

DECEMBER 2024

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CASS COUNTY EXPRESS

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER FOR PURDUE EXTENSION - CASS COUNTY

The Holiday Season is here! The Extension Office is looking forward to a joyful Christmas Break and a Happy New Year. This is an excellent time to reflect on 2024, while looking forward to all things Purdue Extension in 2025.

UPDATE FROM THE COUNTY EXTENSION DIRECTORS

Welcome back to the Cass County Express! Winter weather is here, and Cass County Extension is embracing the season. We have tasty recipes, Holiday Mental Health tips & tricks and some winter programming to share.

With the change of seasons come changes in life- and in the Extension office. Our ANR Educator and co-CED, Jessica Outcalt, has accepted a new position on Purdue's Campus. We are grateful to Jessica for a fantastic year of education and for bringing in our office pets! We wish Jessica the best as she takes on her new role in Purdue's Natural Resources department.

For the time being, I will be assuming all duties for the County Extension Director.

The Extension office will be closed for the holidays from December 23rd-27th, as well as New Year's Eve and New Year's Day! Here's wishing you all a Merry Christmas and Happy Holidays!

-*Claire Crum*, Cass Co. Extension Director

HEALTH AND HUMAN SCIENCES

The holidays are here, and for all the joy they may bring, they can also bring stress. In fact, about 9 in 10 Americans feel stressed or overwhelmed during the holiday season (American Psychological Association). Here are some tips for managing holiday stress:

- Communicate your plans for visiting and/or hosting in advance. Some events may overlap or create a demanding travel schedule. Be realistic with your commitments.

- Plan and stick to a budget. Expenses like food, gifts, and travel can spiral out of control without a plan in place. Do your best to maintain boundaries with your spending and don't be swayed by sales or emotions. Carrying holiday expenses into the new year will cause more stress and limit finances for weeks or months to come.

- Maintain healthy habits. Make sure you are sleeping enough and take time to relax. Eat nutritious food and avoid overeating. Make sure you are moving and getting some physical activity.

- Limit and simplify travel time. Rushing from one place to another can be exhausting and stressful. Try to reduce the number of stops in the car or take direct flights. Spending an unnecessary amount of time in travel is a recipe for stress.

- The holidays can be hard, especially when grieving. Make it a point to honor lost loved ones. It may help to find ways to acknowledge the memory of your loved one with new or existing holiday traditions. It may make you feel better to share your feelings with others.

-*Kailey Dockerty*

Sources: Mayo Clinic & UC Davis

4-H AND YOUTH DEVELOPMENT

Well, winter isn't what most people think of when we mention "4-H Season", but in Cass County, 4-H Fun never ends!

4-H Enrollment is open for youth and adult volunteers alike. There will be 4-H Volunteer Enrollment events in January, February and March, for anyone who would like a chance to complete their volunteer enrollment in-person.

Livestock Tagging dates are scheduled for the Spring. Be sure get the dates on your calendar and make plans to attend, the Extension office will not be handing out tags to 4-Hers if they miss tagging days!

Coming in January: Cass County 4-H will be hosting an entomology Spark Club, lead by Cass County resident and Purdue University Entomologist, Dayne Hill. More details will be available soon, registration for the club will be required!

- *Claire Crum*



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NUTRITION EDUCATION PROGRAM

Looking for a new recipe to for the end of summer zucchini? Below is the perfect recipe for a side dish:

Baked Zucchini Sticks:

4 medium zucchini, 2 eggs, 1/8 cup milk, 1/4 cup finely grated parmesan cheese, 1 1/2 cup bread crumbs, 1 Tablespoon dry Italian herbs

Directions: 1. Cut zucchini into long sticks, about 3 inches long. 2. Microwave zucchini for about 3 minutes. Pat zucchini sticks dry with a paper towel. 3. Mix eggs and milk together in a small bowl. Mix cheese, bread crumbs and herbs together in another small bowl. 4. Dip zucchini sticks first into the egg mixture and then into the bread crumb mixture. 5. Arrange zucchini in rows on a metal baking sheet that has been sprayed with cooking spray. Broil zucchini sticks for about 12 to 15 minutes, turning once while cooking.

