

2015 Late March Update

From: Tom Barthel

Sent: Sunday, March 22, 2015 8:44 PM

To: Tom Barthel <tom@snakeriverfarmmn.com>

Subject: Late March, 2015 Update.

Dear Friends, Neighbors and Customers

Little pigs will be here late this week.

This is earlier than usual, but we planned that in part so we could spread the processing workload out.

I will spend the next couple days getting a warm shed set-up for them.

They will need a few weeks of protection s they grow and toughen for outdoor living.

The first batch of **baby chickens** will arrive about April 7.

These will be mostly whites. They grow to be the meatier, heavy birds.

Ryan has a batch coming the same day.

His will be Red Rangers.

They grow slower and are not as meaty but most people say they are more flavorful.

We will raise several batches through the summer to fill all your orders.

The **ducklings, turkey chicks and goslings** will arrive closer to Spring Farm Day.

That way they will be smaller and cute when you visit.

Spring Farm Day is Saturday, May 23. Mark it down.

I will get another batch of baby chicks by that day also.

The three **rabbit** does are each spending some time with the buck this week.

There should be bunnies of just the right size for cuddling on Farm Day.

Sarah and Jordan have their **lambs** lined up for this year.

I will start building the **beef** herd in a week or two.

Maybe the grazing season will start early.

The weather has been unusual of course.

Is there really a "normal" weather or just an average?

In any case, the **maple sap** run has been odd.

Gail has been boiling it down each day as I bring sap home but the "run" will be over in another day or two.

This earlier than normal mild weather is making it possible for me to start **spring seeding** and pasture interseeding.

I posted a few photos and some information about planting hog and poultry pastures on our facebook page this evening.

Link to our Facebook page.

[Snake River Farm Minnesota on Facebook](#)

Teresa sent the following a couple of weeks ago.

“Please see [RANCHER BELIEVES WE CAN SAVE BISON BY EATING THEM](#) on Page SH1 of Sunday, March 01, 2015 issue of Star Tribune

Hi Tom--I don't know if you get the Star Tribune, but if not, I wanted to send a link to this article. You probably know all about this guy, but I thought it might be of interest. –Teresa”

We do not get the Tribune, but several people sent the article to me.

Thank you for doing so.

The article has many errors and is misleading in a number of ways but then again, I agree with much of what it is about.

The basic premise, that eating bison can save them, is not a belief.

It is a crystal clear fact.

There are hundreds of thousands of bison in North America and over 90 % are owned by farmers and ranchers who love the creatures just like many of you.

We could not afford to raise them if people like you did not eat them.

The article also repeats the misleading information about cattle genes in bison.

Let me know if you want more details but basically 6% of the American bison in the world carry a very small amount of cattle genes.

That means that one in 16 bison has a very small amount of cattle ancestry.

So small that there is no external evidence of that. i.e. None of them look or act in any way like cattle.

That 6% rate holds true for virtually all herds including those in parks and zoos.

There are two or three herds including the Yellowstone and Henry Mountain herds, that apparently do not have cattle genes.

Unfortunately, those herds have a correspondingly narrower, hence less survivable, gene pool.

In any case, any herd can be “purified” simply by testing all animals and eliminating those with cattle genes.

The test costs \$35.

Some ranchers are purifying but it seems like a bad idea.

Nobody knows what critical genes may be eliminated by eliminating unpure animals.

We recently have two dinners with guests at which Gail served incredibly delicious meat that a good customer felt was tough.

Thursday evening, our friend Russ said it was the best steak he ever had. Russ is no kid and he has lived well.

Besides, Russ is a lawyer, he wouldn't lie, would he?

I need to write more about cooking.

Molly and Julian sent the following.

Hi Tom,

Thank you for the winter updates. We really appreciate the ongoing ideas about how to cook and prepare grass-fed meat. Now in our second year, we are finally getting the hang of it. Patience and cast iron helps.

Jim sent the following.

Tom

The rabbits are extraordinarily good. I've done two of them in a slow cooker with cream of celery soup.

Broth Bones

Nancy, at Quality says ½ box of packages turned up left in the freezer..

If you want them call Nancy.

Quality Meats phone # 320 968 7218

Go to Sarah's blog for all kinds of information about cooking and many other topics.

Sarah recently added a recipe of Gail's

[**LARD – The Farm Party Doughnut Recipe**](#)

by [sandhillfarmsarah](#)