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Weather



TODAY:
MIX OF SUN
AND CLOUD

HIGH OF 20
LOW OF 6



TUESDAY:
SUNNY

HIGH OF 24
LOW OF 14



WEDNESDAY:
CLOUDY

HIGH OF 22
LOW OF 16



THURSDAY:
PERIODS OF
RAIN

HIGH OF 24
LOW OF 16



FRIDAY:
CHANCE OF
SHOWERS

HIGH OF 23
LOW OF 10

The man with boot and bucket



THE SCOOP

MABLE HASTINGS

When I recently asked my son, Ethan why he has chosen to pursue his interest in farming on some small scale, I was surprised to receive the following response in writing. After reading it, I asked him if he would be okay with my sharing it with Record readers in my column and he agreed. The following is his response to my question...

It's a cool day in late August; unseasonably cold and the sun sets on Hastings-Ball Farm or "Graceland."

This has always been a quiet landscape, long serene, like something from a movie but it is now bustling with life and excitement. At the beginning of lockdown, I took on the task of rearing three meat pigs with the goal of producing enough meat to be able to cut costs on the yearly expenses that come with enjoying a higher quality of meat.

My wieners are a mixed gene but are predominantly large white. This breed is made to eat and has been so mass produced since World War Two that, they do worse outdoors in a pasture than they would in an industrial barn. However, my pigs seem to have done pretty well at fulfilling their purpose. It will be sad to see them go as they really are such inquisitive animals

and it was a pleasure to get to interact with them. Likely it sounds crazy that I send something I love so much off to slaughter but this is where the reality of meat eating comes into play.

When I calculate expenses and weigh them against what I will gain back, I end up losing \$100 plus dollars on each pig. The benefits you may ask? These pigs were always happy. They were clean and safe. They were fed on schedule morning and night and they had ample space to roam and much earth to till. They were well treated by the man with boot and bucket. These simple realities have made my summer adventure in pig farming worthwhile.

I was counselled by many to try a few batches of wieners prior to jumping into "wintering" animals. As winter approaches, I look upon the shelters and repeatedly ask myself the same question, "How do I make this better?"

I admittedly have a hard time defining my mission with "Hastings-Ball Farms" (Graceland). If you pressed me to put it into words, I guess I would say the following... My mission is to enrich the agricultural community in Pottton and to do my part to conserve, preserve and educate others (especially youth) about heritage breeds and to show the rewards and challenges of farming.

With my most recent acquisition of two heritage breed kunekune pigs, I hope to begin my path and blaze the trail for others to be more self-sufficient in a way that is preserving our history. I remember the farmers of Pottton and the part they played in our community's agricultural D.N.A... I too wish to be remembered for such a noble cause and to be part of the next generation to take the reins and plough ever forward.

It's a cool day in late August. The sun is setting and the birds chirp. I am a farmer from a few generations past. Surrounded in the thick of it; it's great.



PHOTOS: ETHAN BALL



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Ben by Daniel Shelton

