



Farm News from June

Tractor problems are never a good thing, especially when you need that tractor for mixing feed for the animals.

I could hear the tractor from a distance. My daughter was mixing feed. The motor started and then stopped. Started and then stopped again. I began wondering what the problem could be. I went to check it out. Fuel maybe? Remember the farm motto, "expect the unexpected"? The problem with the tractor ended up being a pair of woodchucks. The rather large groundhogs had for some reason crawled under the hood of the tractor and now did not want to leave. My daughter had tried scaring them out by starting the tractor but that didn't work either. They could be quite vicious if you get too close. Eventually after removing part of the hood the woodchucks scurried away unharmed.

We have a new neighbour! Last month my son Donovan purchased a quarter section of land just 4 minutes away from home. The 160 acre farm has 2 log cabins, two wells, a large garden fenced to keep the deer out and 120 acres of forest. He managed to find a good deal on a solar system on Kijiji so he'll have no electricity bills. No natural gas to the place so no gas bills. The only bill he'll have is the big one. The mortgage.

Last month we received six hundred chickens in the mail. This is down from the 1200 we raised in past years since the processor for our birds for the past 20+ years has closed down. This year we'll try a new place, Pigeon Lake Poultry Processors. We also hatched out about 80 layers. That's the neat thing about eggs. Put them in the refrigerator and you have eggs - scrambled, fried, omelets, etc. Put the eggs in an incubator for 21 days and you have chickens. We also hatched out a dozen wild turkeys (28 days).

"Sixty", the new dog on the farm has settled right in. He's a pretty smart pup who has no problem standing his own ground. Even Jack the Irish Wolfhound who is at least 150 pounds heavier backs away from the little barker. Sixty has also learned how to avoid the wrath of the hissing cats and has suffered only minor scratches. The relationship with Edith the goat however is still developing. It's unclear who has the upper hand. I've scolded Sixty for chasing the goat. He's a good listener. Sixty would stop, mope off and then the goat would follow him, taunting him to do it again. Sometimes Edith would bunt the dog sending him running off. A few minutes later they'd be playing together again. At the end of the day every one would be cuddled up together on the deck, just outside the patio window, Jack, Jesse the cat, Sixty and Edith the goat. Jerry