

Winter Farm Safety Tips

Winter in Nova Scotia can be unpredictable. Even so, farmers have to brave the elements no matter the weather, to get their work done. Below are a few safety tips to consider for keeping safe while farming in the winter:

1. **Dress warm.** Make sure that you are wearing enough layers to keep yourself warm. Also, remove any wet layers of clothing immediately and replace with dry clothing.
2. **Wear hi-visibility clothing in the dark.** If you are working early mornings and evenings remember to wear hi-visibility items of clothing so that others can see you.
3. **Remove snow and cover icy patches:** Remove snow from pathways and entryways to allow easier access to and from locations on the farm and sprinkle salt or sand on places you know to be icy. Also, make sure you have the proper footwear for walking around on icy areas (i.e. winter boots with good traction on ice).
4. **Fence around areas of water.** If possible, have a fence around areas of water that could be dangerous and covered in ice and snow (i.e. a pond). Identify these areas to anyone you know who is going to be on farm and around the property.
5. **Don't be out in bad weather if it's not necessary.** Don't put yourself or others at risk to perform unnecessary work in poor conditions.
6. **Be prepared.** Be up-to-date on the maintenance of your facility, vehicles and machinery so that everything works properly and is ready to go in case of an emergency. Also, you should have a safety kit readily available.
7. **Always let others know where you're working.** Informing someone of your whereabouts will help them to find you quickly if an accident were to take place (i.e. falling on the ice and hitting your head). Also, always have a communication device on you when working alone.
8. **Eat and stay hydrated.** Make sure that you have enough to eat to provide you energy while working. Also, keep yourself hydrated.
9. **Watch the weather.** It's not only the cold temperatures that can affect your day on the farm. Storms can reduce visibility while operating equipment outside.
10. **Have a back-up plan.** Be prepared for power outages and storms by considering such things as: having a generator to operate equipment or having extra feed on hand in case you are stormed in for a few days.

References:

The University of Maine. (2012). *10 tips to stay safe farming in the winter*. Retrieved from: <https://extension.umaine.edu/agrability/2012/12/20/10-tips-to-stay-safe-farming-in-the-winter/>
Prairie Farmer. (2017). *Winter farm safety: 5 ways to avoid accidents and injuries*. Retrieved from: <https://www.prairiefarmer.com/farm-life/winter-farm-safety-5-ways-avoid-accidents-and-injuries>
That's Farming. (2017). *10 tips for safe farming during the colder months*. Retrieved from: <https://www.thatsfarming.com/news/safety-farm-10-things>