

SHARIDON FARMS

Raising Lowlines Fencing Lowlines

Each year we check over our permanent fences for any damage that might have occurred. Broken branches or entire trees have been known to come down during the winter snow and ice storms. Because we rotationally graze we have our small farm divided up into a number of permanent paddocks and during the growing season we further subdivide these into temporary paddocks. Early in the growing season we have fewer paddocks and during the peak of the growing season we have many, many temporary paddocks.

Although we rotate our cattle through the paddocks through the winter months, once the stockpiled forage is consumed we tend to work our cattle up through those paddocks that are closer to the barn and the house. We take down most of our temporary cross fencing in the latter part of winter and create larger paddocks. Hay is taken out to these paddocks and the cattle will stay in a paddock for a couple of weeks at a time unlike the more frequent rotation we will use throughout the growing season. So, before we start using all the paddocks again in spring it is a good idea to check over the fence lines. We have tried all kinds of fencing materials and have found that this combination works pretty well for us. Just last fall we came across a new type of temporary fence post that looks like it will work well for corners. We will be trying it out this summer.

Our permanent cross fences are composed of metal t-posts and 3 lines of electric wire with spring wire gates. These main paddocks are generally accessed off a central walkway down the middle of our property. The reason we use spring gates is so that we can open the gate and have the charged spring nicely held up off the ground, leaving the cattle free to come and go out of this section of the field. Not all spring gates are created equally. Some stretch out quickly and just don't hold their coiled spring shape. We have found that the white Gallagher spring gates, although slightly more expensive, have been far superior in holding their shape. We use 14 gauge galvanized wire for this fencing clipped to the t-post with 4 inch plastic connectors. Although you run the risk of having your wire ground out on metal t-posts if it gets knocked loose with the 4 inch spacers this is minimized unless you have a serious break.

Starting in late March and early April we will begin putting up the fiberglass posts we use for our temporary cross fencing. For these lines we use a combination of 3/8 inch diameter fiberglass posts and 5/8 inch fiberglass posts and single strand of polyrope electric line. We tried all kinds of posts for these temporary cross fences. For more information on what we have found works and doesn't work see our book Fencing Lowlines what works and what doesn't, available for sale on our website. Take advantage of our sometimes costly trial and error before you invest in fencing materials.

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