

Winter Prep: protecting outbuildings

Urban farms require sheds, barns, greenhouses, and other storage options. There simply isn't any way to contain the mission in a postage stamp of land without getting creative in how you use and store tools and supplies. Enter the out building. At Mezzacello this includes

- a rabbit warren
- a chicken and duck coop
- a shed
- a greenhouse
- a lean to greenhouse
- two lean to storage corrals
- a garage
- and the cellar.

The three most difficult challenges are organization, weatherproofing, and pest control.

Organization is really tough because one needs such a wide variety of tools and supplies and they all have different storage requirements. You start out thinking any structure will do, but there are definitely pros and cons. The type of structure, whether it has a foundation or not. The materials, access to equipment, and weatherability. Not all structures are the same. When I started building storage I didn't Realize all this. Learn from my mistakes.

My first out building technically was my garage. It was a useful space for the first year. inherited an 8'x10' shed that was full of promise EXCEPT that it has a standard 32" door. A lot of the tools I use won't fit in that door. Do the garage (same issue except the garage door makes that easier – but the garage is where the kitchen replacement cupboards and appliances live) so I built the corrals in the secured service

yard.



This is a second generation greenhouse. The first generation was destroyed in a winter windstorm in 2017. [Jim Bruner](#) | Mezzacello

The greenhouse is a fragile and semi-useful outbuilding. It will only last at max in this climate five years, so plan accordingly. Ironically, it's cheaper to buy a whole new structure than it is to buy enough PETE plastic to replace the oxidized panels. But in early late winter and all spring and summer it is useful for propagating. It is useful for storing lawn equipment as well. Leave the doors shut, or you WILL find chicken and duck nests in there. It is warm.

The service yard lean to structures are useful for storing larger equipment and securing it behind locked gates. It lets you store larger equipment but offers ZERO weather proofing.

In retrospect, if I had to do it all again, I would have built a 10x10' shed with double doors, windows, shelves and a skylight. That would have allowed me to optimize use,

organization, and weatherproofing. I guess we know what 2020's summer project is going to be.