

## Design Windbreaks With Intended Use in Mind

Don Janssen  
UNL Extension Educator

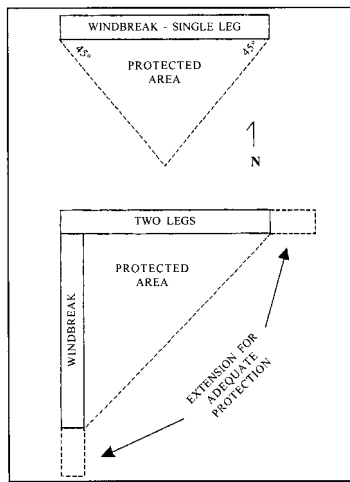
The best designs for windbreaks depend on their intended purpose and the characteristics of the site where they will be located.

Windbreaks can be planted to enhance wildlife, provide snow protection for humans and livestock and provide wind protection to dwellings in both winter and summer. Windbreaks also prevent soil erosion caused by wind and reduce water runoff from agricultural lands. Typical windbreaks consist of conifers, deciduous trees and shrubs.

Conifers provide dense foliage to reduce wind speed. Tall deciduous trees extend the area of wind protection

with their height. Shrubs trap snow, add beauty to the windbreak and provide wildlife habitat.

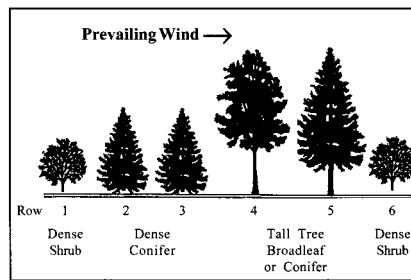
The area protected by a windbreak is determined by the windbreak's average height. Generally, windbreaks protect an area 10 to 15 times



Windbreak zones of protection

the average height of the trees. Windward tree rows should be located approximately 150 to 250 feet upwind of the protected area in order to allow for snow deposition.

Windbreaks are most effective when planted perpendicular to prevailing winds. Windbreaks for winter protection should be located on the north and west side of the farmstead. Summer wind protection is provided by planting on the south and east sides of the farmstead. The number of tree rows and the plant species used will be determined by the intended purposes of the individual windbreak and the amount of space available. Typical windbreaks include two or more rows of conifers and one or more rows each of deciduous trees and shrubs.



Typical windbreak profile.

Windbreaks with two legs or one planted on two sides of the protected area will provide better protection than a planting on one side only.

Assistance with windbreak planning and design is available from Nebraska Forest Service District Foresters, Natural Resource Conservation Service offices, Natural Resource District offices and local extension offices.

### FOR MORE INFO

UNL Extension NebGuide G-1304 "Windbreak Design," or extension circular EC 1763 "How Windbreaks Work" online at <http://ianpubs.unl.edu> or available at the extension office.

## GREEN ACRES

### The Physical Resources of the Acreage—Part 2



Don Janssen  
UNL Extension Educator

Note: This is part of a series of articles related to acreage enterprises.

Successful farming includes the ability to match crop options to your acreage's capability.

### Climate and Microclimate

Climate and microclimate are important to farming. An area's climate refers to the generally predictable patterns of temperature and rainfall across the seasons. Your climate zone limits the crops you can grow (such as bananas or apples). This limitation generally is based on the plant's ability to survive the area's temperature extremes and the potential for enough heat to mature the crop. Some crops require the accumulation of a certain number of heat units (the number of degrees over a critical minimum temperature, taken as the average high and low each day) to mature. Many crops require more heat units than are available in some locations. For many crops, considerations such as sun exposure, rainfall amounts and pattern, air movement, and frost are critical to success.

The crops already grown in an area are a reasonable indication of climatic limitations. If your proposed crop is not grown locally, there might be some very good reasons for its absence. This does not necessarily mean it cannot be grown, but there might be some significant limitations to its production for which you must discover and plan.

Be alert to microclimate variations on your property. A microclimate is a particular weather pattern in a small area. Is your property warmer than surrounding property? Or, wetter with poor air flow?

