



## Farm News from July

Wet weather can cause all kinds of problems like softening the ground under granaries. Each granary can hold up to 60 tons of grain and when they start to lean, they just keep going. We had that problem a year ago, what a mess!

Some projects are easily completed in the mind. Leveling up the granary: "It should take a day or so". The reality is I started 2 weeks ago and I'm still working on it. The problem is I keep making improvements to my feed mixing system." While I have it apart I might as well .....". That line of thinking has caused me lots of problems to the extent that feed supplies for the pigs started running low and I became frantic (that's why the Farm News is late).

The end result? Now all my augers, tractor



etc. are under cover, almost, I still have to get the roof on.

40 years ago when we first moved to the farm Barn Swallows nested everywhere. Under the eaves of buildings there were hundreds of nests. The parent swallows had taught their babies well "if you need to poop, poop outside the nest, not inside!". The result was hundreds of swallows born every year to take care of the mosquitoes and mounds of swallow poop under every nest.



Move forward 40 years and the swallow population is perhaps 1% of what it was then. Now any nest on the farm is sacred. And the poop? The bit of cleaning has become a small price to pay to see the hatchlings flying around. And I don't mind sharing the mosquitoes.

For 30 years I have been going to the Old Strathcona Farmers Market, selling the beef,



bison, chicken, turkey and pork at our First Nature Farms booth. The drive,

which I always enjoyed, was 6 hours and on the first Saturday of every month I would be there to see the customers I have known for so long and share stories.

The time has come that I will no longer be going to Edmonton and my First Nature Farms freezers will be gone. The reasons for my "retirement" are many. The COVID situation has kept many of my regulars away from the market. Also the virus now requires mandatory masking. I do not want to bring anything from the city back to my community. Here all of the masks we own are still in the packages. The reason I feel best about is that The Homestead booth at the Grande Prairie Farmers Market is doing well. The local demand for products from our farm is increasing and the value of efforts from the next generation are now being realized. Hats off to young farmers! To all the people we have nourished for so many years - thanks for allowing me to live my dream.

Jerry