

First Nature Farms is a family farm in the Peace Country. Once a month, First Nature Farms owner Jerry Kitt writes about his experiences on the farm. We acknowledge the homeland of the many diverse First Nations and Métis people whose ancestors have walked this land since time immemorial. We are grateful to work, live and learn on the traditional territory of Treaty 8.

Farm News from January



Just the day before, we had dropped off a load of firewood for our neighbours. I noticed the shed that stored the firewood was right beside their house.

"Not a good thing" according to "Firesmart", the County guide for being fire safe. The very next morning I saw smoke. My neighbour was 3 miles north-east and the smoke lined up perfectly with where their house should be. Oh no! We've known them for 45 years. We raced over.



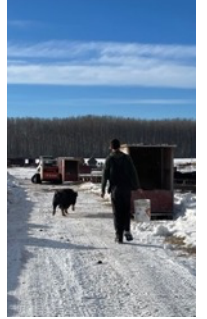
False alarm. The smoke was coming from brush piles across the road from their place. I read that only a quarter of city people know their neighbours. Too bad. Building community is one of the best investments you can make (I believe).

Goodbye cows! Hay has become a precious commodity. The drought last year has driven up hay prices but worse than that, no one has any hay to sell. As a result, ranchers have had to look to the wetter parts of the country and pay almost as much for the trucking as they do for the hay. How lucky we were to find a few bales just three hours away but not enough to meet our needs. As a result, a quarter of the cows, all of them born on the farm, had to get sold.



Three months, three weeks, three days. That's the gestation period of a pig. As the big day gets closer there's a few things that need to happen. Using the udder line and swollen belly as a guide, we separate the pregnant sows from the group.

A simple process for them, we just open up the one wire fence and they walk out. For us, the preparation is much more involved. First, we have to plow the snow to create a clearing in the field. Then we set down our new, insulated frost mats, two per house.



Building them was last month's project. Then comes the 8x8 foot farrowing huts (which unfortunately had to be chipped out from the previous location).



The hut gets placed on the frost mats and then filled with straw. One hut for every pregnant sow; this time, eleven in total.

Prediction: lots of baby pigs!

"Kitt Family Recognized as the County's 2026 Farm Family of the Year"

The County of Grande Prairie recognizes Jerry, Donovan and Lisa Kitt, owners of First Nature Farms and The Homestead, located in Goodfare, as the 2026 Farm Family of the Year. This second-generation farm has paired nearly a century of learning with long-standing practices, built on a commitment to healthy soil, good food, and a strong community." *Jerry*

