
From: "Tom Barthel"
Sent: Friday, June 24, 2011 10:45:33 PM
Subject: The Lady Slipper is Blooming

Hello Friends, Neighbors and Customers

This is just an update letter from the Snake River Farm.

Some of you have asked that I inform you when the Lady Slipper is blooming.

It is blooming now and depending on weather may bloom for another week.

If you wish to see it, it is a very short walk from the gravel road.

For those who do not know, the Lady Slipper is an incredibly beautiful wild orchid.

It is the Minnesota State Flower. Just Google it for more information.

This year there are about ten buds. There have been as many as nineteen.

The plant is probably forty years old, more or less.

To our knowledge it is the only one identified in Sherburne County, although there are sure to be others.

The animals are doing well.

Although it has been very wet, the rain is at most an inconvenience for us.

Especially when compared to the problems crop farmers are having with water in their fields or those poor folks who are being flooded along the rivers.

In fact, this weather has been wonderfully good for grass and grass is what we grow.

The beef and bison are living luxuriously on the grasses.

The beef animals will be especially nice this fall.

You will also find an average $\frac{1}{4}$ to be somewhat larger than in other years.

There are two reasons for that.

The excellent grass of course and also the fact that I bought animals somewhat larger than in previous years.

You will find the meat delicious and grass fat.

Because there is so much grass, I was able to increase the number of beef animals.

We will fill all existing orders and have a few more for new customers in the fall.

Wildlife is amazingly abundant this summer.

Each morning I see four to eight deer while doing chores and checking the herds.

Deer are everywhere.

Waterfowl are also the best ever.

Wood ducks, mallards and in recent years more and more blue wing teal.

The teal first appeared about three years ago. I had not seen them nesting since I was a boy.

They are now many nesting pairs.

Yesterday, I took some photos of a pair of swans with five signets in a pond $\frac{1}{2}$ mile north.

The eagles visit us daily.

If the poultry are quiet when I walk through the yard, I know to look in the trees for a perched eagle.

They all figure this stuff out.

I expect we will lose a few chickens and ducks to the eagles but they are an incredible sight.

Best regards and contact me if you have any questions.

Tom