

Winter Safety

ON  
THE  
FARM



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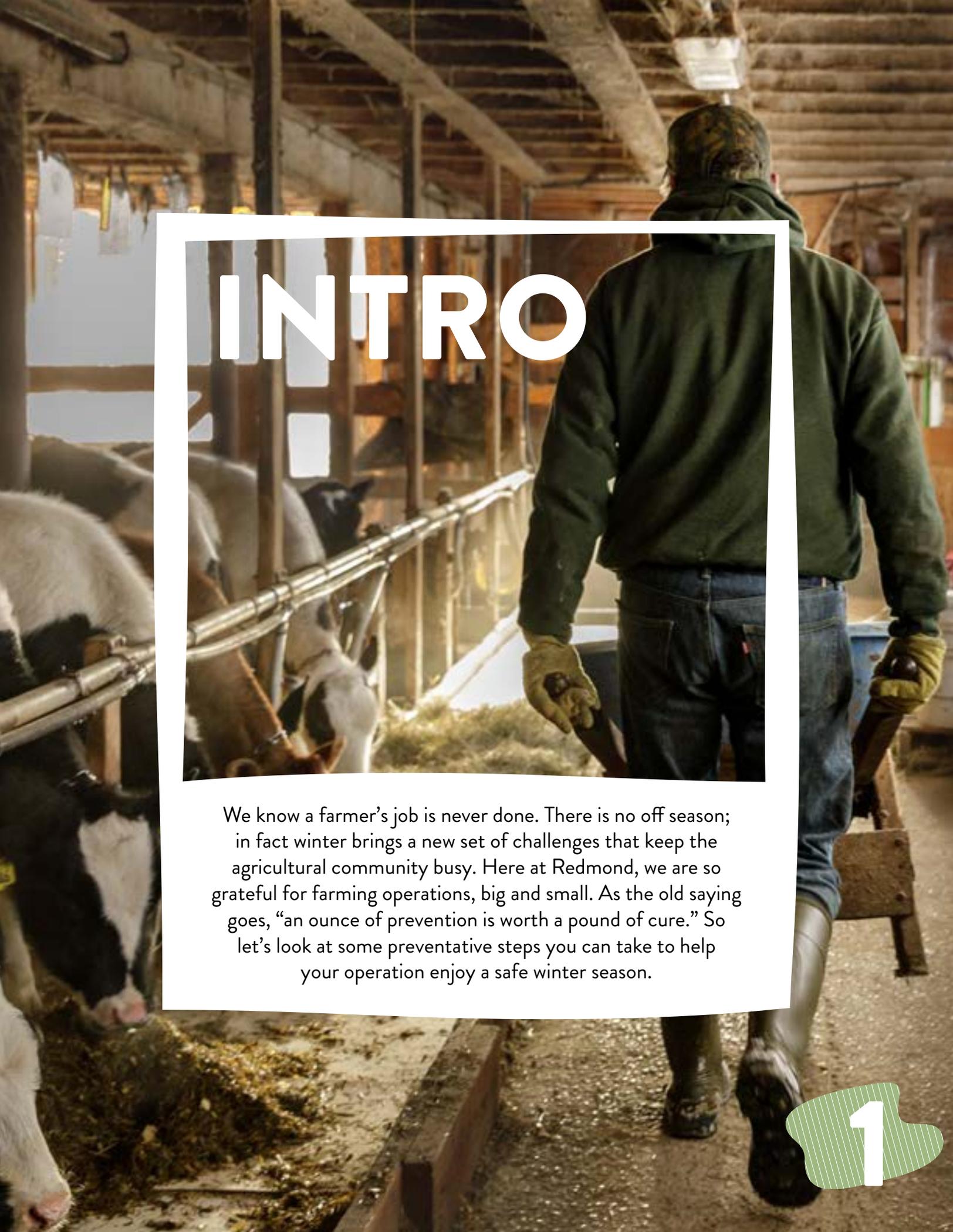
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# INTRO

We know a farmer's job is never done. There is no off season; in fact winter brings a new set of challenges that keep the agricultural community busy. Here at Redmond, we are so grateful for farming operations, big and small. As the old saying goes, "an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure." So let's look at some preventative steps you can take to help your operation enjoy a safe winter season.

