



## Farm News from August

I have an alert on "Kijiji". Anytime someone posts an ad with pigs for sale I am notified. Not that I need more pigs or care about prices, I want to see the background of the pictures, how they are raised. Are they free ranging on green pasture or are they confined by permanent fencing, boards or steel panels? When the time came to introduce new genetics into my pig herd, I knew what I wanted. Although the pigs looked good, the breeder used steel panels. "I've been raising pigs for 32 years!" he said. Could I teach the pigs (and the farmer) about electric fencing? It would take just minutes to set up a new pasture if they were both trained. When the new animals arrived home I had to enclose them in panels to help them adjust but after a couple days I expanded their area and put some electric string in the corner. For the first day they touched that string and got zapped (3/10,000 of a second is the duration of the pulse). Pretty soon they were staying away from that corner. Then I expanded their area again but this time used the electric string for part of the expansion. They respected that string and in less than a week all the steel panels were gone. For the first time in their lives they were walking on green grass. Now they are free with 100



times more space. Before you couldn't touch the pigs. Now it's like we're old friends. The farmer? Like me we don't learn

as quick, I still touch the fence.

Introducing Duroc genetics to the Berkshires will increase the marbling in the meat. They also have really cute babies.

This ranch has seen cattle for over a hundred years and over time the accumulation of cow manure has piled up. Corral cleaning has probably seen some old bulldozer pushing up the valuable manure into hills. When we arrived in the 80's we used to ski down those hills. This month I hired a bulldozer to level them. It was a birthday gift to my son and family. What was old cow corrals will now become rich garden soil and eventually gardens. The future is growing!



From chicken barn to garlic farm! For 30 years I started my chickens and turkeys close to the house in a building which only saw seasonal use in the spring. The rest of the year the shed was just for storage. This year a new fragrance has moved in - garlic! Lots of garlic! Harvested from last year's planting, the massive harvest is now drying and getting ready to share their aroma with shoppers at the Grande Prairie Farmers Market. This photo shows some of the garlic.



Looks like a lot of garlic? The massive wall is 20 feet thick! The fresh air on the farm has changed its scent but it sure is better than what the chickens smelled like!

Jerry