



Ashton Glen Farm

Organic Grassfed Angus

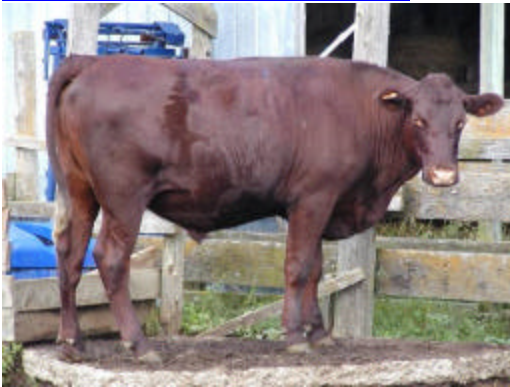
Natural Yorkshire Pork

www.ashtonglenfarm.ca

[Summer 2011 Newsletter](#)

The 2011 farmers market season for us will start **Saturday July 30** at the **Main Street Farmers Market** on the grounds of St Paul University on Main Street from 9:00 until 2:00. We will have individual cuts of beef for sale as usual, with pork coming later in August.

[New Stuff at the Farm](#)



Red Poll Steer
Mahogany Red with White Tail Swish

We have introduced heritage breeds to our livestock. We purchased 3 red poll cows with calves and 5 red poll stockers (older steers which can be finished on grass at our farm) this spring. They were purchased from Bruce and Janet Duncan who are neighbours, certified organic grassfed beef farmers and fellow members of the Ecological Farmers of Ontario. Red Poll is a dual purpose (both beef and milk)

breed originating from Suffolk England. The Poll refers to the fact that they are a polled (hornless) breed. Polled means that there is no need for dehorning, a task which I have assisted in at other neighbours farms, and found unpleasant for all concerned. As with our Angus cattle, also a polled breed, they will do very well on grass and produce excellent quality meat. You can try some at the market this year.

We also introduced Berkshire into the pig herd. Berkshire is also a heritage breed. It was on the endangered list of rare breeds (Red Poll still is) but has recently moved to vulnerable status. Our customers who have tried the pork report that it is a little richer in taste than our Yorkshire pork and just as delicious.



Purebred Berkshire in Middle of Group
Others are Berkshire Cross



You are probably asking yourself why does a breed become 'heritage'? The reason lies in the modern ethic of cheap food fast. The heritage breeds are typically slower to grow and do not fit into the factory farming model. This is true of both pure bred Berkshire and Red Poll. They generally do though have richer and deeper flavour and so are prized by discerning chefs and eaters. It is also true, that if we don't raise them, the breeds will become extinct.

[Other News](#)

One of hallmark tasks of our farm is haying. I am happy to report, that as of this writing, July 27 2011, our hay is finished. We put up 452 round bales and 350 squares for a total of 300k pounds of feed. This is quite different than the last 2 years where haying went past Labour Day due to lots of rain. This summer has been much drier and so we were able to cut, dry, and bale relatively early.





4 Point Buck in Hayfield Last Week

Well I am happy about the hay situation it reminds me about the state of our planet's weather. There are record floods and record droughts in many places on earth resulting in monumental destruction and devastation. Even in our temperate climate zone in the last year we have seen new weather records of several kinds reflecting the harbinger of climate change, weather extremes. The scary part is that we are only at the beginning. Climate change is noticeably not on the Canadian government agenda but has been supplanted by the notion that Canada become a world oil superpower. I personally do not agree with these priorities. If you do not, I encourage you to write your MP and let them know that you feel climate change is an important issue.

I realize that it is a bit of a downer to talk about climate change in our "happy farm newsletter" but really, things can only be happy if we are take care of the planet. That is a central theme of our farm operation. Ignoring it would be irresponsible.

We look forward to seeing you at the Main Street Market on Saturdays starting July 30 2011.

Have a Great Summer....Dave and Diane Smith