

Windbreaks

Strong winds can cause serious problems, whether in winter or summer. In valleys, plains, and farmland, where large expanses of crops are raised, there is little to stop or slow the wind once it begins to blow.

Wind causes serious problems for farmers. Every year, the wind carries away seven to ten millimetres of Quebec soil. The soil particles can be swept up to 4000 metres in the air and be carried hundreds of kilometres away.

High winds also cause highway accidents in the winter, turning over trucks and making drivers lose control of their cars.

But there's nothing like trees to slow the wind down.

Using trees as windbreaks offers a number of advantages:

- crop protection (especially vegetables, small fruits, orchards, and nurseries);
- protection of buildings (through energy savings);
- protection of woodlands (Christmas tree plantations, other plantations, and sugarbushes);
- conservation of sensitive soils ([organic soils \(/dictionary#organique\)](#) or [sandy soils \(/dictionary#sablonneux\)](#));
- soil conservation (stabilizing the snow cover);
- safety on main highways.

The best species for windbreaks are:



[ash](#)



[larch](#);





spruce;



pine;



poplar.

An effective windbreak shouldn't stop the wind, but only slow it. In fact, it should only reduce the wind speed by half. Small whirlwinds can result if the windbreak is too compact.

Trees also affect temperature.

