



Farm News - March

Every once in a while I wished I had my own milk cow. The milk, the butter, the cream, the cheese, not a product from the Saputo corporation but from my own farm. The grass that grows by the house, the hay bales I make from the fields could all turn into delicious, nutritious, organic, home grown dairy products.

It was just a dream until I received a phone call from a friend. "I've found the perfect cow for you!" The voice on my right shoulder said "the perfect cow, what could be better?" The voice on the left shoulder said "what do you need a milk cow for? Your kids are grown up and moved away from home. There's just yourself and the neighbourhood!" So I phoned up a few of the neighbouring families and inquired. The result?

We had a "Meet the Milk Cow" party and welcomed "Buttercup" to our farm. Buttercup is a 3 year old Jersey cow, very tame and very pregnant. Around 20 neighbours came over for the event which included brushing the cow and taking her for walks. Dinner was a pot luck event which included a delicious dairy desert made from whipped cream, chocolate and graham wafers. There were cow jokes for the kids and research articles on the benefits of raw milk for the adults. After Buttercup calves, she should produce 2 ½ gallons of milk per day. A quarter of that should be cream.

No one knows their animals better than the farmer, right? Last fall I gave away my old laying hens thinking I would start with new chicks in the spring. The person who took the hens already had too many roosters so I ended up keeping three roosters which wintered in the chicken coop. Every morning as part of the daily chores we would go into the chicken coop and bring them fresh water and food. Imagine my surprise when one morning I found two eggs! Since then my one he/she "rooster" has been giving me two eggs every three days.

I have a great time being a WWOOF host. (World Wide Opportunities on Organic Farms). People from all over the world have come and spent time on the farm learning about organic livestock and experiencing life on the farm. But it's kind of a hit and miss thing. Last year at this time I had six people helping out. For the past three weeks I have had no one. Life on the farm has been pretty quiet and the days filled to the max. Although I've been busy, the work couldn't be better. Warm, sunny days, the returning swans flying overhead, moose dropping in for their daily visit and lots of friendly animals which just love a scratch behind the ear, life can't get much better.

Jerry

Buttercup has just had her calf, a girl!