

# CASS COUNTY EXPRESS

## THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER FOR PURDUE EXTENSION - CASS COUNTY

Welcome, we're so glad you are here! Our office is eager to share some of the many accomplishments and changes we've made over the last several months, and we hope you'll stay tuned for what's to come in 2024!

### UPDATE FROM THE COUNTY EXTENSION DIRECTOR

Welcome to the Cass County Express! I have had the honor of working with the Purdue Extension - Cass County office for nearly a year. Throughout my time, one thing has been evident across the board and that is the dedication of the staff, volunteers and community members involved with Purdue Extension - Cass County.

The Extension team is looking forward to a great year through furthering relationships with community and stakeholders and enhancing programming in 2024.

- Allison Hillis, interim County Extension Director

### HEALTH AND HUMAN SCIENCES

February is American Heart Month. I am teaching Be Heart Smart at Peak Community. I'm also teaching it virtually beginning February 7. You can find details on our web or Facebook pages.

I'm also on Purdue Extension's Farm Stress Team. I will be giving a couple presentations about how to help yourself or others deal with stress. We also have a Facebook page and a podcast "Tools for Today's Farmers." If you would be interested with me sharing about our work and resources please reach out.

- Jane Horner

### 4-H AND YOUTH DEVELOPMENT

There is no better time to start as a 4-H Educator than the week before fair, and that's just what I did! Since starting in June 2023, I have enjoyed getting to work with Cass County's incredible volunteers, community partners and of course, our 4-Hers themselves.

Since completing my time as 10 Year 4-Her here in Cass County, I wanted a career as a 4-H Extension Educator. After studying Animal Science and Agricultural Sciences Education & Communication and working in the state Extension Office at Purdue University, I was able to make my dreams come true and come home to Cass County!

I am so excited for 4-H in 2024- there are so many opportunities for 4-Hers to learn, grow, serve their communities and have some fun! Keep an eye out for camps, workshops, service projects and more in 2024!

- Claire Crum



Above left: one of our lovely office staff members, Emily (not pictured, our office manager Vicky!) and apart of the office staff after rock climbing for our Fall retreat!

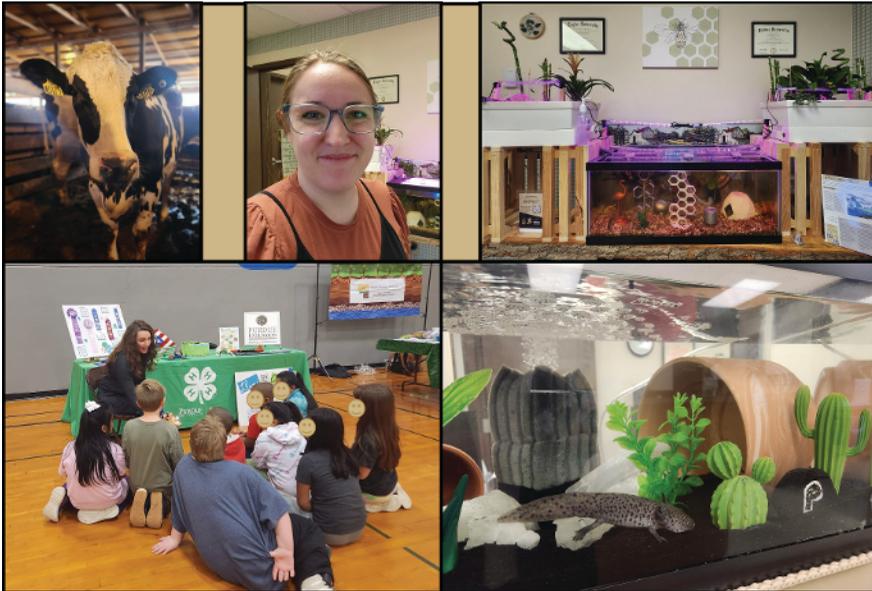
Above right: Jane Horner (HHS), Sylvia Saxena (I-HOPE), Jessica Outcalt (ANR/CD) and Krista Pullen (CWC) at a stakeholder meeting to plan programming on substance use, January 2024.



Extension - Cass County

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Clockwise from upper left: one of the cows from an Artificial Insemination workshop this past December; Jessica Outcalt, our new ANR/CD Educator; the office aquaponics set-up; Claire Crum (4-H) reaching Columbia Elementary children at a career fair; and our mascot, Hela the axolotl!

## NUTRITION EDUCATION PROGRAM

This winter I am using the CATCH curriculum to teach kids in Logansport schools about healthy eating and physical activity. They will be learning how to fashion meals after the My Plate and they will be sampling fruits and vegetables that might be new to them.

For my adult classes at the Area V Seniors Lunch and Mom's Group, I use the Eat Smart Move More curriculum to help individuals and families learn to prepare inexpensive healthy meals and help them find ways to include exercise into their daily lives. These classes have hands on meal preparation and tastings.

