

Farm News - February

Bees in February? The unusually warm temperatures have made the coldest month of the year quite pleasant. The snow has mostly melted leaving ice in the fields and pastures which the animals have a hard time walking on. The honey bees we have on our land have been tricked into thinking spring has arrived. With the bright sun warming up their hives they have started flying away in search of food. But when the sun goes behind the clouds the temperature can cool pretty quick. Unfortunately, too quick for the bees whose demise is "chilling out" on the ice. That's where we find them the next day.

Of the red meats, hamburger has to be the most popular type of meat we sell. Then steaks, roasts, stewing meat and the list goes on. Occasionally we get requests for cuts that we normally do not have on display: bones, fat, tongue, kidneys, tendons, etc.

I was both honoured and shocked to receive the most unusual request yet.

Honoured? To be asked to supply meat for the annual meeting of SLOW FOOD Canada being held in Edmonton this year. I have been a member of SLOW FOOD for nearly ten years and have participated in three of their international gatherings in Italy. Good food, fair food and clean food summarizes SLOW FOOD.

Shocked? The request was for bison testicles. "No ones likes bison testicles better than a bison" was my immediate response but there does come a time in a bison's life when they are no longer needed. That time arrived so hopefully I get a chance to taste the fabled dish of the wild west.

February has been a month of meetings, courses and conferences. One common subject that is new to "farmer education" is the use of social media to share information. Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn the list goes on. I'm not sure if I should be proud or embarrassed to say "I'm not involved with any of them". One thing I did try (only because it was so incredibly easy) was QR codes (stands for "Quick Response"). It's always been important to me to share information with the end user about where their food comes from and the effort involved in raising it to the standards I believe the animals deserve. So I was able to record an amateur video, link it to the QR Code and display the code at the meat counter. Any customer with a smart-phone who is standing in front of the organic pork section could then "click" on the code and like magic - there's the message!



Crazy man!

Jerry