Recipe from: www.foodhero.com

-Rachel Taylor

COMMUNITY WELLNESS COORDINATOR

Celebrating Farm to School Month

Farm to School Month is a national initiative that teaches the importance of supporting our local farmers and encourages healthy eating. This October, 682 students throughout 5 elementary schools learned about how farmers contribute to students' lunch trays every day. The 30 minute program included a taste test of 3 unique kinds of apples that look and taste very differently. I select apples with a variety of color and characteristics - red flesh, pear taste, traditional apple. The students watch a short video of how apples are produced, harvested and stored. This year's program was sponsored by Purdue Extension and apple varieties purchased from Doud's Orchard included Aquarius, Razor Russet and Red Moon. The students in each class vote on their favorite variety and the winning apple is displayed in their hallway.

- Krista Pullen

AGRICULTURE, NATURAL RESOURCES, AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT



Cass County hosted a Cattle Artificial Insemination workshop. The two day "AI School" was led by ABS Bovine genetics and offered hands-on experience for students to use in their own livestock production. Stony Pike livestock Auction provided the cattle and workspace, with plans to continue to class in 2025.

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CASS COUNTY 4-H NEWS

THE 2025 CASS COUNTY FAIR DATES

The 2025 Cass County Fair will take place July 5th-July 11th!

The 64th Annual fair will continue the tradition of a family friendly, exciting event, with Jepson's Midway Amusement Rides, livestock show and the best 4-H program in the State. Starting on a Saturday and ending with the Livestock Auction on a Friday, the 2025 Cass County Fair is sure to be the highlight of the summer.



FALL AWARDS IN REVIEW

Before Thanksgiving, Cass County celebrated the incredible achievements of our 4-Hers in 2024 during our 4-H Fall Awards Night. Project pins were given to 4-Her who presented outstanding 4-H projects, as well as some special awards. Some of special award winners included:

I Dare You Award: Taylor Mills & Kinsey Mennen
Brad Scott Memorial Award: Maggie Taylor
Outstanding 4-Hers: Kaylyn Zeigler & Bailey Mills

We also recognized some community partners and volunteers for their significant support of 4-H in 2024.

Outstanding 4-H Volunteer: Scott Albaugh Family
Friends of 4-H: Logansport Municipal Utilities & the Cass County Highway Department

Thank you to all of our awards sponsors who continue to support the future leaders of Cass County 4-H!

IMPORTANT DATES



Adult Volunteer Enrollment Nights in Jan., Feb., and March 2025

January 2025 A new Entomology Spark Club will be hosted for Cass County 4-Hers in Dates TBD!

January 8th Last Day to submit 4-H Camp Counselor Application

January 25th Indiana State 4-H Scholarships Due

SCHOLARSHIPS FOR SPRING

There are numerous scholarships available for 4-Hers, regardless of their plans for after High School graduation. State Scholarships are sponsored by the Indiana 4-H Association, which awarded \$176,000 in scholarship money in 2024. All state Scholarships are due on January 25th, 2025. More details are available at bit.ly/4hscholarship.

County 4-H Scholarships include the Bank Family Scholarship, the Helms Family Memorials Scholarship and the Junior Leader Scholarship. Information for these scholarships is available on the Cass County 4-H Webpage within the Member Materials page.

JUNIOR LEADERS

Junior Leader President and Vice President Maddie Sprow and Taylor Mills attended the Fairview Career Fair to share about 4-H! The Junior Leaders collected food for the Emmaus Food Pantry at the November Friendsgiving meeting. The next Junior Leader meeting is scheduled for December 7th at 5:30pm, where we will be hosting a Christmas Party, with a Secret Santa gift exchange and a Warm Clothes Drive for the Salvation Army.

