



Winter Care for Pets and Large Animals

Winter is rapidly approaching, bringing cold weather and winter precipitation. While some pets like St. Bernard's and some long hair cats are prepared for the cold weather, many pets are not. Precautions for all pets are still necessary.

Outdoor Pets

- Be sure your pet has a warm, dry place out of the elements to get warm.
- Remove snow and ice from your pets' coat to prevent frost bite.
- Check on your pet often and observe its behavior.
- On the coldest days, allow the pet to come indoors or a heated place in the garage.
- Feed smaller portions more often (morning and late afternoon feedings) and be sure your pets have plenty of fresh water. Check the water often, making sure it doesn't freeze.

Inside Pets

- Allow indoor pets outside long enough for exercise and to "go" only.
- Supervise your indoor pets when they are outside.

If cats run free in your neighborhood, tap on your hood before starting your car. Cats will often climb under the hoods of cars to get warm.

Large Animals (Horses)

- If your horse spends most of its time outdoors in an uncovered area, the construction of a run-in shed (wind break) should be a top priority. During heavy snow, the shed provides the only dry place for the animal to sleep. Face the opening of the shed to the south for maximum sun. The shed is also a good place to feed.
- When feeding your horse on cold days keep in mind a large portion of the energy that is consumed will go to heating the body, therefore, a higher dietary energy content is important.
- Water is very important for your animal. Studies have shown that if water is warmed up, the amount consumed by the horse is much higher. Schedule several water changes each day to promote more drinking.

Remember, pets are family too!

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