

I picked up 150 little pigs today. Posted on Facebook, 3/27/15.



The pigs are only a few weeks old. All 150 fit nicely into the stock trailer. Ryan helped load them at the nursery. To keep them warm on the 30 mile ride home, we closed the trailer window and provided a deep bed of straw. In this photo, the piglets are getting their first tastes of fresh air, soil, and sunshine. Within a month, they will be divided into four smaller groups. Each group will contain 30 to 40 pigs. Pigs do not really form herds. They are not herd animals but rather form families or tribes sometimes called a "sounder." Each group will have its own shed and pasture. For now, all 150 are in the northwest pig shed. That is the one closest to the driveway. That shed, like all of our animal sheds is open to the south to catch the sun. It is cold today. The high was 34 and tonight will be in the teens. To keep the pigs warm, I closed the shed with a tarp and added heat lamps. The stock trailer is also available to the pigs with heat lamps in it. I checked the piglets at dark. All were comfy in hog piles, snoring away.



This is a photo of pigs resting from a day of playing in the dirt. This is a classic “hog pile.” Pigs are not adapted to cold climates like cattle, bison, sheep, or horses. Their hair coats are thin. They pile tightly to share body warmth.



Each year when we get little pigs, some are smaller, weak, or lame. One of the first things I do is set up a nursery. The pigs in this photo were selected by Gail from the group of 150 for special care. They are in a separate area near the other pigs. That area has its own food and water and a little more heat. But most important, these pigs are away from the pressure of their larger mates. Each day as I work with the piglets, I will move a few improved animals out of the nursery and if necessary add a few that need special care. It is amazing how quickly disadvantaged animals can recover with a little special care. The nine that are in the nursery tonight look perfectly comfortable and relaxed. They will be stronger tomorrow.