

97 King St., Georgetown • 905-873-6388 • www.bareimage.ca







VISIT US ONLINE AT BADBOY.CA

SEE OUR FLYER IN TODAY'S PAPER!

## COMMENT Thank a farmer ... while he's still around

By Ted Brown tedbit@hotmail.com

Not long ago I watched a news feature regarding the price of meat. The report featured interviews with consumers in Toronto, complaining about the increase in beef prices.

That always gets my back up.

"We take the

stress out

of finding a

good reliable

maid"

The interviews included a butcher, who held a gorgeous steak, saying five years ago it would have cost \$12, while now he charges \$20 for the same cut.

He was quick to say, "But I don't make any more money on that cut today, than I did when it cost \$12."

Well, welcome to the life of a farmer, buddy.

During the complaints about the price of meat, no one took the farmer's side. Nope, to them, he's just the guy jacking up the price of

There are many factors that escalate the price of farm products, not only beef, but milk, pigs, chickens, eggs, lamb and goats—the list

I chatted with a retired dairy farmer who sold his herd and milk quota, after running his dairy operation for 40 years. And after he sold the dairy cattle and quota? He bought some beef cows, to raise beef calves, which will grow into steers, and ultimately, in about two years, land on your barbecue.

He admitted the price has been at an alltime high, which was certainly good news. But when those beef calves are ready to go to market, there'll be no guarantee the price will still be up there.

He's a typical farmer, he'll take that 'leap of faith,' and invest thousands of dollars into those animals, the crops he grows to feed them, and the time and effort— all to see it possibly turn a profit.

That's what farmers do, so you can enjoy a nutritious lifestyle.

While he's doing that, he must monitor the costs of his operation, including hydro, fuel,



## A Ted Bit

wear and tear on the equipment, etc.

And all that initiative—trying to eek out a decent living.

Over the past decade, countless beef farmers have been squeezed out of the business due to uncertainty. They simply got tired of investing time, money and effort, to break even- or in some cases, lose money, just for the sake of

The average age of farmers is around 57 years—not a comforting thought.

But the reason for that age is the fact that younger people do not want to jump onto that roller coaster of commodity prices, when they can work a 9-to-5 day, complete with benefits and paid vacations—unlike the farmers.

And as we continue to build houses on prime agricultural land, many farmers simply have no urge to relocate to another area, where the growing season may be shorter, and the cost of transporting farm commodities to and from the farm will certainly be higher with the fickle fuel prices.

If you think food is expensive now, wait a few more years. The rate we're driving our sons and daughters away from the farming profession, the higher food prices will escalate—as it comes into the country from across the border.

We can't blame our farmers— they're human, and they get tired, just like all of us, they get to a point where they throw in the towel, and say 'I'm done.'

So when you walk down the meat aisle at the local supermarket, and peruse that \$20 steak, please stifle the urge to complain about the price being too high.

Years ago, there was a campaign to promote farming, "If you ate today, thank a farmer."

I'm a firm believer is should be updated to a newer version, "If you ate today, thank a farmerwhile he's still around."

905-702-0885 • www.bathstudio.ca

