

SNAKE RIVER FARM

BISON, CATTLE and damn fine HORSES

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Fall 2008 News letter

Dear Friends and Customers

We hope you had a nice summer. It has been a good growing season for us.

Not a lot of rain but we got rain it when we really needed it. The pastures and prairies grew well.

The Fall Farm Day is Saturday September 27th from 2 to 6 pm. This is your invitation.

You and your family are invited to visit the farm and enjoy a Fall day with us.

You are certainly welcome to bring neighbors or friends.

For those of you who have not been here before, there are lots of things for kids and adults to do. Chickens to feed, corn to shell, authentic one-room school, our museum of farm tools and machines, lots of animals, space to walk and play, horse drawn wagon rides and more. Of course you will be able to get close to the bison.

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.

Our Fall Harvest Plans

We intend to harvest about eight bison, six beef and six hogs between now and December.

Most of our customers buy quarters or halves and then have those processed into a full range of cuts. Some of you want to buy smaller quantities or want only ground meat or roasts. We are happy to accommodate that but please order ahead so we can make arrangements. We do not try to maintain a stock of meat.

Many of you placed your 2008 order after our Spring Letter reached you. I appreciate that. It makes it much easier for us to plan.

The hogs are all sold and some of you are on a waiting list. Sorry to run out. I'll raise twice as many hogs next year. Pastured hogs are surprisingly lean and delicious.

Bison

We expect to harvest about twelve bison in the next twelve months with the majority of those being harvested between now and Christmas. That is about the same as last year. Fall and early winter is always best but some customers ran out so we harvested a few other times through the year. We can't do that with hogs or beef unfortunately. Beef are all harvested between September and December. Hogs are all harvested in late November or early December depending on the growing season.

Most of the bison and beef that we will be harvesting are heifers, about thirty months old. That is ideal for grass grown animals.

For those of you who want only ground bison or roasts we will harvest a couple of animals for that purpose between now and Christmas. You need to order that ahead.

We "pasture harvest" all of our animals. For 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 don't like to be herded or hauled. By pasture harvesting we can minimize trauma to the bison and to ourselves.

On many harvest days a Lakota ceremony is performed at 8 a.m. before we shoot the bison.

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

The prime bison typically dress out about 100 to 125 pounds per quarter. That is the hanging weight.

We are willing to sell bison by the 1/8 but that that requires that we have two such buyers.

SPECIAL NOTE: We will have ground bison available about mid August. \$5 per pound. One & 1/3 pound packages. No charge for delivery. Call, it goes quickly.

Beef

The cattle are mostly Hereford and Angus breeding. Several heifers, two steers and one two year old bull. These animals will be pasture harvested and taken to Quality Meats in Foley.

My guess is that they weight between 800 and 1,100 pounds live.

They should dress out between 450 and 600 pounds hanging weight.

That means an average quarter should be 115 to 150 pounds. That is the “hanging weight” that you pay for.

The meat will be available about two weeks after the harvest date.

We prefer to sell beef by the quarter. If you want less than a quarter you might consider splitting one with another family.

We butcher a mature animal now and then for ground meat and boneless roasts. Let me know if you want some of that.

The following applies to both Beef and Bison.

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

You tell Dave how to cut and package your meat.

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

You pay Dave for the processing when you pick up your meat. About 50 cents per pound.

If you buy only ground meat or boneless roasts, the price (\$5/# for bison, \$4/# for beef) includes processing.

We can pick up your processed meat and deliver it to you home if you wish. No charge.

The folks at the butcher shop are very easy to get along with. Some of our customers have asked Quality Meats to process a portion of their meat into brats or specialty products.

Hogs

We are raising six hogs but they are **all sold**. I'll double that number for next year.

The hogs are harvested on the farm and then taken to Quality Meats in Foley for processing to your specifications. They can do anything you like including sausages, brats, hams and bacon.

Prices

Bison price is \$3 per pound, hanging weight, plus processing charge of around 50 cents per pound.

Ground bison and boneless bison roasts are \$5 per pound, processing included, when available.

Beef price is \$2 per pound, hanging weight, plus processing charge of around 50 cents per pound. Ground beef is \$4 per pound, processing included, when available.

Pork price is \$1 per pound, hanging weight, plus processing. We are sold out of pork for 2008.

Free Stuff for Our Customers.

I hope you all know that you can visit and enjoy the farm anytime we are home and available.

In addition to that there are a number of by-products that we routinely give away to our customers.

1. Skulls, hides and other parts picked up on the day of harvest. You just need to be the first to ask.
2. Compost available anytime. This isn't raw manure but rather excellent compost.
You can easily fill a few pails or I can dump a loader scoop into your pick-up or trailer.
3. Pure lard from hog back-fat. This isn't necessarily health food but folks who make their own bread or pies say it gives better results than store bought lard.
4. Cracklings. If you have to ask you probably don't want any. Some people use it instead of butter.
5. Frozen, packaged, edible liver. We always have extra because some folks don't take it.

Please order your meat now. The supply is limited and we need to finalize the fall schedule.

It is best to call Gail or Tom at home in the evening (763 263 2721). Email works well too.

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Best Regards,

Tom Barthel