



Farm News from October

October was turkey month and there is a lot of pressure to have the perfect bird arrive at the perfect time. The birds were perfect but "delivery is now going to be a problem". This was my thought when my faithful pickup truck left us sitting on the side of the highway with a broken transmission. The turkeys were resting in an elevated state of consciousness back in St. Paul and I had 24 hours before I had to go back to pick them up and start my deliveries. I'd been a member of the Alberta Motor Association for years and they were the first ones to hear my problem. After our conversation it seemed my bad luck was about to change. They said "we'll tow you 340 km, pay for a car rental, your meals, and hotel for the next 3 days." This was sounding pretty good! What sounded even better was the good deal on a used pickup truck my son found on-line.

Just a few hours later I was driving in my "new" pickup truck, only 13 years old with 650,000 kilometres less than my old one. It's nice when bad situations turn positive. Turkey deliveries went well.

There's a new predator that has moved in, a black fox. According to Wiki, the black fox is a rare variation of the red fox and historically was considered a sign of bad luck. It certainly was bad luck for the chicken who got carried off in the fox's mouth. Not too sure what's going to happen. We have (had) fifteen laying hens and I'm sure I'd prefer eating eggs over fox.

It's exciting to be sitting up high on your combine, watching the grain crop feeding into the massive machine. A side glance reveals the cleaned barley seed pouring into the quickly filling hopper. Even better to know it was you who had tilled the soil, planted the seed and in appreciation of the gift of nature, have a clover crop starting out to return the favour. Congratulations to my son on his first successful farming year.

Terra Madre (Mother Earth) is the name of the Slow Food gathering held every two years in Torino, Italy. With representation from 170 countries, 3000 delegates showcase their food cultures to over 200,000 visitors. With 62 delegates from Canada, I was once again honoured to be one of them. But could I leave the farm? Something always seems to happen when I'm gone. This time I would be leaving the farm in the very capable hands of my daughter with help from her brother. It was a balmy 17 C. when I left. What could possibly go wrong? Motto: "Expect the unexpected". It didn't take long.

The first day a deer in the bale yard got it's antlers tangled up in a gate and had to be put down. That must have been traumatic. Then she couldn't move the deer and had to saw off the antler. A tough situation for my daughter who just a few years ago wanted to study fashion design in Paris.

The next day it was minus 10 and everything that was not put away had a foot of snow on it. The new snow made watering the pigs difficult with the truck getting stuck. Where are the chains? Under the snow of course. Dealing with difficult situations is part of the job of farm work and they did a great job. Jerry

First Nature Farms is a family farm in the Peace Country. Once a month, First Nature Farms owner Jerry Kitt writes about his experiences on the farm

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