



Keep Your Livestock Safe in Winter

To keep your livestock safe in winter, a reliable water source and windbreak or a way to avoid cold winds should top your list

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If you experience sub-zero temperatures where you live, it is essential that you take extra care to keep your livestock safe and healthy.

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Your winter livestock husbandry routine should include: Providing animals with more food than usual (include extra roughage to get them through the cold nights).

Ensuring an adequate and dependable water source. (Guard against frozen pipes!). Use plastic food and water bowls rather than metal to protect the animal's tongue.

Keep pets and smaller animals indoors when the temperature drops below freezing.

Keep de-icing products and other winter chemicals away from animals; clean contaminated paws as needed.

Consider a wind- or water- proof blanket for horses who live outdoors full-time; smaller livestock, such as goats, may also benefit from a blanket or coat.

Provide a windbreak for animals that stay in a field or pasture.

What's a windbreak?

A windbreak can be a large portion of brush, a heavy board or piece of canvas secured over a fence, or a manmade shelter – something they can get behind to guard themselves from bitter cold blasts of air.

Be sure to talk to a veterinarian, local university extension agent or experienced livestock owner for advice specific to your area and weather conditions.

You may also find additional information by contacting an expert at one of the Livestock Associations listed in our Resources section.

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