



Preparing for Winter

Whether your growing season is complete, your tunnel is clear and ready for a rest period, or if you are still using your tunnel to extend cold weather crops through winter months, now is the time to ensure that tunnel structures are ready for freezing weather and snow.

- 1) **Not sure where to start?** Watch Iowa State University's [Top 5 Tips to Winterize a High Tunnel](#) and review Cornell Cooperative Extension's [10 Snow-Related Causes of Greenhouse Failure](#)
- 2) **Winterize your irrigation equipment:** If still in use, double check any systems being used to keep hoses and bibs freezing. For tips on winterizing equipment that will not be in use, check out DripWork's *Winterizing an Irrigation System* article: <https://www.dripworks.com/winterizing-an-irrigation-system>
- 3) **Inspect the frame:** Any damage or missing supports could cause structural failure in the event of a large weather event. Vern Grubinger (University of Vermont Extension) shares seasonal reminders in his article [Prevent Greenhouse Collapse](#), including a tip to reduce the risk of collapse by adding temporary wooden supports below ridgeline in Quonset style tunnels.
- 4) **Plan for your Plastic:** If the tunnel is not being used, consider the option of removing the plastic to prevent snow or ice damage as well as providing an opportunity to allow natural precipitation to flush salt or chemical build-up from the soil. If removing the plastic isn't an option, create a plan for how snow or ice will be managed. This includes single-event accumulation on the roof as well as preventing accumulation over time causing damage to sidewalls. Additional information about wind loading and snow loading can be found in John W. Bartok Jr.'s article [Reduce Storm Damage to Your Greenhouse](#).