This spring I will be starting 2 new classes at Lewis Cass Jr. High using our Teen Cuisine curriculum. These classes build confidence in the kitchen and make learning about the My Plate fun and practical. They will learn a lot about food safety and how to choose and prepare healthy food for themselves.

- Rachel Taylor

## COMMUNITY WELLNESS COORDINATOR

In the first 6 months as a CWC, I've been working on completing a community health assessment to identify strengths, health needs, and areas for opportunity and collaboration that will assist in developing my plan of work. I've been meeting with community partners, schools and businesses to conduct interviews to gather the data for the assessment.

This summer I will be launching a new program in partnership with the the Logansport Farmers Market. Power of Produce (POP) Club is a program to encourage kids to become market participants with educational activities, demonstrations, interactions with local growers and challenges to try fresh market produce through the "Two Bite Club." I am so excited about this program and I'm looking forward to seeing kids engage at the market.

I have begun the process of forming a Health & Wellness Coalition which I hope to share more information about next quarter. Please contact me if you're interested in participating in the coalition.

- Krista Pullen

## AGRICULTURE, NATURAL RESOURCES, AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

I have been with Cass County since September 2023 - this is a dream job come true for me, and I'm so excited to be here. I have a background in biology and wildlife ecology, so if you have any interest in birds, forestry, or wildlife, please reach out!

This winter I have been busy with hosting our annual Artificial Insemination course for cattle producers, an Ag Outlook and PARP meeting, and planning future programs. If you're in need of PARP credits, reach out - I'll be teaching at an event in Royal Center on Feb 29.

I'm eager for our upcoming annual meeting (stay tuned for a Save the Date), a chance to meet all our stakeholders, and identifying needs I can help to address in Cass County.

I also maintain two aquariums within the office - swing by to meet some goldfish and catfish buddies (who hang out in my office aquaponics system) and our new arrival, an axolotl named Hela!

- Jessica Outcalt



Extension - Cass County

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# CASS COUNTY 4-H NEWS

## CHECK OUT OUR WEBPAGE

Cass County 4-H Youth Development has recently updated and modernized our county webpage! The page is your go-to source of easy, accessible information for all things 4-H in Cass County. Resources on the webpage include directions for using 4-H Online, the 2024 4-H Handbook, lease agreements for livestock, a calendar for project judging dates, scholarship information and more! The website will continue to grow and update, and you are encouraged to check in regularly as fair season approaches for more updates and announcements!

## VOLUNTEERING IN 4-H

Volunteers are the backbone of 4-H in Cass County. We are lucky to have several Club Leaders, project leaders and committee members who have been volunteering for over four decades! The volunteers of Cass County are what make the activities and opportunities for our 4-Hers possible. No prior 4-H experience is required to be a volunteer. 4-H is the place to share your skills and interests- from entomology or soil science, to history or genealogy, 4-H needs leaders with a passion for sharing *their* passion with the next generation! All adult volunteers must complete an application, include references, pass a background check and complete a 4-H Online profile, all of which are available on the website!

## ENROLLING IN 4-H

4-H Enrollment is available year round! Enroll for 4-H in 2024 now to make the most of the opportunities possible to 4-Hers in 2024. Kindergartners can enroll in the Kinder Clovers program to learn what 4-H is all about. Mini 4-H is open to first and second graders who want to further explore 4-H and take part in the Cass County Fair. Third graders and older can enroll in 4-H, and members who continue 4-H for all ten years of school receive special recognition as Tenure Members. To enroll in 4-H, visit 4-H Online to get started!



## IMPORTANT DATES



**February 26th**  
**4-H 101**  
**Session**

**February 29th**  
**Cass County**  
**Extension Annual**  
**Meeting**

**March 2nd**  
**Beef Tagging**

**March 6th**  
**4-H Photography**  
**Workshop**

**May 15th**  
**Livestock**  
**Enrollment**  
**Deadline**

## 4-H SCHOLARSHIPS

4-H Scholarships are available for 4-Hers graduating in 2024! From Indiana State 4-H Scholarships, to local scholarships, there are opportunities for 4-Hers to receive support as they pursue higher education. Deadlines for scholarships are approaching, please check the Cass County 4-H Member Materials page to view available scholarships.



## PROJECT UPDATES

There have been several project updates for 2024.

Projects with new updates include

- Lego Crafts
- Toy Farm Scene
- Dollhouse
- Dog/Cat/Rabbit Posters
- Llama/Poultry/Horse Posters
- Bake with a Mix

Please contact the Extension office with questions and check the website for more details on the project changes.

## 4-H INFORMATION SESSION

There will be a 4-H 101 Information Session on February 26th, 6:00pm at the Cass County Fairgrounds! This is for interested or new members and families, regardless of age or experience, to learn the basics of 4-H. Some questions that will be addressed include: What is 4-H? What do youth get out of 4-H? What projects are there? How does 4-H work? And more!



Extension - 4-H Youth  
Development

