

Bone Dry Ridge

A little bit of everything farm



Spring News 2020 from Bone Dry Ridge Farm

Meat Sales: This has been the most unusual year here on the farm. People are obviously paying more attention to where their food comes from. In my 20 years of farming I have never sold out of all the meat in just one month. Beef, lamb and both summer batches of pork are sold out. This is not a business one can expand quickly. It takes years to have more beef and lambs to harvest. But I was able to secure pigs for the second batch of summer pigs. It was strange to take orders for meat when the little guys were just born. We are going to do winter pigs again this winter. We have put in a request to the pig farmer for piglets. But since the little things are not born yet, I'm not taking orders for them until fall. We will of course have beef again next spring. I will likely be sending out the Winter pig and next Wagyu beef brochures in the fall.



Hoggin the food

Pigs: I did get more than the normal number of piglets for the first summer batch. I had so many emails regarding buying meat that I decided to add a couple of extras. I can't really have that many, since the barn and barn field are only so big. 9 pigs are now in and around the

barn and it seems to me that is the max. I will get 6 more for the second summer batch. At this time I have no idea where I'm going to put them, but Keith and I figured we could find them a place somewhere. We do have over 150 acres combined, so we should be able to find a place for a few pigs to live for a few months. These guys have been quite the characters and I'm happy to announce that none of them are scoopers, but I'm keeping the chickens with them anyway. Pigs are such pigs when they eat, so there is always some food that hits the ground. Chickens are happy to eat off the ground.



Geirprúður with triplets

Sheep: Lambing season was a breeze this year. Having nice weather makes all the difference. I remember in years past being out there in cold wet weather, but not this year. It was nice and dry. I did spend a part of one night out in the sheep shelter in the upper field. Just as I was heading to bed, I noticed I had two ewes starting their labor. I got them into the shelter, brought a sleeping bag, a book and a head lamp, and spent the rest of the evening in a bed of hay. I was nice and cozy and was able to sleep a bit, but right around midnight they both started pushing. It can be hard to let them do their thing. Sometimes one just wants to help but for the most part I stay out of it. As long as everything is progressing the right way, I let them do their thing. Both ewes had twins and both were so happy and content. I made sure they each had a place where they could be alone with their babies for the rest of the night and I headed home to my own bed. It all went perfectly.

Remember last spring we had a tragedy when Geirprúður had triplets that were born dead on arrival? I was so hoping things would go well for her this year, and they did. Again, she had three lambs. She had them in the middle of the day and I was there to help her because they all came out abnormally. Not one of them came out the right way, but between the two of us we were able to deliver the little things fine. It was so nice.

Beef Cattle: We keep learning more and more about our Wagyu breed. One of the things we are realizing is that sometimes the Wagyu characteristics comes out stronger and sometimes the Holstein or the Angus characteristics win the day. The mama cows are either a Holstein/Wagyu cross or a Holstein/Angus cross, but the calves all have a Wagyu sire. The Wagyu characteristics are shorter and stockier and it takes them longer to reach a harvest weight. We are also realizing that it may take over a year to see which characteristic wins. This makes it a bit harder for us to decide when they are ready to be harvested. We of course like to pick a date, about 2 years after they are born but we are now learning that is not always that simple. The life of a farmer is an endless learning experience. Just when we think we have it down; we realize that we don't.



Personal: I had planned to go to Iceland this May to see my family, but that of course did not happen. I may try again later this summer or I simply may have to wait until next spring. Iceland did a great job protecting the islanders from the virus. From the beginning they did a lot of contact tracing and a lot of testing. There is this striking difference between how Icelanders believe in their institutions and government, but Americans do not. Not that Icelanders agree with everything the government does, but they have been deceived so seldom that they believe that the officials that represent them are capable and are doing everything they possibly can to do their jobs properly. Politics played no role in how things were managed. It was all science as it should be. Keep politics out of healthcare. Oh, what a concept.

Take care. Your farmers and shepherdess

Selma and Keith