

# Both Livestock And Humans Need Artificial Windbreaks During Winter

MARSHFIELD, MO.

According to Bob Schultheis, a natural resource engineering specialist with University of Missouri Extension, a good tree windbreak will reduce wind velocities downwind for long distances.

This reduction can be used to the benefit of both livestock and humans.

“Where trees of suitable height are in short supply, a good alternative is a wood or metal fence strategically located to give weather protection and accessibility to buildings and livestock,” said Schultheis.

A solid fence provides wind protection for a short distance downwind. A fence that is only 80 percent solid reduces wind speed for a greater distance, and tends to spread out snowdrifts for faster melting.

For example, a 10-foot high slatted windbreak fence on a four-foot high ridge can protect a 200

foot wide feedlot, if the lot slopes away from the windbreak six to eight percent. The slats can be 1x8's spaced 1.75 inches apart or 1x10's spaced two inches apart.

“When positioning windbreaks, locate buildings, feedlots and equipment within the area of wind protection but beyond the snow catch zone,” Schultheis said.

Long open sheds (those three times longer than wide) are especially vulnerable to snow drifting and cold drafts. To reduce blow-in, Schultheis suggests putting partitions every 50 feet inside the shed, and provide a 16 to 20 foot square “swirl chamber” at the southwest corner of buildings that are open to the south.

More tips on building windbreaks are available from the nearest MU Extension office or by calling Schultheis at the Webster County Extension Center, (417) 859-2044. △



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