

## SNAKE RIVER FARM

BISON, CATTLE and damn fine HORSES

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## Early 2009 News letter

### Dear Friends and Customers

We are having a real Minnesota winter. The snow came early and stayed. We reached 41 below one Friday. We have been bobsledding a good deal but intend to do much more as the temperature moderates. The horses take cold well but I am reluctant to work them into a sweat when it is below zero. You are invited to come out and bobsled with us. We should be hitched up most weekends in February and March.

That reminds me of another point I want to make.

Some of you visit us several times a year, some less often and some never. We would like you to come to enjoy the farm more often. **You are welcome to bring your families or friends to see the animals and enjoy the farm anytime we are home.** During a typical year we get scout groups, home school groups, community education groups, and families. If you call ahead **I will be happy to hitch up a team of horses and give you, your family or friends wagon or bobsled rides. We don't charge** and we don't really cater either. We just want you to enjoy the farm as we do. Animals, space, pastures, woods, one room school, farm museum & more.

**With this mailing you should also receive a sheet titled Introductory Letter.** That letter gives a lot of details about how we grow, sell, harvest and process our meat. If you have questions or are a new customer please read that Introductory Letter. Please pass it on to other potential customers.

### **Our 2009 Harvest Plans and Your Order. No deposit required. You can change your order anytime.**

We intend to harvest about ten bison, twelve beef and twelve hogs in 2009.

Last year we were sold out of hogs by May and sold out of Beef by September. In response we are raising more beef and more hogs but there is a limit to how many we can raise and still do it the way we know is best.

Many of you placed your 2008 order after our Spring Letter reached you. I appreciate that. That made it much easier for me to plan. **Order Early (Now) to be sure we can supply what you want.** No deposit required.

**If you order now and change your plans later there is no penalty.** Just give me your best estimate of what you will want and when. If your plans change for any reason just tell me and I will adapt. You won't need to give me an excuse. Few customers change their order and if you do there are other folks on a waiting list. It is easier for me to deal with a change now and then than not having a good idea of what to grow.

### **Bison**

Fall and early winter harvest is best but we will harvest an animal in March and another in June if necessary. We "pasture harvest" all of our bison. Pasture harvest means that we slaughter on the farm, clean and cool the carcass and then haul the quarters to Quality Meats in Foley within about two hours.

Bison are wild animals and they get terrifically agitated if herded, penned or hauled. Pasture harvesting eliminates trauma to the bison and to ourselves.

On some harvest days a Lakota ceremony is performed at 8 a.m. before we shoot the bison. The ceremony is always done on a Saturday to improve the chances that you can attend.

Let us know if you want to participate. It is impressive.

### **Beef**

Our cattle are Hereford, Angus or similar beef breeds, selected to finish well on a grass.

These animals will be pasture harvested and taken to Quality Meats in Foley. Pasture harvesting eliminates trauma for the animals. When done, right, and I work hard to do it right, the animal that is harvested never even hears the shot that ends its life.

We prefer to sell beef by the quarter. If you want less than a quarter you might consider splitting one with another family. That is easily done after the meat is packaged.

### **The following applies to both Beef and Bison.**

All quarters are similar. The butcher shop mixes fronts and backs to give everyone a variety of cuts.

You tell Quality Meats how to cut and package your meat.

You should pay us for the hanging weight before you pick up your meat.

You pay Quality Meats for the processing when you pick up your meat. About 60 cents per pound.

The folks at the butcher shop are very easy to get along with. Ask for Beth or Nancy. If you are a new customer I tell them so and they will be particularly helpful.

### **Hogs**

I am raising more hogs this year. Last year they sold like hotcakes. (Do hotcakes sell that well?)

The hogs we raise are big, lean and delicious. They are a joy to grow. They are the happiest animals on the farm. Honest. You have to come to see them. They run and play like kids on a playground.

Because they are outside and get a lot of exercise, the hogs grow slowly and stay lean.

Last year they dressed out to a hanging weight of between 120 and 150 pounds per half.

The hogs are taken to Quality Meats in Foley for processing. You specify how you want the meat processed.

The folks there can do anything you like including sausages, brats, hams and bacon.

**I can pick up your processed meat, bison, beef or pork and deliver it to you home if you wish. No charge.**

**A quarter of bison or beef or a half hog will fit easily in a small chest freezer.**

### **Prices**

Bison price is \$3 per pound, hanging weight, plus processing of around 60 cents per pound.

Beef price is \$2.10 per pound, hanging weight, plus processing of around 60 cents per pound.

Pork price is \$1.50 per pound, hanging weight, plus processing. Processing charges vary a lot on hogs, because many of our customers have Quality Meats make specialty products and even have other meats added for sausages etc. The pork is incredibly good and it is lean.

### **Free Stuff for Our Customers.**

As a customer you can also take advantage of the following at no cost;

1. **Farm Tours** and horse drawn wagon or bobsled rides for your family and friends. Prearranged of course. Animals, one-room school house, farm museum, nature, camp sites, woods, stream and prairie.
2. **Skulls, hides** and other parts picked up on the day of harvest. You just need to be there and be the first to ask. (Note. The next six hides are spoken for by several different customers.)
3. **Compost** available anytime. You can easily fill a few pails or I can dump a loader scoop into your pick-up or trailer.
4. **Pure lard** from hog back-fat. Folks who make their own bread, pies or cookies say it gives better results than store bought lard. In fact Gail makes bread every week but she stops if she runs out of our lard.
5. **Cracklings**. If you have to ask you probably don't want any. Some people use it instead of butter.
6. **Edible liver**, packaged and frozen. We always have extra because some folks don't take it. Does anyone want liver for dog or cat food? I've got plenty.
7. **No charge delivery** to mutually convenient site and time.

**Please order your meat now.** The supply is limited and it helps me to finalize the 2009 schedule.

It is best to call Tom or Gail at (763 263 2721). Email works well too. [tbarthel@clarus-medical.com](mailto:tbarthel@clarus-medical.com)

Would you like me to communicate with you via email to save trees and cost? Let me know.

A customer asked, so maybe I should mention that we do not share your contact information with anyone.

Best Regards,  
Tom Barthel