

Wintering Site Assessment and Growing Forward Program

The [Wintering Site Assessment and Design Tool](#) has been developed to assist producers in identifying the environmental risks associated with their in-field wintering sites. This tool evaluates five main wintering site factors: site characteristics, feeding strategies, bedding and shelter management, water source management and post-wintering site management.

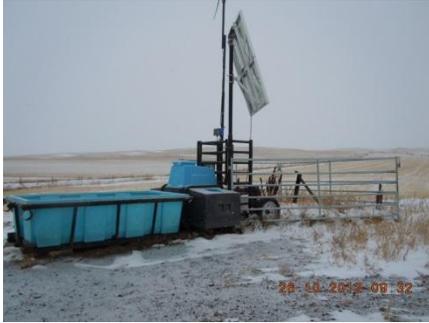
Before spring, farmers will have to consider their wintering site location and runoff. The greatest environmental risk from wintering sites is the potential of water contamination from runoff carrying nutrients, pathogens and sediments. Under the *Agricultural Operation Practices Act* (AOPA), wintering sites must be located at least 30 metres away from a common body of water. If this cannot be achieved, the operator must have either designed the site to divert runoff away from the common body of water or move the accumulated manure and bedding to an appropriate location away from the common body of water prior to the runoff event. Vegetative buffers are very ineffective when it comes to spring runoff because vegetation is dormant and the soil is frozen.



For a copy of this tool call Alberta Agriculture & Rural Development's publication office toll-free at 1-800-292-5697

"This is a great tool for farmers to evaluate their wintering site," says Dennis Lastuka, Senior Conservation Technician with Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada, and the lead in the development of this tool. "Not only does it look at potential risks, it also provides beneficial management practice (BMP) options to address these risks. So over the summer if producers want to address these risks they can apply to the Growing Forward 2 (GF2) On-Farm Stewardship Program."

The GF2 On-Farm Stewardship program provides producers access to funding to implement projects and management practices. Producers can apply for multiple projects under the program with a maximum matching grant of \$50,000 for each producer. In the grazing management category, year-round/portable watering systems and portable shelters/windbreaks are two types of cost-shared projects available for producers. The GF2 program opened in April 2013, and will close on or before March 2018, depending on funding availability.



Year round watering system – Photo credit ARD



Portable Windbreaks – Photo credit ARD

To be eligible for the program, producers must be actively operating in Alberta and must have completed an Alberta Environmental Farm Plan. An application for each project must be submitted and approved before any work begins or project materials are purchased.

For more information and application forms, go to the On-Farm Stewardship Section on the Alberta Growing Forward 2 website at www.growingforward.alberta.ca or contact the Ag-Info Centre at 310-FARM (3276).

Click on the title [Wintering Site Assessment and Design Tool](#) to download the manual or call Alberta Agriculture and Rural Development's publication office by phoning 1-800-292-5697 for a hard copy.