



Farm News from July

When a tree falls in the forest, does anybody hear? I didn't but maybe the buffalo did. The big old poplar was quite a ways from the fence but when age became too much for the tree, a gust of wind was all it took to send it crashing to the ground.

Trees along fence lines tend to be the most spectacular ones since they get so much sun. But trees have a lifespan and along many fence lines, their end is near. Our farm has 23 miles of fence line and there are some tough decisions ahead - what to do about the trees. Bull dozing the trees makes the most sense economically but the impact would be devastating. Making the fields smaller and building new fences would be costly.

My friend Ted has the same situation with his fences. I'm using some of his pastures along the Peace River to graze my herd of 33 - 2 year old bison. They probably heard the tree come down. When they went to check it out, the top of the tree had pushed the wire to the ground. Since the grass is always greener on the other side the whole herd went over the wire and disappeared. That was 3 weeks ago. Still no sign. Will they come back? Hopefully the answer is positive in the next "Farm News".

We're used to having WWOOFers (World Wide Opportunities on Organic Farms) come to visit but this month we've set a new record for the number of people sitting at our table, 13 including us. That

number includes 2 families visiting with their children, a 6 year old, a 9 year old and 2 - 7 year old twins. There's a lot of cooking that's been happening and fortunately for them and me, they're all better chefs than I am and our meals have attained gourmet status. The waist line seems to have responded too.

Tough year for haying with lots of rain dampening the hay swaths. We always try to put up the best quality hay since our animals are going to have to eat what they are given for their winter nutrition. In the spring I prayed for rain and now realize how effective prayer can be. Sun please?

Our new poultry pens are finished and the chickens that tested them out have all reached higher states of consciousness. Now the turkeys are enjoying their 4300 square foot pastures and will be awaiting dinner invitations for Thanksgiving and Christmas.

In 1916 the first rodeo on our farm took place. The tradition continued every year until the event became so popular that a new site was dedicated to the rodeo but the tradition of getting together to celebrate continued. This year we are hosting the 100th Annual Ranch Barbecue. The event will be held on the 3rd weekend in August with lots of music, games, campfires and a home cooking contest. Hope I'm not haying that weekend. Jerry