

## **CLUCK petitions Las Cruces to change chicken law**

**By Steve Ramirez/Sun-News reporter**

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LAS CRUCES — If elected city officials are going to continue to promote a “green” Las Cruces, some residents are suggesting that they may want to serve it up to residents with some eggs.

A group calling itself CLUCK, or Citizens for Legalizing Urban Chicken Keeping, has petitioned City Council to change an ordinance that prohibits chickens — particularly hens — within most areas of the city.

“About a year ago we started working on this,” said Jon Simmons, an organizer of the group. “We’ve collected 250 signatures from city residents, and we’ve turned in a petition. We want to start an official dialogue with the city.”

Simmons said allowing residents to keep a small number of hens would be no different, and likely less intrusive to neighbors, than owning dogs or cats.

“We’re not asking for roosters. We know, and we agree, that nobody wants the noise roosters can make,” Simmons said. “But hens are quieter than dogs, for sure. They don’t make a peep after it gets dark, and they wouldn’t do anything that could violate nuisance laws.”

Simmons said the greatest benefits of allowing hens within the city are that they would support local food production, and promote sustainability, self-sufficiency and urban agriculture.

Connie Fragoso, a lifelong Las Cruces resident, said she is intrigued by the proposal and doesn’t have any concerns about it.

“It surely wouldn’t be the first time we’ve had chickens in the city,” Fragoso said. “When I was a little girl, my grandmother had chickens in her backyard, and nobody around her minded a bit. They gave us eggs, and I used to gather them all the time. When they got old, my grandma made fried chicken or chicken soup out of them.”

Simmons said interest is growing in allowing hens back into the city.

“There’s really broad public support,” he said. “There’s a lot of people who are excited about bringing them back.”

On the Web

• [www.localsolutionslc.org](http://www.localsolutionslc.org)

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