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COMMUNITY



FARM ANIMALS OF EVERY KIND. Chickens, ducks, lambs, peacocks and turkeys entertained the Little Country Preschool children on their recent field trip.

N.K.C. TRIBUNE/Jim Fossett photos • 2014

Noah's ark has nothing on Thorp's Newhall ranch

by **Jim Fossett**
jim@nkctribune.com

THORP – On Thursday morning, April 10, the Newhall family ranch – perched on the ridge above Thorp like Noah's Ark – became the epicenter of a field trip comprised of youngsters hailing from Ellensburg's Little Country Preschool.

It was a crisp, windswept, blue-sky ranch experience for the kids as **Bradley, Gregg, Laurie** and **Lisha** Newhall gave them all a grand, eye-popping tour.

Housed or roaming on the Newhall's 800-acre spread are 2,000 chickens for meat and 370 for eggs, 200 turkeys for meat and 10 for pets, 85 pigs, 70 sheep, 140 lambs, 45 goats, 90 kids, 60 ducks, 15 peacocks, four horses, an assortment of pheasants, 250 cows, yearlings and bulls, 100 calves, two llamas, five bee hives and ... five Anatolian Pyrenees dogs, each trained to shepherd a different



BRADLEY NEWHALL introduces a chick to (L-R) Conner Colsen and Landon Henrichsen during their school field trip to the Newhall ranch on Thursday, April 10.

N.K.C. TRIBUNE/Jim Fossett photo • 2014

species of farm animal.

After the kids got a look at the critters they soaked in another kaleidoscope of life that surrounds the Newhall's most of

the year: Acres of orchard grass and alfalfa, blueberries recently planted and "Hobbit-class" fruit trees, including apple, pear, peach, apricot and plum. Parked

in the center of the ranch was a trailer truck full of racks, each one containing stacks of trays bursting with barley sprouts on a six-day growth cycle: Protein-rich food for the animals.

Said Gregg, "We've got eight species of animals that are AWA certified. That's Animal Welfare Approved (AWA). Six AWA-certified species are the most any other ranch in the country has. That makes us Number One in America.

"The AWA is a very difficult certification to get and maintain. Those who have it care very much about their animals."

Not unlike Noah? You be the judge.

RIGHT: FOR SOME REASON preschoolers on a tour of the Newhall ranch were fascinated with the barley sprouts the Newhall's feed their animals. Gregg Newhall takes a minute to explain the life cycle. The kids called it "Easter Grass."

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