



Farm News - September

When I was a smoker, I thought that blowing smoke rings was the super cool thing to do. Unfortunately for me, I never did learn the skill. Now I have a tractor that can blow perfect smoke rings, and big ones too. The 1964 Massey 97 was a pretty large tractor for it's time, 110 hp. This old beast, which I recently acquired does not have a muffler, just a short exhaust pipe sticking out from the hood. To "fire up" the noisy old beast you have to stand in front of the rear tire, spray ether into the air cleaner and press the starting button. After a few cranks the engine explodes into life and somehow, it is able to blow perfect smoke rings. I was totally amazed watching this event the other day when the air was perfectly still. Giant smoke rings, perfect in shape, maybe a half a meter across, slowly expanding as they drift into the sky. If someone was to capture the floating rings on film it certainly could qualify as an "unidentified flying object".

Another first for the farm! My son Donovan worked up some land and planted flax this spring. This fall he bought a used combine and harvested his first crop. Although not a bumper crop, the flax looks great. Flax is such a healthy ingredient for not only our animals but us too! My neighbour just beat liver cancer by drinking organic flax oil every day.

The super dry summer we've been having (again) has made grazing for the bison pretty sparse. On my "things to do" list for the past couple of years has been to "build the new bison fence". But the forty acre pasture is almost a mile away and to get the bison to move there requires a long fenced corridor running down the road. Only when every post was in, every wire stapled up, every connection made, every gate secured, and with the solar pump filling up the trough, could the bison be released. That moment finally came this past month. I was able to throw open the gate of their old pasture, call the bison and watch as the herd walked through the gate to the new pasture, grazing along the roadway and then disappearing to the south to their new field of grass.

You just never know who comes by to visit. The "feed shed" is the building which holds all of the vitamins and minerals I use when I am mixing food for the chickens, turkeys and pigs. The door is usually open and occasionally the cat will visit in search of mice. One time I walked by the shed and noticed a half empty bag outside the door. I walked inside and something had made a big mess. A pail of barley was tipped over across the floor, bags of granite grit were ripped open and a bag of vitamins opened. Deer? Bear? Don't know! Of all the choices of supplements to drag away what did the animal choose? A bag of probiotics. Wise choice. Jerry