

My Rooster is Aggressive and Has Its Spurs Intact. What Should I Do?

Roosters that are part of backyard flocks can be dangerous if they still have spurs. Injuries to children, pets, and other chickens are likely if your rooster is aggressive. Increasing the size of your backyard flock to include more hens and roosters may subdue the aggressive rooster because chickens are social birds that need to form a structured social order. Adding more birds to the flock will allow the rooster to establish a pecking order among its own species, instead of among other animal species, including humans.

Another recommendation is to file down the

tip of the spur with a dremmel or other grinding instrument. Since the spur continuously grows, like the toenails, the procedure will have to be repeated as the spur tip continues to grow. It should be noted that if the rooster is aggressive, filing down the tip may not reduce injury as the aggressive behavior to fight will still occur whether the spur point is sharp or blunted. If these recommendations do not improve the flock situation, a veterinarian may perform surgical amputation of the spur. Since this is an invasive procedure, the humane use of anesthesia and postoperative pain relief should be included in the surgical protocol.

Revised from Original Resource. Revised 2019: Davis, M.F., G.M. Ebako, T.Y. Morishita, and J.S. Mattoon. Medical management of the rooster spur. Extension Factsheet, Veterinary Preventive Medicine. The Ohio State University Extension. Factsheet #VME-014-02, 2002.