

April — May 2025



Extension - Spencer County

Our Mission

We deliver practical, research-based information that enhances lives and livelihoods.

Our Vision

We will be a leader in providing relevant, high-impact educational programs that transform the lives and livelihoods of individuals and communities in Indiana and the world.

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Ag Agenda

Agriculture & Horticulture Update for the Home and Farm



Lacebug adults (Obermeyer, Purdue Entomology Extension)

Insects are Waking Up - Are you Ready?

The bitter winter cold has finally passed us (or has it? It's hard to tell in the Midwest)! The days are getting warmer and longer, and that means the insects are coming out of their overwintering stages. As you prepare for your landscaping and gardening this year, are you implementing preventative measures for pests? Now is the time to think about those strategies to minimize the damage to your plants.

Preventing pest issues is foundational to integrated pest management. The first step is always to start with healthy and clean plants. Don't be afraid to bring a hand lens to the store and check for those hard-to-see pests! You don't want to bring a problem home. Next, remember that many pests will thrive due to improper watering, light conditions, or fertilization. Avoid these issues by reviewing the recommendations for your plants and consulting a soil test.

Finally, which pests/diseases do you anticipate? What are the most common pests on the plants in your landscape? Perhaps you have had issues in past years and know what to expect. Review the biology of these pests and consider implementing preventative measures now. Let's look at a couple of examples of frequent landscape pests and some management options you can add to your list of spring preparations.

Spider mites

Spider mites overwinter on the host plant or in leaf litter. Around this time of year, cool season mites such as spruce mites and boxwood mites are the dominant issue. Check your plants now for these spider mites, and scout regularly to make sure populations aren't getting out of control. *(continued on page 2)*

Nicholas Held, Extension Educator
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Newsletter Highlights

Soil Temperature
Climatology Tool

Weed Control
Technology Survey

Purdue Commercial
AgCast Podcast

Save the Date -
Greener Pastures Field
Day



Extension - Spencer County

Insects (*cont.*)

A rainy spring will help keep the pressure low. If you have to spray, avoid chemicals that will harm natural enemies, which are vital to spider mite management. (Learn more about spider mite management:

<https://extension.entm.purdue.edu/publications/E-42/E-42.html>)

Bagworms

Bagworms overwinter as eggs in the bags left on the tree. They're frequent pests of arborvitae, junipers, and several other trees and shrubs. Take action now to prevent an infestation in the summer that requires costly pesticides. Manually remove the bags from your tree and drown them in soapy water. (Learn more about bagworm management: <https://extension.entm.purdue.edu/publications/E-27/E-27.html>)



Bagworms overwinter as eggs in their cocoon-like bags (Obermeyer, Purdue Entomology Extension)

Lace bugs

Lace bugs may overwinter as eggs or adults, depending on the species. They become active again in the spring, so now is a good time to check for these pests. Focus on the undersides of the leaves where the pests are found. Lace bugs prefer hosts planted in sunny areas with a lack of plant diversity, so consider including some flowering plants in your landscape to provide pollen and nectar to beneficials.

What pests do you encounter in the landscape? Take a moment to review their biology and your options for preventative management. Be proactive now and reduce your pest problems for the season ahead.

-Alicia Kelley, CAPS State Survey Coordinator, Purdue University

A Look at the MRCC's Soil Temperature Climatology

Spring field operations have already begun across the state, including tillage, anhydrous ammonia applications, and even some planting. Temperatures look up from here, but we cannot rule out periods of cooler conditions between now and May that could impact crop emergence. As of March 18, 2025, the 7-day average 4-inch soil temperature at the Purdue Agronomy Farm (ACRE) was 40.5°F, according to data derived from the [Purdue Mesonet Data Hub](https://mesonet.purdue.edu/). Daily soil temperature data can be accessed through the Data Hub, which can be downloaded to compute 7-day running average temperatures. A future update will allow 7-day soil temperatures to be readily accessible.

How does the current soil temperature compare to those of previous years? A collaboration between the Midwestern Regional Climate Center (MRCC) and the USDA Midwest Climate Hub has resulted in the **Soil Temperature Climatology Tool** (<https://mrcc.purdue.edu/clim/Soil-T>), which can provide that answer. This tool offers historical statistics for 4-inch soil temperatures across the North Central United States from 1991 to 2020. It supports management decisions by answering key questions such as:

- **Average Crossing Dates:** On which day of the year does a location's 7-day average soil temperature typically rise above or fall below a specific threshold, such as 50°F?
- **Early or Late Events:** What constitutes an early or late date for 7-day average soil temperatures to cross the 50°F threshold?
- **Record Dates:** What are the earliest and latest recorded dates for 7-day average soil temperatures to cross the 50°F threshold?
- **Date Distribution:** How are the dates distributed when 7-day average soil temperatures rise above 50°F?

