

# Five Oaks Beef

Five Oaks Family Farm Monthly Newsletter

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## In this issue...

**On The Farm...**

**Extend Your Grilling Season...**

**A Great Idea From A Customer.....**

**A Word On Antibiotics...**

**Some New Offerings...**

**Did you know...**

**Taking Orders Now...**



## On The Farm...

Here on the farm, we just celebrated a milestone date, our one year anniversary of selling beef! We have been raising cattle here since about 2010 but only selling our beef directly to consumers for the last year. It's been quite a journey. We've learned more and accomplished more than we ever could have imagined, and yet, barely scratched the surface. We have met so many wonderful people and are truly blessed!

We have a full house now at our farm here in Oakville with about 17 calves, all of which are happy, strong and growing rapidly, 7 'stocker' cattle, also looking great and two 'feeder' cattle in great body condition. More on the terms, 'stocker', 'feeder' and 'body condition' in next months newsletter.



We will be 'working' all the cattle here in the next few weeks, carefully checking each animal, de-worming and recording current weights.

Afterwards, we will be moving some of the younger calves to our Newell Farm where there is more pasture available in preparation for winter.

At Newell, we have our vet scheduled for pregnancy evaluation (preg checking), de-worming and overall inspection toward the end of November. The earliest time to effectively preg check, using the palpation method, is at about 60 days after the last exposure to the bull.

## Extend Your Grilling Season...

Everyone has their favorite way of preparing a great steak but if you are like Linda and I, there is nothing like

a great steak right off of a hot grill. Winter, unfortunately, can make outdoor grilling uncomfortable at best and downright unpleasant at it's worst! We recently picked up a cast iron grill / griddle which turns out to be a pretty good winter substitute for our outdoor grill.

We use the grill side (the one with the ridges, not the flat griddle side) and get it very hot across two burners on the range, and sear the steaks for about a minute on each side. We then reduce the heat a little and cook until we get our preferred 'done-ness', medium rare.

It's not as good as grilling outside but on a cold rainy or snowy winter's evening, it's sure going to be our method of choice. However, I have to say that grilling a steak this way in the kitchen does really make one heck of a mess of your range, back splash behind your range, nearby cabinets, the floor in front of the range and even pets that may wander through the kitchen! ☺

## A Great Idea From A Customer...

We really like attending the Warren County Farmers Market, mostly because it gives us a chance to chat with existing customers and meet new people. We like to talk about our beef!

Those of you who visit us at the Farmers Market know that we have small half page 'sales slips' where we record purchases. We use them to calculate how much the customer owes for the transaction and to later use to adjust our inventory for sold items.



It takes a little time to fill one out and we always feel bad when we are keeping customers waiting. I'm sure we are not as efficient as we could be.

Not this last Saturday, but the one before, during a busy period at the market, a customer, Tina R. picked

up a sales slip and, to save us time, began filling out the sales slip herself! Linda and I exchanged a "hm-mm... why didn't we think of that" look. ☺

So, the Farmers Market season is over for this year but next year we will have sales slips available on our table with our price sheets and customers will be able to fill out their own sales slips, if they would like to, which should minimize the wait for everyone and hopefully give us a little time to chat with customers as well. A big thanks to Tina R. for a great idea!

## A Word On Antibiotics...

If you have spoken with Linda or I about our beef for more than about a half a second, you have certainly heard us say that our beef contains no antibiotics, steroids or artificial growth hormones. These things, along with our deep convictions about low stress handling and humane



treatment of our cattle are indeed what our business is all about, and we believe, why we have been so successful to date.

I was speaking with a nice woman at the most recent Farmers Market and she wanted me to confirm that our beef contains no antibiotics and I told her that was indeed true. She then asked, "Well, then what happens when an animal gets sick and needs an antibiotic? Surely you don't just let it die?"

The answer, of course, is definitely "No, we would never withhold necessary medical treatment from an animal in need!". The woman's question was a really good one, though, and I began thinking that perhaps other people might wonder about the same thing.

Here's what we do. When calves are born here on our farm, both the bull calves (males) and heifer calves (females) may be designated for either beef production or breeding.

If a calf that is designated for beef production becomes ill and needs to be treated with an antibiotic, the calf will be treated and then re-designated, if possible, for breeding. If the calf does not possess the necessary qualities for breeding, the calf will be sold at auction.

We sell no beef from an animal that has been treated with antibiotics.

### **Some New Offerings...**

We are pleased to announce two new great Five Oaks Beef offerings. We now have a Zesty Italian Sausage and a great Breakfast Sausage. Both are 100% natural Five Oaks Beef and contain no additives or preservatives. We hope you will try some soon!

### **Did you know...**

Cattle have a very wide field of view of about 330° which means there is only a small area, directly behind them that they can't see. Staying out of that 30° 'blind-spot' directly behind a cow or calf is always a good idea. When you are close behind them and you move out of the blind spot, you may startle them and often their reaction, specially with calves, is to kick, which can be very painful!

### **Taking Orders Now...**

We are already taking orders for great Five Oaks Beef for the Holidays. We have variety packages, individual cuts and custom orders. Order yours soon!



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**Beef you can trust!**