

News Column

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## RCLA SUMMER TOUR

It was the fall of 1988 and I had been dating a really pretty blonde-haired girl from Salina for a couple of months. The romance was just in its infancy – and I wasn't a fast mover – so we only saw each other maybe every other weekend.

I had a weekend “off” in early October, so I volunteered to help a friend move into his new house on a farm near Green. When I volunteered, he thought for a moment – apparently having already pre-judged my furniture moving skills – then consented to let me help.

I arrived at Ron and Marilyn's new home about 8:00 a.m. Saturday morning and parked my Toyota pickup off to the side of the driveway, where it would remain for the day while we hauled furniture with Ron's pickup and trailer. Knowing it would warm up later in the day, I left the windows down a bit so my truck interior wouldn't be scorching hot when I left later in the day.

Having been a pig farmer myself for over 10 years, I didn't give much thought to the slight pig odor that greeted me when I exited my pickup. As we worked through the day, and as the temperature rose to the mid-80s, the slight odor turned more toward being a strong stench.

Being the tactless friend that I am, I finally asked what was up. That's when Ron admitted he had applied liquid hog manure to the field beside the house the day before.

OK. Great timing. I'm sure your wife appreciated that!

Here's where that beautiful blonde comes back into the picture. You see, I had a date

with that pretty girl the next weekend and my pickup smelled awful. Leaving my windows open to let the heat out resulted in pig smell permeating every bit of fabric in my truck's interior.

The smell lasted for months.

I know this isn't a good way to invite you join us when the Riley County Livestock Association hops the county line to tour Roth Farms for our annual RCLA Summer Tour on August 25. But,... I'm telling the story anyway.

And, yes, it is the same site where my pickup got "pigged" 30 years ago. However, there wasn't even a slight pig odor at Ron and Marilyn's house when I stopped by for a pre-tour last week.

Roth Farms will be the host site for the RCLA Summer Tour on Sunday afternoon, August 25. Participants will gather at Ron and Marilyn Roth's home at 1924 Valleyview Road, near Green, at 5:00 p.m. The tour will begin at 5:15, with supper following the tour, at approximately 6:45 p.m.

If you are traveling from Riley County, you will go west on highway 24 from Leonardville, driving one mile across the county line into Clay County, to Valleyview Road. Then turn north and travel one mile north on Valleyview Road to Ron and Marilyn Roth's home.

Roth Farms has a cow-calf sector that utilizes rotational grazing on part of their tillable land to feed the cow herd, with the philosophy that it is cheaper to harvest forages with cattle than with machinery. Grazing growing alfalfa has been a part of their program for at least 40 years.

The Roth swine operation has converted to all-natural production in recent years, working with Coleman Natural Foods to increase profits by serving a niche market. Ron and daughter Amanda will discuss changes in facilities and management they have made to meet the Coleman

specs.

A free supper will be provided by the Riley County Livestock Association. Participants are asked to bring their own lawn chairs for a picnic on the Roth's front lawn.

Reservations are needed by Wednesday, August 21 and can be made online at [www.riley.ksu.edu](http://www.riley.ksu.edu).

If you have questions, you can reach me at the Riley County Extension Office at 785/537-6350. Or, you can send e-mail to [gmclure@ksu.edu](mailto:gmclure@ksu.edu).

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