

2015 May Spring Customer Day Update

**From:** Tom Barthel <tom@snakeriverfarmmn.com>

**Sent:** Sunday, May 17, 2015 9:16 PM

**To:** Tom Barthel <tom@snakeriverfarmmn.com>

**Subject:** Spring Customer Day and May Update

**Dear Friends, Neighbors, and Customers**

This spring started early.

It has been too warm sometimes, too cold sometimes, too dry at first and now a bit too wet.

All things considered, this has been the grandest, most delightful spring I can recall.

And I can recall a lot of fine springs.

The animals are off to a terrific start.

Near sunset, Gail and I watched a herd of 30 cattle run from end to end in their 20 acre pasture, just for sheer joy.

Animals enjoy a rainy day that ends in sunshine just as farmers do.

A class of third graders visited us on Friday.

A couple of the girls realized that if they ran along the pig fence and yelled, the 40 piglets inside would run along with them.

Soon the whole class was joining in. Running from end to end of the hog's pasture.

Pigs enjoy running if they have enough space.

Sometimes the pigs get so excited running that they will spin in a circle in delirious joy.

People do not often think of animals as enjoying life, but they can.

I visited a farm recently that had a few pigs.

Later, Gail asked me if the pigs had enough space.

I said they did. They had an outside dirt pen of about ten feet on a side.

Gail said, "But do they have enough space to run?"

In fact, they did not.

Pigs, cattle, bison, and all animals I know of, run for joy when they can.

You cannot run in a small space.

I posted two articles on Facebook a week ago.

Each had a photo and a short text.

I have attached them to this letter.

In one of the articles, I mentioned the eagles that perch every morning waiting for the young chickens to venture out and hoping for a tasty breakfast.

I wrote that the eagles get few or none.

The day after I posted the article Gail had an encounter with an eagle.

The eagle had killed a chicken and was trying to get it airborne.

She posted about that event of her personal facebook page.

Gail kept the broiler.

It weighed almost three pounds when dressed for dinner.

**Saturday May 23 is Spring Farm Day at the Snake River Farm.**

Time is from noon until 5 p.m.

We have **bison, cattle, pigs, chickens on pasture and baby chicks in the brooder, turkey chicks, goslings, ducklings and bunnies.**

Jordan will bring a lamb over from Sandhill Farm.

**Horse drawn wagon tours** of the farm and out to the cattle and bison herds, all day. There are bison calves.

Horse and **pony rides** for the kids.

A **playground**.

The **one room schoolhouse** will be open as will the **farm museum**.

### **Log Milling Demonstration**

Our good friend and neighbor Terry Herman will again set-up his portable saw mill. He will saw oak, pine and tamarack logs into boards.

Ask Terry if you have a special request for a rough cut board. (No charge.)

I intend to have a variety of logs for Terry to mill including oak, maple, ash, and pine.

### **Soap and Magic Balm**

Sarah will be available to talk with you about soap and balm from tallow.

No doubt she will have some samples.

### **Rope Making**

We have plenty of twine to make ropes for all the kids.

Paula will help the kids (and adults) make jump ropes and lassos.

Everyone can help.

Bethany and Nick of **Quality Meats** will be here with their kids.

Be sure to talk with them about processing questions you have.

If you are getting June ground beef, you might ask about processing options such as wieners and sausages.

We will have a camp fire.

There is plenty of room to walk, play, and relax.

Although these farm days are primarily for our customers, you are welcome to bring your family, friends, and neighbors.

It is helpful to us if you give an indication of how many are coming, but not required.

Dress for the farm and the weather.

Long pants, long sleeves, denim is good.

Solids shoes are good. Sandals are not so good.

A change of clothes for the kids is a good idea. They play hard.

If you wish to load some **compost**, you can self serve from a pile near the end of the driveway.

There is a shovel at the compost pile, but bring your own containers. Boxes or pails work fine.

Do you need **spruce seedlings**? Or white cedar? Or locust bushes?

There are volunteer plants growing under the spruce trees near where you park.

They are 12 to 24 inches tall.

You are welcome to dig some if you wish.

**About parking.** Brother Mike will not be directing parking on Saturday. He must attend a family event.

Most of you know where to park.

If you are new, just park where others do.

Best regards and see you soon.

**MapQuest is best for directions.**

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Tom

p.s. No one has ever been injured at a Farm Day. Help us keep it so.

Please keep the kids safe by watching them as if they were all family.