

Farm News from December

A sad day at the Grande Prairie Farmers Market. My son Donovan and his wife Lisa had spent nine years building up their booth. This was the day we were told they could take it all down. The freezers had been sitting with no power for twelve days after the fire. Armed with a box of garbage bags we entered the dark, smoky market using our cell phones for light. Chickens, turkeys, beef and pork, onions, garlic, carrots, parsnips, cabbages, microgreens and eggs filled those garbage bags. The market dumpster was overflowing. We loaded



up the trailer with the now empty freezers, shelving and displays. There was one questionable

garbage bag of meat that hadn't quite thawed. As we were dragging it across the icy parking lot the bag burst open. A "homeless" couple was there to see the meat spill out. The guy reached down for the chicken and then eyed the rib eye steaks. "Go ahead" as I passed him another garbage bag. They might not have had a stove to cook on but I'm sure they would have friends.

Around twenty-four totes of firewood have been split in the past couple of months. That's enough to heat our house for another year plus share some with our neighbours. When



the temperature dropped down into the minus thirties our plumbing froze so we had to melt snow on the wood heater. Fortunately, we had no problem finding snow since we've had several major snowfalls, just what all the farmers were praying for. In case you are wondering, that's our Honda ATV under the snow.



One way we keep our pigs warm in the winter is to put insulated mats inside their houses with straw on top. We build these mats from 3/4" plywood on the top, two inches of Styrofoam in the middle and plastic on the bottom. We hate buying plastic and was overjoyed to find a free source. Our local sign shop said "oh we just throw them in the dump".



I hope the Colonel doesn't mind.

Christmas is our favourite season on the farm. Campfires and friends, neighbours and family. The Christmas feast filled the table and everything we ate was grown on the farm. Even the pigs celebrated knowing there was turkey in the oven.