The tool utilizes daily average 4-inch soil temperature data from the North American Regional Reanalysis (NARR), available at approximately 20-mile grid spacing from 1991 to 2020. The MRCC has recently added features to the tool, including a time series of all occurrences over the 1991-2020 period and another feature that allows users to select a date and see the historical range of temperatures on that chosen date.

To revisit the original question, the 7-day average soil temperature at ACRE on March 18, 2025, was 40.5°F. (*continued on page 3*)

Soil Temp (*cont.*)

This temperature is considered climatologically normal, as it aligns with the 1991-2020 average displayed in the Soil Temperature Climatology tool. You can verify this information by clicking on “Go to ‘Temperature by Date’ View” and selecting March 18. In comparison, the 7-day average soil temperature at a depth of 4 inches reached 60°F in 2012, while the lowest recorded temperature was 33°F in 2014. That’s quite the spread!

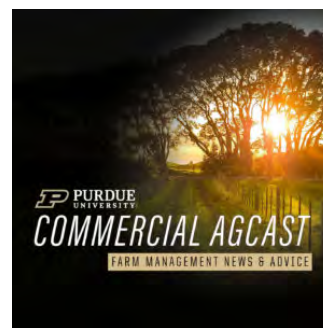
-Austin Pearson, Climatologist, *Midwestern Regional Climate Center*

The survey is voluntary and all information will be kept confidential to the extent allowed by applicable State and Federal law. No names, contact information, precise locations, or computer IP addresses will be collected. By completing the survey, you are agreeing to allow the use of your responses for research purposes.

To access the survey, please see <https://bit.ly/PUWeedTechSurvey>. It should take approximately 15 minutes to complete.

Purdue Extension Specialists Seek Producer Input on Weed Control

Dr. Tommy Butts, Clinical Assistant Professor and Extension Weed Scientist at Purdue University, along with his colleagues, are seeking producer input on crop weed management, future weed control technology (spray drones, laser weeders, live detect and remove machinery, robotics, etc.) and economics regarding current and future weed control strategies through a survey regarding these concepts. The survey includes questions detailing current weed control technologies used in field and horticultural crops, future weed control technologies, and the costs associated with such technologies.



Purdue Commercial AgCast is a monthly farm management podcast presented by the Purdue Center for Commercial Agriculture. Check out past episodes and subscribe to receive new episodes at <https://ag.purdue.edu/commercialag/home/>. Click on the “Podcast” link at the top of the page.

Save-the-Date: Greener Pastures Field Day

2025 is a *Greener Pastures* year! This collaborative effort between Purdue Extension, SWCD and NRCS in Spencer, Dubois and Perry Counties is held every 3 years and rotates between each of the three counties. This year’s program will be held in **Dubois County on August 28**. Details are being finalized, but mark your calendars!

Contact Us!

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[Purdue Extension-Spencer County](https://www.youtube.com/PurdueExtensionSpencerCounty)



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Extension

SOUTHWEST INDIANA HOMESTEADING CONFERENCE

May 17th, 2025

**Daughters of Charity St Vincent Conference Center
9200 New Harmony Rd, Evansville, IN 47720**

Pre-Conference Workshop

Food Preservation

May 16th

Noon-4pm CT

\$35 per person

Guided by experienced
instructors, you'll practice
using a pressure canner.

Whether you're a beginner or
looking to refine your skills, this
workshop will give you the
confidence to can
safely at home.

Main Conference

May 17th 8am-4pm CT \$40 per person

New This Year: Beginner and Advanced Sessions Available!

Morning Sessions - at St Vincent Conf Ctr

Beginner's Guide to Poultry, Mushroom Cultivation,
Soil Health/Nutrient Management, Foraging/Edible
Landscaping, Seed Saving, Pesticide Use, Sheep &
Goats, Pruning Fruit Trees & More!

Afternoon Sessions - At Seton Harvest (Live Demos)

Strawbale Gardening, Open Fire Cooking
Hydroponics, Poultry Processing, Beekeeping & More

MORE INFO & REGISTER HERE: <https://puext.in/SWINHC>

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THE SOIL SCOOP



Spencer County Soil and Water Conservation District

NEW CWI GRANT FOR 2025

We have been awarded a CWI grant for 2025!

