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Sam Seulean, left, and Kelly Huckestein, right, are in the process of starting Spring Up Farm, a small-scale chicken farm, in Knappa.

JOSHUA BESSEX — The Daily Astorian

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## Farmers: Licensing requirements pose a challenge for egg farmers

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 A challenge for Suelean, Huckestein and any other farmers wanting to sell eggs or dairy commercially are the licensing requirements through the Oregon Department of Agriculture.

That issue might be a business opportunity for Gary Sunderland of Lazy Creek Farms, which less than a month ago became the first in Clatsop County to be certified through ODA. His son, Frank Sunderland, spent about 80 hours building out a closet-sized room in the farm's barn, covering it in washable floors, walls and ceilings, with cupboards and refrigeration.

"We can't do more than 100 dozen (eggs) a week without getting another certification," Frank Sunderland said.

They've been making egg runs in Astoria, selling to the Blue Scorcher Bakery and have already received interest from other restaurants. Gary Sunderland said the idea is to call his farm — 503-325-4510 — and negotiate a price that will cover his costs and provide a profit margin.

An even bigger hurdle for aspiring meat farmers like Spring Up is the need to use a U.S. Department of Agriculture-certified slaughterhouse and a USDA inspector to sell commercially. Huckestein said her uncle had tried but



Chickens walk in the yard at Spring Up Farm in Knappa Friday.

JOSHUA BESSEX — The Daily Astorian

postponed his effort to start one because of the build-out and cost of employing a full-time meat inspector.

Brian Tallman, co-owner of Meadow Harvest, sells meat directly to consumers, commercially and at markets. The company drives its animals, at \$50 to \$70 in gas per round trip, more than 100 miles away to USDA certified Mt. Angel Meat Co.

"I can't imagine there's enough (meat) to make a go of a USDA facility down here," Tallman said, adding

that one of the USDA mobile slaughter units, a truck-trailer outfitted to process meat, might be a better fit.

But Huckestein and Seulean are content for now with testing the waters through direct-to-consumer egg and poultry sales and hopefully earning enough to allow at least one of them to work full-time at the farm.

"If you can't make it doing the direct sales, you definitely can't make it with the lower margins" commercially, Seulean said.

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Kelly Huckestein holds a basket of eggs.

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