

# Bone Dry Ridge

A little bit of everything farm



Wagyu X Cattle  
Icelandic Sheep  
Chickens  
Pigs

## Winter News 2020 from Bone Dry Ridge Farm

**The weather report:** What a rainy January. We had almost 14" of rain here on Bone Dry Ridge Farm, but in November we only had 2". It really was amazing that we did not have a big flood. The rain was spread out enough so that we only had some road closures, nothing dramatic. But the rainy season is not over yet. 20+ years ago we had a major flood in April.

**Meat Sales:** We still have two pigs left to sell. I would much rather that they go into your freezer than mine. They are going to be harvested in mid-February, just around the corner. We only have  $\frac{1}{4}$  of a beef left. So, if you are wanting beef you may want to contact me ASAP.

[Winter pig brochure](#)

[Winter Wagyu brochure](#)

[Beef Cuts Made Easy](#)



**Pigs:** This time around we have a scooper. A scooper is a pig that scoops the grain out of the feeder onto the floor. This is very annoying because the pigs then will not eat it. How does one teach a pig not to waste food? I would like to know that. What we do is scoop up the scooped-out grain and give it to the chickens. This has added to everyday chores, but leaving it on the floor is not an option. In summer I often keep my chickens with the pigs to do the cleanup. We don't always have a scooper, so sometimes I have to also feed the chickens. But having a scooper is the worst, and having more than one is a bummer.



**Sheep:** My sheep are doing very well this winter. They are all looking healthy and bright eyed. No issues so far this winter, except with Pitter Patter. He is a Weather that lives with my flock. He belongs to my friend, Angela. She pays for his upkeep and has for many years. I think he is about 8 years old now. He was a triplet and was only 5lb when he was born. He did not have a chance to get any milk from his mom, because his siblings where big and strong and would simply push him over. I bottle fed him and when Angela came for a visit she fell in love with Pitter Patter and he never did end up in the freezer. But he has issues with his feet. He grows warts between his toes that make him lame. They come and go, but hopefully this

winter we can make them go away permanently. My friend Maryclaire was just here to shear the sheep. I often have the sheep shorn twice per year. In mid-February (usually) and then again in August. In mid-February before they are very pregnant, so I can see how they are doing come lambing season. You may be horrified because we are having some cold nights, but they have very thick bedding that has been composting all winter and gives off heat. They can lie down and be perfectly warm. If any of you are interested in some fleece, let me know. I have many colors. I sell the fleece for \$15.00 per fleece.



**Beef Cattle:** Keith is the main caretaker of our beef cattle, so I find myself not knowing them very well. Sure, I go out and help with this and that and I'm around them but I don't know them like I know my individual sheep. We have 15 animals in our Wagyu herd and Keith feeds them 10 bales of hay every day. Some of the hay ends up being bedding material because the animals like to pick the best hay to eat. We think this is just fine. That way we know they get their fill and more every day. One of our neighbors has a very different

philosophy. He feeds two bales to his 15 animals. I have been driving by his starving animals all winter and one day I had enough and had a talk with him. He is getting old, lame and simply not physically able to haul hay bales around. After some discussion we came up with a solution that I could live with. I'm feeding his animals in the afternoon and he feeds in the morning. So now at least I don't have pain in my heart every time I drive by them. I know they are getting fed, because I'm doing it. This of course is not a long-term solution. The long-term solution is to help him move forward and out of this business. He simple cannot do it anymore. I have planted that seed in his brain and hopefully by spring he will sell his herd and move on. But some habits as hard to break.



**Personal:** This winter I have thought a lot about our population growth. When I was born there were 3 billion people on the planet, now we have 7.7 billion and in 2050 we are estimated to have 9.7 billion. That is a lot of people. Population growth has slowed down, but we are still growing. The tip of this curve is estimated to reach its peak in 2100 with the population of 10.8 Billion. Then our population is supposed to start going down. So' with all of these people to feed one would think farmers and farming would be the greatest profession to be in. But that is not so. We barely hang in there and live on the edge of financial ruin at all times. We just get used to that and think of farming as not just a way to make a living, but as a lifestyle. We get to work and live at home, be surrounded by animals (at least those of us who do that) every day, spend most of our days outside and eat the best local food. The

only way for us little farmers to exist is to sell directly to people like you, and we are so very thankful that you are there. Without you we would not be here. This direct relationship with the people that eat what we raise is so important and so rewarding for us. When Keith first came with me to deliver meat to you he was given a hug from one of you for being a farmer. It gave him a boost that lasted months. He used to be a conventional dairy farmer with not even a pat on the back for having the highest quality milk in three states. But since he and I got together and sell meat directly to you and we have our little creamery where we sell yogurt wholesale to stores, farming has become so much more enjoyable. Being a small farmer is such a joy. We can't imagine doing anything else. Thanks to you.

Take care. Your farmers and shepherdess

Selma and Keith