# ANIMAL SAFETY



A few important tasks can help you raise winter resilient livestock and set them up for a healthy and productive spring.

- Assess which of your animals are at risk of having a rough winter (very young, very old, have lower body weights, have chronic health conditions, etc).
- Determine if any of these animals can be marked for processing, and which can be reasonably supported through the winter.
- Provide higher risk animals with extra bedding, increased access to indoor areas, and adjusted food and mineral ratios as necessary.
- Make sure outdoor runs and pastures are safe and animals have a place to gather for communal warmth and relief from the wind (trees, 3 sided sheds, etc.)
- Ensure feed and water sources are winter ready, properly stored, and easy for you to access even during storm conditions. Most importantly, make sure your animals have access to thawed water.
- Ask your vet what ailments they see frequently during the winter so you can take preventative measures or be more watchful.
- Be extra vigilant about predators. Their hunting and stalking behavior changes during the winter due to increased hunger.

CLICK TO SHOP



Redmond Minerals offers a wide range of mineral supplements for all classes of livestock





# WINTER CLOTHING

Scandinavians have a saying: “there’s no such thing as bad weather, just bad clothing.” Whether or not you agree with that statement, there’s no arguing that proper clothes can make or break winter productivity.

## ***Winter Clothing Tips***

- Dress in layers, and use water wicking (not water absorbing) fabrics.
- Outerwear should be wind and water resistant.
- Dress and layer up in warm indoor areas first before heading outside.
- Protect extremities (hands, toes, ears, nose) that are most vulnerable to heat loss.
- Wear boots that are insulated, water resistant, and have good traction.
- Put away steel toed boots during winter unless absolutely necessary and wear boots with better insulation around the toes.
- Use air activated hand and feet warmers as needed.
- Remember, wearing gloves is better than just using pockets while walking around outside. This frees your hands to stabilize yourself if you slip or stumble.

## ***Watch the Weather***

- Sign up for local weather alerts from a trusted weather app (AccuWeather, weatherbug, weather channel)
- Know when to hold off until a storm passes.
- Prioritize tasks: what can be done indoors, what must be done now, what can be completed later.
- If possible, perform outdoor tasks during the warmest part of the day.



# WINTER HEALTH & FIRST AID

Let's become familiar with the symptoms and treatments for the most common winter health emergencies.

## **General Winter Health Tips**

- Limit alcohol and caffeine intake while working outdoors; both can hinder your body's ability to maintain heat.
- Remember that in cold temps your heart is working harder to keep you warm; be careful of overexertion.
- Take more frequent breaks than you do during warm weather months.
- Snack on protein rich foods and hydrate more frequently than during warm weather.

## **Hypothermia Symptoms**

- Shivering
- Confusion and memory loss
- Slurred speech
- Exhaustion and drowsiness
- Difficulty using your hands
- Body temperature below 95° F.

## **Hypothermia Treatment**

- Get the person to a warm room or shelter if possible
- Remove all wet clothing
- Warm their head and core first (chest, neck, groin, and head)
- Use an electric blanket and/or skin to skin contact under layers of dry clothes and blankets
- Provide warm non-alcoholic, non-caffeinated drinks
- As their body temperature increases, keep the person warm and dry
- Seek medical attention as soon as possible

## DID YOU KNOW?



According to the Center for Disease Control, hypothermia can set in even at "cool temperatures (above 40° F) if a person becomes chilled from rain, sweat, or submersion in cold water."

### ***Frostbite Symptoms***

- Firm and waxy skin texture
- Early symptom (skin redness and pain)
- Advanced symptom (numbness and loss of feeling)
- White/gray/yellow skin

### ***Frostbite Treatment Do's***

- Get the person to a warm room or shelter if possible
- Use gentle heat sources on the affected area such as warm water, body heat (core area, arm pits, etc.)
- Wrap affected area in warm, dry, and clean dressings
- Check for signs of hypothermia (a grave medical emergency) as they are warming the affected area
- Get medical help as soon as possible

### ***Frostbite Treatment Don'ts***

- Do not rub or massage the affected area, it can cause more tissue damage
- Do not use hot water, heat lamps, heating pads, fire, or stoves to warm the area (affected area will be numb and can burn easily)
- Do not walk on or put weight on the affected area to avoid worsening tissue damage.