Microclimate is related to how air drains and collects on the land, how natural features such as small bodies of water moderate temperatures and so on. The tendency for a farm, or an area on a farm, to have early or late frosts or to avoid frost, is an example of a microclimate. In some instances, a microclimate can make it possible to grow a crop not normally grown in an area, or it can make it impossible to grow some crops that are grown on surrounding property.

## Fencing for Appearance

By Shawn Shouse  
Iowa State University Extension  
Ag Engineering Specialist

Fences serve many purposes on the landscape. They may be built to contain or exclude animals, to mark property boundaries, to provide privacy or to add beauty to the property. When the primary purpose is ap-

pearance, board or rail fences often are chosen.

For small enclosures such as yards, picket fences or vertical board fences provide privacy and wind protection. For larger enclosures such as pastures or entire properties, horizontal board or rail fences are more practical and economical.

The common horizontal wooden fence uses three or

four boards (1" x 6" lumber) nailed or screwed to wooden posts every 8 to 10 feet. This fence adds striking contrast and definition, especially when painted white. The boards may be parallel horizontal or arranged in decorative "crossbuck" patterns.

Rail fences consist of heavy horizontal rails that generally have their ends chiseled down and inserted into

holes in the posts. The rails may be round or rectangular in section, with smooth or rough split surfaces.

Livestock pressure and cribbing (biting) of the wood can be reduced by placing one or more electric wires on the inside of board or rail fences.

Wood fences can be painted, stained or left to weather to a natural wood  
*see FENCING on page 11*



## Upcoming Acreage Insights Clinics

"Acreage Insights — Rural Living Clinics" are designed to help acreage owners manage their rural living environment. This series of seminars are presented by University of Nebraska-Lincoln Extension at various locations in the state.

The seminars below will be held in Lincoln at the Lancaster Extension Education Center, 444 Cherrycreek Road on Thursdays from 7-9 p.m. Pre-registration is \$10 per person and must be received three working-days before the program. Late registration is \$15 per person.

For more information or a registration form, go to the Acreage & Small Farm Insights Web site at <http://acreage.unl.edu> or contact extension at 441-7180.



### Feb. 16 • Growing Fruit Trees

This year's fruit-production clinic will focus on Tree Fruits for Home Production. Topics include:

- Cultivar selection
- Plant spacing
- Pollination requirements
- Planting and caring for new trees
- Pruning and training techniques for the conventional stand-alone fruit tree as well as more advanced training systems such as espaliered and trellis systems



### Mar. 16 • Vegetable Gardening

Successful home vegetable gardens are the result of careful planning, including vegetable variety selection. Topics include:

- Vegetable varieties suitable for Nebraska gardens and each variety's unique attributes.
- Insect and disease control — learn to identify common pest and disease problems and strategies for controlling them



### April 13 • Horse Nutrition & Management

This clinic will cover basic horse nutrition and efficient feeding-management practices. Topics include:

- Nutrient requirements of horses at different ages, activity levels and stages of production
- Determining body condition and how feeding management can change the body condition
- Effectively using different feeds and roughages (such as hay) to meet nutrition requirements

### New this year: a web-based seminar Feb. 23 • Selecting the Right Horse and Horse-Related Businesses

**Selecting The Right Horse For You** — Whether you are leasing, buying or borrowing a horse, you want one which meets your needs and expectations. Horses come in different ages, abilities, health, and dispositions. Selecting the right one will make your horse experience more rewarding and safer.

**Conducting A Profitable Horse-Related Business** — Can you make money with horses? This presentation will explore the resources, skills, and attitudes needed to make money working with horses, and help participants determine if they are capable of generating a profit in the horse industry.

### About Web Seminars

This web seminar offers you the ultimate in convenience — you can attend from home! Using exciting new technology, "WebEx" creates a virtual meeting room. All you need is access to the Internet and a separate phone line for the audio.

Cost is \$30 per participant.  
Register for this clinic at <http://cit.webex.com>