



Ashton Glen Farm

Organic Grassfed Beef

Natural Yorkshire Pork

www.ashtonglenfarm.ca

[Spring 2012 Newsletter](#)

Happy Spring! The last week or so has seen the return of spring rains and we are very happy about that. The traditional verdant green colour which brings joy to the farmer's and eater's heart has shown up. With the predicted heat you can almost see the hay growing. Gotta love it!



[Changes at the Farm](#)

We have made some changes at the farm for 2012. Nothing stays the same and that includes us:

[Ashton Glen Pork](#)

Something that has not changed for 2012 is our pork production. You can continue to order sides of pork as in other years. All the details can be found here:

www.ashtonglenfarm.ca/SidesofPork2012.pdf Orders are quite brisk already this year, and our first batch is sold out. Don't worry, there is a second batch coming, but don't wait too long.



Feeding Hay on Pasture

[Beef Herd Reduction](#)

One of the changes we have made is to reduce the size of our beef herd. We had grown it to the point where we reached the limits of the farm's capacity and that left us vulnerable to weather stress. With last summer being a record dry one, we were having to supplement with hay in July which put our winter feed storage at serious risk. We made the decision to reduce the herd to bring things back into balance. We are now very comfortable that we will have plenty of grass and hay this year to continue to produce less, but the highest quality grass fed beef.

Main Street Farmers Market

This summer we will not be returning to the market. This is a farm capacity issue rather than anything else as talked about above. We have loved our years at both the Ottawa and Main Street markets. The interaction with all of you and with the other vendors was fun and rewarding and we will miss that. The reality is that the market took up more than 2 full days each week in preparation and attendance which we have decided to allocate back to farm time.



Some things don't change

This February we had a chance to go to southern Spain and Portugal. We visited a number of farmers markets and enjoyed them all. The farmers were certainly people with plenty of character.



One of our quests was to find the rare iberico bellota black pig. Just outside of Zafra Spain we found what we were looking for. For centuries pigs have been raised on pasture in this area



which is also famous for oak trees. These are not oaks we are used

to; their acorns (bellota) are the size of your computers mouse and are the main source of protein. The elaborate aging and curing process traditionally takes place in small towns high in the Sierra Nevada mountains (we also did a pilgrimage to one of those villages, Trevelez, on some of the harriest roads I have ever driven). The resulting hams can be purchased in New York for \$180/lb We did have a sampling, and it melted in your mouth. This ham is right up their with truffles for being exotic.



That is a castle on the hill

We look forward to hearing from you soon....Dave and Diane Smith