



## Farm News from May

Fox News? Last month I saw my first fox and wrote about it in the "Farm News". What I didn't mention was the exact moment I was writing about the fox, I glanced out the window and there was the fox for the second time. Coincidence? Amazed, I watched the fox through the dining room window, then through the kitchen window. It was heading to my chicken coop! By the time I went around to the back door it was already at the chicken coop! "Crazy chickens" I thought, "not even scared". Next thing I know the fox was heading away from the coop but I could see he was leaving with something in his mouth. What to do? I make my living raising poultry and foxes are notorious chicken killers. I grabbed my gun.

By the time I got outside the fox was out of sight but I knew the direction he headed. Stalking the predator, rifle in hand, "I've never had to do this before!" Then I saw it. Laying on the ground in front of me was not a dead chicken .... it was a ball. A kids ball! I had looked at that ball just a couple days before. It was laying in front of the chicken house. "I can't believe this!" It was kind of a profound moment and after a while I started feeling stupid standing there with a gun in my hand. I glanced up and all the cows were watching me. I think they knew something I didn't know and I still don't know what.

Since that day we saw the fox many times and just this week we saw for the first time - two foxes! I suspect the fox news is "to be continued."

Spring time is birthing time on the farm. Several times a day we're checking cows for new calves and it seems like the bison have new calves every time we check on them. Eleven hundred chickens just arrived also. Pigs are being born all the time. The day old turkeys show up in a couple weeks. The days have been filled to the max and for the first time since last spring, we have no help, just my daughter and I and occasionally my son. Long days but good ones.

It was a sad sight. The baby buffalo was standing by it's dead mother, starving and wanting to nurse. She was an old bison, over twenty, and the coyotes had already gotten to her. I knew what we had to do, catch the calf and train it to nurse from a bottle. After a few attempts to catch the calf I realized something, it was a lot faster than I was. Another thing that I already knew, it's not a good idea to go chasing calves through a herd of bison mothers wanting to protect their calves. Fortunately the problem got resolved. When I went out again to check there was the little calf, nursing off it's newly adopted mother. Now the cow has "twins", one quite a bit smaller than the other. Last I saw her she was licking her new calf.