



## Farm News from August

August was a social month with three major events. The 99<sup>th</sup> Annual Ranch BBQ proved once again to be a lot of fun. The pig (120 pounds) roasted to perfection, the music was great and the keg of organic stout was drained. The event started out as a rodeo 99 years ago but became so popular that it moved onto it's own grounds and the Rio Grande Rodeo was formed. The local celebrations continued and in 1980 when we bought the farm we carried on the tradition. It's one of the few parties where no one is invited but everyone shows up. (3<sup>d</sup> weekend in August)

Open Farm Days was a province wide event but with only two farms in the Peace participating. We had around two dozen people who came to check out our humble animal farm.

We also organized a 1 1/2 day course on medicinal mushrooms and herbs. Robert Rogers blew us away with his incredible knowledge. Understandable since he's written 42 books on the subject.

I was waiting to ask him about a plant that is causing us a lot of problems, Canada Thistle. We've been pulling it, mowing it and burning it and with it's near indestructibility, I thought this thistle must have some powerful medicinal properties. I've often imagined it as a tonic "Thistle Cure Anything!" To my great disappointment Robert said it wasn't good for much, edible though.

We did however gain a whole new respect for the diversity of life in our forest.

Chicken season is over and the birds that grew up on our farm have moved on to a much cooler state of being. The huge shelters sat vacant for only a few days until the turkeys moved in, a nice change from chickens. I really enjoy raising turkeys. They are far more interactive and curious than chickens. Never believe someone who says that turkeys are "dumb birds". Those statements indicate a lack of intelligence on the part of the user.

Even the lowly chickens can often outwit their human caregivers. Take for example the chickens that have learned to play tic, tac, toe (X's and O's). Some have learned the game so well that rarely can they be beaten by a human competitor. You can even play against a chicken in Las Vegas. If you win, \$10,000 is the prize!

Now, even the intelligence of houseflies presently has me pondering. With August being fly season they are everywhere: on the windows, the table, on my laptop. When I finally had enough and grabbed the fly swatter, where did the stupid flies go to seek refuge? On my head. Hmmm?

Two new donkeys were born this summer. I'm always amazed at how the newborns are able to unfold themselves, like transformer toys. Within minutes they are standing, wobbling on unsteady legs. An hour later they race circles around their mothers. Proud father Joe and friends Jessica and Julia are now the new parents to Jordan and Jalapeño, two Jennys. Joe, a jack, is also father to Jasmine and Jager. Jerry