Dear Resident,

Lead exposure in residential urban chickens is a new research project being conducted by the Department of Environmental Sciences at Macquarie University. The research is being undertaken as part of a PhD thesis program by Ms Sara Yazdanparast. This project will determine establish trace element pathways and metal exposure (in particular lead) from backyard urban soils into the ‘urban’ livestock (chickens). The study will focus on Sydney.

Interested persons can watch a short ABC program video on the issue from 2017 by clicking here.

The study will be the first Australian project to assess systematically (using ~100 chickens) the link between urban contamination in soils and dusts, and uptake into domestic chickens and their eggs.

This project requires engagement with the local Sydney community by providing access to backyards and chickens for analysis. Importantly, no chickens will be harmed during the collection of samples.

Our research will benefit the community by increasing knowledge and awareness of the links between trace metals in their residential environment, home-produced foodstuffs and any potential risks.

The study results would be published in different formats and will include maps, tables and figures. All data will be de-identified to the extent that no address or other information can be used to specifically identify the precise location of samples / persons involved in the study.

Participants will receive a formal analysis report. Remedial actions and guidance on ways to mitigate any potential hazards at their home will be provided as required.

The project has ethics and animal approval from Macquarie University and researchers will be trained by a qualified veterinary practitioner for the collection of chicken blood samples.

If you are interested in participating in this program, please register your interest with Sara (sara.yazdanparast@hdr.mq.edu.au).

Kind regards,

Sara Yazdanparast, PhD researcher

Professor Mark P. Taylor, research supervisor

Acknowledgements - The research project has received funding support from the Inner West Council and Macquarie University
Do you live in one of the lead contaminated areas of Sydney and keep chickens? If so, register for the Macquarie study on lead in backyard chickens.

Macquarie University's published studies on Sydney residential soil lead contamination:

- VegeSafe: a community science program measuring soil-metal contamination, evaluating risk and providing advice for safe gardening. Available at: 10.1016/j.envpol.2016.11.024