

## TWO TRACKS ACRES NEWSLETTER

November 2013



So we've finally come to the end of the season. It has certainly been an adventure, beginning to learn how to run this farm of ours. The year started with us cleaning out the hay and manure from the old cow barn. Swept it away into a compost pile. Now we have a clear space to put the animals in the winter. The barn used to house dairy cattle, so the troughs and stalls are still there. We converted one into a place for chicks, with some heat lamps and a wire mesh top to keep out predators. We hope to



turn the old milk room into a processing area, with a sink and oven for heating water.

This year we also tilled a part of the land to plant feed for next year's animals. We planted some winter wheat and will be planting corn next year. Since it's so hard to buy organic feed, we believe growing our own feed will be healthier and more sustainable to our operation. Next year is an experiment to see how much we will need to plant in order to feed the animals we have.

The rest of the land remains in pasture, which the chickens and turkeys enjoyed and the pigs are still pleased to have. Our barn roof needs mending and the house needs a lot of work, but isn't that how it always is? This first year has been about getting to know this place, and next will be about improving and building.

We raised a few turkeys this year as an experiment. The largest was a 33 pound birdzilla of a turkey. Next year we want to raise more but will probably try a different breed or get them later in the year, so they won't get as big.



A few friends came over to help us butcher and pluck them before Thanksgiving. The birds were so big that we needed two people to pick them up, and four people to pluck. Even with all the help, it still took us ten hours to do seven birds. (To put into perspective, it takes about a half hour to do a chicken.) The turkey on our Thanksgiving table was delicious, but I will miss them strutting around, feathers fluffed up, and their happy sounding gobbling.

We had hoped to go to the farmers market this year to sell meat, but we never made it and didn't have enough meat. Next year, it is our goal to raise enough meat to sell at one of the markets in the area.

We will be doing the CSA again next year, but we still need to figure out details. This year has been great and it has been wonderful working with all of you. Thank you so much! We will be in touch, and in the meantime, happy holidays.



Until next time,

Be well!

