



GOVERNOR GREG GIANFORTE
DIRECTOR BRENDAN BEATTY

Date: April 9, 2024

Subject: Poultry, game birds and apiaries

Question:

What are the requirements for Poultry, game birds and apiaries?

Reference material:

[ARM 42.20.601](#), [ARM 42.20.620](#), [ARM 42.20.683](#), [15-7-202](#), [MCA](#)

Response:

Most agricultural crops and forage are produced on an annual basis. However, certain crops are grown for multiple years, these are classified as specialty crops. Specialty crops refer to unique crops, such as fruit trees orchards, vineyards, Christmas trees, apiaries, biological control insects, gardens, produce farms, floriculture, nurseries, poultry, game bird farms, and sod farms. Biological control insects are insects used to reduce or control noxious weeds. Poultry are domesticated birds raised to produce eggs, meat, and other marketable products.

Apiary owners must be registered with the Montana Department of Agriculture and market \$1,500 annual gross income from raw products.

Poultry and game birds must be raised in an unconfined area and receive their general dietary requirements from the land during the grazing period. Providing a place to escape predators and supplying nourishment outside of the grazing months does not disqualify an applicant. Poultry and game birds that are raised in a building, cage, or an enclosed area, the land is not eligible for agricultural classification.

All agricultural lands that are producing specialty or unique crops are assigned the highest productivity level of non-irrigated continuously cropped farm land. This is based on a decision by the Governor's Agricultural Advisory Committee.