



# ***PAMI RELEASE***

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Humboldt, Sk

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Immediate Release

## **Tips for Harvesting in the Snow**

Stressful situations call for innovative thinking and this year can definitely be called one very stressful situation. Someone had commented that if Hollywood had written a drama about life on the prairies, it could not have written a more difficult situation than what Mother Nature has provided this year.

Recently, PAMI sent out a news release asking farmers for techniques they have used to get the crop out of the snow and into the bin. PAMI would like to thank all those farmers that took the time to call in. PAMI will continue to take calls at 1-800-567-7264 on any new ideas and will keep an updated listing on our website [www.pami.ca](http://www.pami.ca). These ideas have not been PAMI tested, but rather are a collection of ideas, techniques, and machines used by your fellow farmers.

Getting the swath out of the snow.

- Sund, McCoy Renn, and the Manitoba-manufactured Elmer's Bean pickups worked well.
- Running the windrow through a round baler with the hatch open and combining directly behind works well in cereal crops.
- A wheel rake or swath turner may work to roll the windrow out of the snow if the swath is not frozen down.
- Mounting an air reel fan or air seeder fan on the combine pickup was used to blow out loose snow; driving the fan is a potential problem.
- A straight-cut header could be used to cut the swath that is frozen to the ground.

Baling swaths of oats and barley crops for livestock use.

- Balers with enclosed chambers worked best to get the straw and grain into a round bale.
- It is important to check green/frozen crops for nitrate levels; may be beneficial to blend with other forages.

Flax.

- Flax seems to winter much better than canola in that it will not shell out as quickly.

Combining techniques to minimize ice chunks forming.

- If temperatures are below -8°C, loose, fine snow seemed to blow out and icing reduced.
- In warmer temperatures, ducting the engine exhaust into the cleaning fan was tried; fumes could taint the grain so this needs to be watched.
- Lower humidity reduces ice buildup in the combine; combining in early morning or late evening worked best.
- Putting screens on the grain-cross auger and grain elevator door helps remove some ice and snow.

Removing ice chunks after combining.

- Use a rotary screen cleaner with the "wheat" sized screen; good success with the Quick Clean, SnoCo, Farm King, and Forever grain cleaners. The secret is to use the larger screens to let the canola through but catch the ice chunks; fine canola screen tends to ice up.

Using grain dryers to reduce the moisture content and melt ice chunks in stored grain.

- Batch-type dryers were used; major problems are bridging and air channeling through drier areas of grain. Watch temperatures to avoid hot spots.
- **Screenless continuous-flow dryers such as the Vertec also had some success.**
- Re-circulating batch dryers such as GT and Morige are equipped with agitators, which help prevent moist grain from bridging. Check air screens between batches for material buildup that will reduce airflow causing longer drying times.
- Cost of propane used for drying grain is reported to be 50 cents up to \$1 per bushel.

Binning grain with large amounts of ice and snow.

- Grain with high moisture content may have a tendency to freeze into a large block, or start to heat so the ice and snow should be dealt with before binning.

Safety and caution at all times.

- Grain flow must be constantly monitored to make sure the grain keeps moving to avoid combine plugging, and bridging of grain in trucks, bins, and conveying equipment.
- Safety is main issue; take care out there.

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