

Being Neighborly

Oftentimes, the importance of neighbors is heightened in rural areas. It's a good idea to get to know your community a bit before you move to an area. Conflicts, both real and perceived, between new and existing rural landowners are always possible. By getting a better understanding of the causes of these conflicts, some may be avoided.

Advice on Being a Good Neighbor

- Recognize that being good neighbors is a two way street.
- Respect your neighbors' endeavors including their right to farm.
- Realize that fences usually belong to one or the other neighbor. Clarify fence ownership with neighbors before altering them.
- Control your pets and livestock to ensure that they do not harass or harm your neighbors' animals or property.
- Recognize that moving farm machinery and/or livestock on country roads is necessary. Be cautious and prepare for delays.
- Understand that some practices, such as running frost fans, applying orchard sprays and running machinery after dark are common farming practices during certain times of the year.
- Prevent noxious weeds from moving from your property to your neighbors' land by wind, water or other means. See the "Weed Management" chapter for more information.
- Avoid growing plants in your yard that could harbor pests for commercial orchards. See the "Living Among Orchards" chapter for more information.
- Realize that people who live in rural areas prize their privacy and their space.
- Realize that your trees may impact your neighbors, and vice versa. Work cooperatively when managing vegetation on property borders.

Resolving Conflict

Of course, the best approach is to avoid an issue before it arises. If something does come up, talk to your neighbor. Try taking some of these proactive steps towards a good outcome:

Talk directly.

Choose an appropriate time.

Plan ahead.

Don't blame or name call.

Give information.

Actively listen.

Talk it through.

Work on a solution.

Follow through.

caught chasing, killing or otherwise injuring livestock. If your dog is responsible for the injury or death of livestock, you will be held financially responsible and your pet may be euthanized. It is also your responsibility to license and vaccinate your dog against rabies. Your pet should also have a collar and identification tags.

Fences

Fences and property lines are potential sites of conflict. Yet by working with your neighbors to maintain these areas, there is an opportunity to improve cooperation and build a relationship with neighbors. Properly maintained fences are important for the protection of livestock and wildlife, which may become entangled, injured or killed. Remember, fences do not always indicate property lines. Know where your lot lines are.

Private Property and Privacy

People are often unaware of private property delineations when first moving to a rural area. Yet it is always the responsibility of the individual to know whose land they are on regardless of whether it is fenced. Always ask permission to be on someone's property. Remember, orchards are private property too.



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