



Farm News from July

It's tough hearing about the farmers who are caught in the drought. I can't imagine what it's like having your pastures dry up, your grain crops shrivel away and your hay crops amount to nothing. I can't imagine having to pay \$150-\$300 for a bale of hay that was worth \$30-\$40 just last year. When we had to purchase hay, it was the largest expense of the year. On top of that was having to pay another \$20-\$50 per bale for trucking. What we didn't expect from importing hay were all the new weeds (Canada Thistle) that we would be fighting for decades to come. We have been lucky on the farm this year since the hay yield has been average and the equipment has kept going.

Last month I mentioned the ground hog that was hiding inside the tractor while my daughter was trying to mix feed. Well it happened again. This time she was going down the road when the large furry creature suddenly appeared. "I almost went into the ditch!"

Sixty, my new pup has no shortage of playmates. With 3 cats (one sided playing), Jack the Irish Wolfhound (who rather not be bothered), there is one animal that is usually game, Edith the goat. With Sixty nipping at her heels, the pair will race around the yard, up onto the deck, off the deck, down the driveway and just keep going. Now Edith has figured out a way to put an instant end to the fun. She just hops up on the roof of any car that

may be parked nearby. If you have ever had the experience of a goat on your vehicle you were no doubt amazed at how quickly the paint gets scratched from the gritty hooves. When I catch Edith on my car I run up yelling "get off the car you #@!#&%#@!!". Edith is probably thinking, "Oh good, now the human wants to chase me too". At the last moment, just before I get there, she hops off and Sixty takes over. The whole game continues until she mounts another vehicle or Sixty gets tired.

This is important information to know if ever you come to visit. That opportunity may arrive this month with our celebration of the 99th Annual Ranch BBQ happening Aug 14th - 16th. We'll be roasting up a pig, listening to some live music and playing a few games of human foosball. The keg of organic beer will no doubt add to the festivities. If that date is out then the following Sunday we're open again for "Alberta Open Farm Days". It's a chance to participate in all the daily chores and a fun way to do it. Starting with milking the cow we'll move onto the chicken coop to search for eggs. The donkeys will no doubt be showing off their new addition, just born last week. "Timbit" the steer will be around waiting for some attention. There should be newborn pigs and maybe even a visit from the buffalo. All tours would no doubt have the company of Jack, Sixty and Edith so it would be your chance to experience the farm motto: expect the unexpected!