### ***Trench Foot (Immersion Foot) Symptoms***

- Tingling/itching sensation
- Pain and swelling
- Cold/blotchy skin
- Prickly, numb, or heavy feeling in the foot
- After warming and drying, blisters may form, skin and tissue may die and fall off

### ***Trench Foot (Immersion Foot) Treatment***

- Thoroughly clean and dry your feet
- Put on clean, dry socks each day (take off at night)
- Apply warm packs or soak in warm water (102° to 110° F) for approximately 5 minutes
- Check feet every day for infection or worsening symptoms
- Get medical assistance as soon as possible



# CLEANLINESS



With lower temperatures and increased time indoors, winter conditions can create a hotbed of pathogen activity for you and your animals.

- Ensure indoor areas (barns, workshops, stalls, coops, arenas, etc.) have proper ventilation to reduce ammonia buildup, dust, and pathogen growth.
- Watch out for rodents and other pests that like to seek out warmth and comfort. Pay extra attention to indoor/sheltered areas, especially feed and food storage.
- Remember, animal waste doesn't break down like it does in the summer because of lower temps, and diminished microbe and insect activity.
- Indoor corrals will need to be cleaned out more often during the winter.
- Outdoor manure piles need to be managed differently during the winter.

WANT TO  
LEARN MORE?



Click here for some winter outdoor manure tips from Iowa State University Ag Extension.



# WATER & ICE SAFETY



Know what trouble areas to watch out for so you can keep ice and snow in their place.

- Keep drinking water thawed and accessible to all livestock. Use tank heaters for less work and more peace of mind.
- Clearly mark the edges of all in-ground water sources so you can see them even under heavy snowfall. Use brightly colored stakes or temporary fencing for easy visibility.
- Check rain gutters, drainage for ice dams. Icy blockages can force water to penetrate roofs, siding, plumbing, etc.
- Watch for runoff over walkways & driveways that can re-freeze and create ice slicks.
- Build up sunken ground around livestock water sources to prevent pooling and ice slicks.
- Be careful around permanently shaded areas (like the north sides of buildings) where ice can buildup.
- Use Nature's Blend anywhere animals or humans walk or congregate (paths, walkways, entrances, exits, etc.)
- Nature Blend ice melt tips:
  - Use a light application before a storm hits to prevent ice from bonding
  - Don't overapply (less Nature's Blend is needed compared to other ice melt products)
  - Stage extra bags of ice melt and shovels by high use problem areas.

CLICK TO SHOP



Nature's Blend is our high performing mineral ice melt that is safe for your plants and animals



# ELECTRICITY LIGHTING & VEHICLES

Use these helpful tips to safely get you through the colder, darker winter months.

## **Electrical/Lighting:**

- Replace frayed, torn, or nicked cords.
- Check property for exposed or unsafe wiring and conduct necessary repairs.
- Remember, freeze thaw cycles can create standing water in unexpected places, so make sure electric devices and cords are protected from moisture.
- Consider getting an emergency generator.
- Use 2-way radios if anyone is working farther from buildings.
- Ensure you have adequate lighting for reduced daylight hours (especially for sheds, barns, workshops, and frequently used walkways)
- Have easy access to portable lights (head lamps, lanterns, etc.) for remote work.

## **Farm Vehicles**

- Make a winter vehicle kit to be used for work or excursions that take you far from buildings.
- Use Nature's Blend for traction around doors, loading ramps, and wheels. Pack extra ice melt in your vehicle kit before setting off.
- Do not run vehicles indoors. Install carbon monoxide detectors where vehicles are stored indoors.

WANT TO  
LEARN MORE?



Click here for a Consumer Reports guide on how to choose an emergency generator for your needs.



# WARM WISHES

Thanks for reading and hope you and your farm enjoy a safe and warm winter season!

For more info about how Redmond Minerals can help improve the health and productivity of farming operations of all sizes:

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