

Winter Homestead Checklist



Garden Maintenance

- ☐ **Protect Perennials:** Cover perennials and winter crops with frost blankets, cold frames, or mulch to protect them from freezing temperatures.
- ☐ **Plan Next Year's Garden:** Use this downtime to review this year's garden performance and plan the layout and crops for next year.
- ☐ **Order Seeds:** Start ordering seeds for spring planting to ensure you have them in time for the growing season.
- ☐ **Start Indoor Gardening:** Consider starting herbs or microgreens indoors using grow lights or sunny windows to maintain a fresh supply of greens.

Livestock Care

- ☐ **Provide Extra Bedding:** Add extra straw or bedding in barns, coops, and pens to keep animals warm and insulated.
- ☐ **Ensure Water Supply:** Check waterers and troughs daily to prevent freezing. Use heated waterers if necessary.
- ☐ **Check Livestock for Cold Stress:** Monitor animals for signs of frostbite or cold stress, especially their ears, tails, and hooves.
- ☐ **Supplement Feed:** Increase feed rations to help livestock maintain body heat during the colder months.
- ☐ **Maintain Barn Ventilation:** Ensure that barns and shelters have adequate ventilation to prevent moisture buildup without letting in too much cold air.

Home Maintenance

- ☐ **Insulate Pipes:** Wrap exposed pipes to prevent freezing and bursting. Consider letting faucets drip during extremely cold temperatures to keep water flowing.
- ☐ **Inspect Heating Systems:** Regularly check your wood stove, furnace, or other heating systems to ensure they are functioning efficiently and safely.
- ☐ **Check Chimneys:** Clean chimneys or flues to prevent creosote buildup, which can lead to dangerous chimney fires.
- ☐ **Monitor Energy Usage:** Keep an eye on energy use, especially if relying on electric heating systems. Try to conserve by sealing drafts and using energy-efficient heating practices.
- ☐ **Prepare Emergency Supplies:** Stock up on batteries, candles, extra blankets, and non-perishable food in case of power outages.

❄️ Property Maintenance

- ☐ **Shovel Snow and Ice:** Keep walkways, driveways, and animal paths clear of snow and ice. Spread sand or salt to prevent slipping.
- ☐ **Check Fencing:** Inspect fences and gates for snow or ice damage. Fix any areas that could compromise security for livestock.
- ☐ **Maintain Outdoor Equipment:** Store tools and machinery in sheltered areas and check that winter equipment like snowblowers and plows are in working order.
- ☐ **Monitor Roofs for Snow Load:** Regularly clear snow from roofs and gutters to prevent ice dams and damage from heavy snow buildup.

❄️ Food Storage and Preservation

- ☐ **Check Stored Food:** Regularly inspect your preserved food supplies (canned goods, root cellars, etc.) for spoilage and ensure proper storage conditions.
- ☐ **Preserve Winter Produce:** Dehydrate or freeze any remaining hardy vegetables such as winter squash, cabbage, or potatoes.
- ☐ **Plan Winter Cooking:** Use this time to make hearty, long-lasting meals using preserved ingredients like soups, stews, and jams.

❄️ Wildlife and Pest Management

- ☐ **Secure Animal Feed:** Ensure all animal feed is stored in rodent-proof containers to prevent attracting mice, rats, or other pests during winter.
- ☐ **Protect Against Predators:** With snow on the ground, predators may venture closer to your homestead. Strengthen fencing and keep a close eye on livestock.
- ☐ **Feed the Birds:** If you feed wild birds, keep feeders full during winter when food is scarce.

❄️ Indoor Homestead Projects

- ☐ **Start Indoor Craft Projects:** Winter is a great time to focus on indoor homestead activities like knitting, soap-making, candle-making, or woodworking.
- ☐ **Maintain and Sharpen Tools:** Use winter downtime to clean, sharpen, and repair all your gardening and farming tools so they're ready for the spring.

