



Veggies on Wheels



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NEWSLETTER OF PFENNING'S ORGANIC FOOD BOX

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"Veggies on Wheels" (edited by Wolfgang W.) generally appears around the beginning of every month.

Dear Pfenning's Food Box Community,

March – finally!

March is here, and with that our first realistic expectations of any signs of spring starting to make their appearance. Anyone with a greenhouse will be aware of the increasing power of the sun and its magical effect on the growth of your seedlings. By the beginning of May, those dormant plants will be ready to be planted out in the open – and the grand cycle of rebirth in the spring begins, once again. That being said, we had the audacity to activate our online Catalogue **Seed Department** (which you can find in the menu under the HOME category). We may gradually dare to consider getting our seedlings started now (around mid-March or so). The increasing daylight and growing noticeably growing power of the sun is a herald of the growing season not too far off. We're ready!

Canadian Dairy Commission Update

Let's face it: no one likes to hear about price increases. But anyone paying attention to the price of things lately will have caught on to the fact that there is an unmistakable upward trend for many items. Although we are told that gas prices have risen the fastest and seem to be on the road to break all records, food prices have also increased considerably. While we try to keep our prices at Pfenning's Organic & More as low as possible, we do have to remain realistic if we want to operate in a practicable manner and are compelled to adjust prices in response to the increases coming down from the suppliers and producers.



After a fairly long period of stability, the **Canadian Dairy Commission** announced late last year that the price of farm gate milk should be increased significantly. The price hike is meant to offset rising costs for dairy farmers, especially for feed and energy as well as higher costs associated with the COVID-19 crisis. According to a study by a consumer research company (*Field Agent Canada*), this has the price of milk going up even faster than inflation. We are told that inflation since the middle of last year has been hovering around an average increase of about 5%, while milk price increases will be around 9-10%. It appears that prices for other things have been rising faster than for dairy products, so this is also seen as somewhat of a needed catching up for the milk and dairy industry.

As with all things, we are given what could be called a sliver lining when the consumer research company comforts us with their findings that "Typically, the highest price in the country is somewhere in the Maritimes and the lowest price is somewhere in Ontario." This seems to be a geographically usual pattern right across the country, not only for milk. So, once again, despite the bothersome price increases, we can count our blessings to be living here in Ontario and the heartland of Canada.

Tough Times?

After learning about the price of milk rising even faster than inflation (*and we are already not happy to see the term inflation*) and the state of affairs in our world continuing to be anything but rosy, we may tend to feel a sense of urgency, if not desperation. On top of that, we may oftentimes hear of dire predictions for things to come which can propel us further into a state of anxiety or even fear.

Other than doing what we have to do in order to make it through, how do we cope with this? What can we do to alleviate such hardships?

There are many philosophies and schools of thought that make suggestions on how to deal with life challenges. Recently, I came across and felt inspired by an approach that seems to be well-known in a country historically well familiar with all kinds of conflicts and struggles – and it appears to work for them. Many will know that Poland's past is defined by multiple partitions to the point of it all but disappearing from the map for over a century, until regaining its independence after a gruesome world war, only to fall under Soviet control for over 70 years, coping with crippling martial law for a decade before the fall of the Iron Curtain and the ongoing difficult challenge of integrating itself into the ranks of the democratic Western countries. Talk about hard times.



After all that, there appears to have developed a **perfect philosophy for tough times** within Poland that offers not merely solace, but an approach of hopeful proactivity that focuses on a positive outcome – regardless of the odds. The Polish phrase that encapsulates this idea is ‘**Jakoś to będzie**’ (pronounced ‘Ya-kosh toe ben-jay’). Literally, the phrase means ‘things will work out in the end’ or ‘somehow it will be.’ As with all foreign concepts, it’s hard to get it just right in our own language. The main idea is that when the going gets tough, you don’t just sit around and take it, hoping that things will work out by themselves. You do something, you act responsibly towards a solution without worrying about the consequences. You reach for the impossible, taking risks and not being afraid. As the Polish co-author of a book about ‘Jakoś to będzie’ puts it, “It’s the unwavering certainty that we can do anything, no matter what obstacles we face along the way.”

According to the observations of a researcher familiar with the country and its people, the Polish derive their unbeatable drive and optimism to make things work out, whatever the odds may be, from their geographical position wedged in between the East and the West. This produces what he calls ‘creative tension’ – a restlessness that does not simply put up with adverse circumstances, but that stands up to them, defies them or finds a work-around, backed by a conviction that things will work out, no matter what. Of course, this can be applied to any situation in our daily lives – such as dealing with an experience even as traumatic as a milk price increase.

If you are interested, you can read the whole intriguing article entitled ‘**The Polish Phrase That Will Help You Through Tough Times**’ right here: https://getpocket.com/explore/item/the-polish-phrase-that-will-help-you-through-tough-times?utm_source=pocket-newtab

**Welcome to the upcoming entry of spring,
Wolfgang**