

Friday, November 6, 2009

## **First Snow at Hawk Hill**

We have been working non-stop building fences so I have been outside all day every day this week. There has been the feel of snow in the air and in the sky. Last night at about 2 am, I looked outside to see everything covered in a blanket of snow. It probably will not last long but it is a stark reminder that fall is leaving and winter is about to start.

We still have to finish a fence line or two and then the horses move to their winter pasture and the ewe lambs and rams head into their winter pastures. The last of the market lambs leave at the end of this month. The word back from all our clients has been a unanimous "Yum"! Two lambs are already booked for 2010.

We are taking a much needed break and heading to the Royal Winter Fair and then on a farm tour in Quebec. I am looking forward to meeting other shepherds and viewing other farms. There is still so much to learn.

The one advantage of downsizing our horse herd is also downsizing (big time) our hay requirements. We now have the opportunity to experiment with other crops and forage management systems. I am really intrigued with "cocktail" cover crop planting for soil improvement and fall forages. Maybe it is the scientist in me but we are already planning for different plantings to test.

Coming soon are two more steers and then the rams go in with the ewes.... and it all starts over again.

So as winter comes our animals are settling in for the long haul. In total we will have 34 animal residents for the winter: 2 dogs, 3 cats, 6 horses, 4 steers, 17 ewes and 2 rams; that is more than enough to keep us busy.

Give me another couple of weeks of clear weather and then... let it snow, let it snow, let it snow.

TTFN  
Laurie