



Farm News from March

Every once in awhile we get the chance to see a sow giving birth. The baby piglets pop out one at a time and within seconds have figured out how their legs work and use them to find the belly of the sow. There is a waiting nipple and often brothers and sisters who are already nursing. After a few minutes another piglet appears and the process continues until all the pigs are born. Eight is a nice number but sometimes there may only be two or three. This month we had one super mom who gave birth to seventeen live piglets!

Edith the goat is by far the number one personality on the farm. I recall one person saying she is almost "like a god". I thought of that comment when I looked into the calf pasture to find at least 20 calves gathered around the feed trough with their heads bowed into the trough. In the center, standing above all the black and brown bovines radiated the pure white Edith. Baaahhhh !!!

One of my favourite nature moments of the year happens when the swans return. When I look back through all the "Farm News" online since 2009, their return was the highlight of the month. The "Farm News" collection is posted on our website: firstnaturefarms.ab.ca

We have some neighbours who raise rabbits. The problem is they're much better at raising them than they are at marketing them. As a result they have rabbits of every different colour and size free ranging through their yard. All they eat is hay which is readily available. One round bale of hay weighs around 1500 pounds and for good quality alfalfa is worth about \$60.00. One bale of hay can also feed a lot of rabbits.

"Have you tried them?" he asked. Being part carnivore I hated to admit that the idea of eating bunnies was kind of off my list. That list also includes things like llama, goat, horse, dog, etc. but he insisted they were "so good! Like a cross between chicken and pork" "OK." I replied. "Why don't we cook up some rabbit and invite the neighbours over". This statement caught the attention of Luke, a WWOOFer from London who happens to be a culinary prodigy. The result was a feast that we couldn't have imagined..

Not being satisfied with just plain stew, Luke's menu also included Rabbit Pot Pie, Rabbit Rillettes with Rabbit Heart, Laupin au Pruneaux, Crispy Fried Rabbit Ears, Rabbit Liver Pâté, Teriyaki Rabbit, Rabbit Vindaloo, and Cajun Smoked Rabbit which the next day was reincarnated into Rabbit Tortillas.

Everyone in attendance was transformed from bunny lovers to rabbit connoisseurs. Every dish was exceptional, 10 out of 10, but the dessert may have been a bit too much, an Italian dessert: Dark Chocolate Ice Cream with Rabbit Blood.