30	170	213	850	1,900
40	220	275	1,100	2,400
60	320	400	1,600	3,400
80	420	525	2,100	4,400
160	820	1,025	4,100	8,400

4. Small farms should not be singled out for more regulation than other farms. All farms should be treated the same and not be discriminated against because of their size or diversity. (pp. 2-3, 22-23, 30-31, 53-54)
5. The county should not impose criminal penalties for violating the ordinance. (pp. 279-280)