

The Pigs of 2020.

We raised almost 150 hogs in 2019.

That is a lot of hogs if you raise them outside in smaller groups and rotate their pastures, which we do. Especially if you are a retired old guy, which I am.

Last winter I told Gail that I was cutting back toward 100 hogs for 2020.

Then the Covid came.

Many of our customers needed more meat.

So, I raised 150 pigs this year.

It is working out OK but I am reducing the numbers next year.

Really!

Each year I buy piglets in April or May.

I start harvesting hogs in late September and finish up by Christmas.

We do not keep any hogs over the winter.

They would not enjoy life on frozen ground anyway.

Each week during harvest I load twelve hogs on my stock trailer and haul them to Quality Meats in Foley for butchering.

They do an excellent job at pork processing.

I do not select the twelve hogs. For the most part, I just close the gate on the first dozen to step into the trailer.

Animals that are raised outside and have freedom to express their individual preferences tend to vary in size.

Pastured hogs vary a lot.

Most are close to an average for the group but there are always some that grow very large and some that stay quite small. Frequently the largest hog on a load is twice the size of the smallest.

That works out OK. Some customers request smaller or larger animals.

When Quality Meats emails the carcass weights, I just assign them to customers appropriately.

Overall, the pigs are large this year. They had a great summer.

The largest pig so far was 450 pounds, live weight. There will be bigger ones out there yet.

Pigs are the most joyful of Farm animals. They love to run and frolic.

One of their four pastures parallels our long driveway.

Those pigs run along with incoming cars just like a farm dog might.

I may make a film of that someday.

Best regards. Tom









