



# GUARDIAN DOGS

## THINGS TO CONSIDER BEFORE ADDING THEM TO THE FARM

### Proper Selection is Important

Guardian dogs should come from working lines and be raised with the species they will be used to protect from a very young age. If the dog is a mixed breed, all breeds in the mix should be guardian breeds.

### Training Takes Time

It can take a couple of years for a guardian dog to mature. The longer puppies stay with their working parents, the better. Puppies and younger dogs can learn from older, experienced guardian dogs.

### Acclimation

Even if a dog is mature and experienced, it will require time to get acclimated to a new environment. Likewise, livestock and poultry will need time to adjust to the guardian. Keeping guardians in a pen within the pasture for a few weeks may help all animals adjust.

### Liability

Dogs may require different fencing than livestock and poultry. Some breeds love to wander. Owners may be liable if dogs leave their property and cause damage or harm. Guardians may bark throughout the night disturbing close neighbors.



### Don't Let Your Guardian Become the Predator

While guardian dogs can be great at protecting livestock and poultry, they can also become the predators if they aren't properly trained and monitored. Boredom and tight quarters can be contributing factors. Just because it's a guardian breed dog, doesn't mean it's cut out to be a working livestock guardian.