



## Farm News from June



Aunt Iva turns 100 ! As a kid we used to visit my aunt and her family on their farm north of Grande Prairie. Of

all my relatives, they were the only ones that lived on a farm. Little did I realize how those visits would impact my life. Now, 60+ years later I am the only farmer in the family. Their farm land has been taken over by industry but the memories of the farm still live on with my aunt.

Two things hit me when I opened the door: the blast of heat, like opening the door of a pizza oven and the smell of burning rubber.

41° C was almost 10 degrees hotter than the previous record and it was still June. The burning rubber was our black welcome mats, careful where you step.

My favorite temperature is +17° so needless to say I was out of my comfort zone, but so were the animals. The heat wave



was predicted so we had some time to prepare. It was the pigs I was worried about.

The structures I set up for shade were well appreciated, so were the wallows. One thing I did not

anticipate was problems with the drinking system. The metal pipes that feed the drinking nipples



heated the water beyond a touchable temperature and the pigs were thirsty. Help arrived in the form of a water truck with 500 gallons of cool

water. We refilled that tank many times to keep the wallow mud muddy and the cool water flowing, an effort the pigs really appreciated.

What do cows and fish have in common? The answer to that is they can share the same water, but not in a good way. The



arctic grayling used to swim up our creeks to spawn but decades of mismanaged

grazing has destroyed the creek banks and surrounding vegetation resulting in warmer, silty waters. With hundreds of farms along tributaries like ours grazing cattle, eventually the river health deteriorated and the grayling stopped returning.

We have three creeks that flow through our farm, two that the cattle are not allowed access to but one (Beavertail Creek) that winds



for about four miles through our grazing lease. Many years ago, we had a

well drilled on our grazing lease but pumping the water out of the well became a problem. The system was too unreliable

and if the cattle found an empty trough they would go to the creek. This past month I've worked on upgrading the system. Since the upgrade, each time I've

gone out to check, the trough was full of cold, clean water



and the cows were there to enjoy it, even on the 41 degree days.

Come on back fish, we're trying our best!