

## Farm Practices During Ice and Snow

Farming practices (such as driving a tractor) during snow, ice and cold weather require extra precautions. The braking ability on many tractors is affected significantly by snow and ice because most two-wheel-drive tractors only have brakes on their rear wheels. That problem is compounded when front-end loaders are carrying heavy loads of hay. Even tractors with front wheel assist have reduced stopping ability. Only the true four-wheel-drive tractors have four-wheel braking.

The use of front-end loaders requires considerably more caution in winter weather. Slippery conditions increase the hazard of maneuvering elevated loads.

Safe and proper ballasting of the tractor is needed with the use of a front-end loader in any season, but especially in winter. Calcium chloride solution used in the rear tires or solid weights are good options. Solid weights are more stable and have the advantage in winter or summer. Untreated water should never be used for ballast because it will freeze and could result in a tractor that is very dangerous and difficult to handle.

Cold temperatures and poor visibility can significantly affect reaction time. Allow additional time to perform tasks, and set realistic goals for daily work.