



Winter Weather Tips and Reminders for the Farm

Helpful checklists to help you get your home, barn and animals ready for winter weather.

Living on a farm means taking a few steps and keeping a few things in mind BEFORE the frigid weather arrives, including: [Basic Winter Home and Barn Prep Tips for Preventing Frozen Pipes](#) [Top Tips for Livestock Care in Winter](#) [Creating a Windbreak](#)

Basic Winter Home and Barn Prep Insulate walls and attics. Caulk and/or install weather stripping around windows and doors where air sneaks in. Install storm windows or replace single-paned styles with double-paned models. Clear rain gutters of wet leaves or other debris. Repair roof leaks and check roof for missing or damaged shingles and have them replaced. Ventilate barns so fresh air is available (place blankets on animals if it gets too cold). Check electrical wiring (ask a professional for help!) Cut away tree branches that could fall during storms. Consider establishing a windbreak to help block winter wind around your home (and barn, too!) Consider relocating exposed pipes or adding insulation added to attics, basements, and crawl spaces to provide increased protection from freezing (more on frozen pipes). Learn how to shut off water valves in case a pipe freezes or bursts. Drain decorative water fountains and unplug the pumps. Do you have a fireplace or woodstove for heat? Be sure to stock up on heating fuel. Keep fire extinguishers handy, too. Don't forget about farm equipment; take care to change and/or check fluid and engine parts.

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Tips for Preventing Frozen Pipes Remove, drain, and store outdoor hoses. Close inside valves supplying outdoor hoses. Keep the outside valve open so that any water remaining in the pipe can expand without cause the pipe to break. Look in the basement, crawl space, attic, garage and under kitchen and bathroom cabinets for possible water supply lines. Consider insulating exposed water pipes. Your local building supplies retailer offers several products. Newspaper can provide some insulation and protection to exposed pipes – even ¼” of newspaper can provide significant protection in locales that usually do not have frequent or prolonged temperatures below freezing. Keep garage doors closed if water supply lines are within.

During very cold weather:

Consider opening kitchen and bathroom cabinet doors to allow warmer room air to circulate around the plumbing. Let the cold water drip from the faucet served by exposed pipes. If you will be going away during cold weather, leave the heat in your home set to a temperature no lower than 55°F.

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Top Tips for Livestock Care in Winter

Farm animals need special care during winter weather. This list offers a few of the most important reminders when it comes to animal husbandry in the the winter: Ensure an adequate and dependable water source. Follow our tips for preventing frozen pipes. Use plastic food and water bowls rather than metal to protect your animal's tongue. Provide a windbreak to keep icy winds off animals that stay in fields (more on windbreaks). Provide a little more food than usual, including extra roughage to get them through cold nights. Bring smaller animals and pets indoors when temperatures drop below freezing. Keep de-icing products and other chemicals away from animals; clean contaminated paws as needed. Offer your horses a waterproof and/or windproof blanket if they live outdoors; smaller livestock, such as goats, may also benefit from a blanket or coat. Seek professional advice: If you're not familiar with the area or are new to caring for animals, be sure to talk with your veterinarian, experienced livestock owners or contact your local university extension agent to get the advice you need.

Sources: Humane Society of the United States, American Humane, Oregon Veterinary Medical Association



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Creating a Windbreak

Wintery winds make the frigid temperatures feel even colder. When you provide a windbreak, your animals will have a place to guard themselves from cold blasts of air. Here are some easy tips for creating a windbreak in the field for your outdoor animals: Establish a large growth of brush to serve as a natural "wall." Secure a heavy board against a fence. Secure a piece of heavy canvas over a fence. Purchase and/or build a manmade shelter. Several companies that offer animal shelters suited to this purpose include: Cameo Fencing; (800) 822-5426; www.cameofencing.com Clear Span, a division of FarmTek; (800) 327-6835; www.FarmTek.com QuickStructures; (866) 533-2333; www.quickstructures.com Noble Panels and Gates; (800) 437-3966; www.noblepanels.com EZ Hutch; (800) 837-8691 Quick Stalls; (505) 453-4322; www.quickstalls.com Port-a-Hut; (800) 882-4884; www.port-a-hut.com AgStructures; (888) 281-9337; www.agstructures.com

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