This grant includes HUAPS, cover crops, internal fencing, and a watering facility.

First time grant recipients are prioritized, then it will become first come first served in application acceptance. Must follow NRCS guidelines that require a resource concern evaluation before acceptance.

Thank you for your continued interest in this conservation practice.

4H APPLICANTS NEEDED

Sign up for Soil Conservation this year and be eligible for a cash prize awarded to the Grand Champion!

SUMMER INTERN

**Summer Intern Wanted
Requirements: High School Senior / College Student
Must be in an ag related major or going into college for an ag related degree
If interested, please call the SWCD office at (812) 649-9136 ext.3**

BOARD MEETING

The Spencer Co. SWCD reminds the public that our board meetings are open to the public to attend. Our next meetings are:

**April 28th
May 26th**

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**"I FIRMLY BELIEVE
THAT NATURE
BRINGS SOLACE IN
ALL TROUBLES."**

–Anne Frank.



APRIL-MAY 2025 4-H NEWSLETTER

4-H Fair T-Shirt

Southern Indiana Power generously donates our 4-H Fair t-shirts. Please get your t-shirt size turned into your club leader ASAP or risk not getting your preferred shirt size. Southern Indiana Power has already contacted us for the t-shirt design and is waiting on us for sizes. Congratulations to Madison Sisley for winning our 4-H Fair t-shirt design this year! Could it be your shirt design chosen next year? It's never too early to start designing!

4-H Camp

4-H Camp applications are currently open for all 3rd-6th grade youth. Applications are can be filled out in 4HOnline under "Events". Payment will need to be dropped off or mailed to the Spencer County Extension Office. At the end of the registration process a message will say welcome to Vanderburgh County and send payment there, but you will send payment to our office here in Spencer County.

Camp Counselors, reminder that you have training on April 8th and May 6th as well as June 1st before camp. If you are unable to attend any of these training dates please reach out to Jennifer directly to make accommodations.

4-H Trip Award Winners

Congratulations to our 2025 4-H Trip Application Award Winners!

4-H Round Up

Amelia Scouten
Lydia Fromme
McKenna Sitzman
Joey Konerding
Miles Pund

Emma Dilger
Madison Sisley
Chase Blubaum
Joe Lasher

4-H Academy

Rachel Held
Oliver Pund

4-H Band

Quinn Keller

Animal ID Deadline

Are you exhibiting an animal at the fair? Please make sure you have everything completed for your animal that is necessary so you are able to exhibit at the county fair. Also, if you are wanting to exhibit at the Indiana State Fair, please make sure that you submit your animal DNA to the office by May 15th.

All animals must be in 4HOnline with their animal identification information by May 15th. It is a good idea to do this before May 15th because technology can sometimes be difficult and stressful. If your animal is not entered into 4HOnline you will not be able to exhibit your animal at the Spencer County 4-H Fair. Please, make sure you are asking questions and getting all the info submitted. We are at the office M-F 8:00 AM-4:00 PM. I am often here by 7:30 AM and am available by email after 4 PM.

Indiana 4-H Quality Livestock Care

In order to exhibit livestock at the county level or State Fair, you will need to take a local class on **April 14th or May 12th** from 5-6 PM with check-in beginning at 4:30. You may also continue to take YQCA online. If you take the class online you will need to email your certificate to Jennifer at allen393@purdue.edu. The in person Livestock Quality Care is at no charge and YQCA is \$13.

If you would like to take the in person Indiana 4-H Quality Livestock Care Program, you can register in 4HOnline under Events. This is mandatory for **ALL YOUTH** exhibiting livestock (except horses). You will not be able to show your animals at the Spencer County 4-H Fair if you do not complete this class.

Important 4-H Fair Info

This year the 4-H Fair dates will be June 27th-30th with fair clean-up July 1st. Project check-in will be the Monday June 23rd in the evening. As we have done in the past, if you are unable to be present on the 23rd for community judging we will work with you to have your projects judged. Fair set-up will be Saturday June 21st. It takes all families in Spencer County 4-H to get the buildings and grounds ready for the fair so please plan to attend for a few hours that morning. The 4-H Fair schedule is being finalized and will be available in April.

May 15th– Drop Add Deadline

May 15th is the deadline to drop or add any projects. 4HOnline will not let you do this through your profile so please email Jennifer at allen393@purdue.edu or Kara our new Office Administrative Assistant kdilger@purdue.edu by 4 PM May 15th to have your project dropped or added.

If you need books for projects and do not already have those they are available at the office Monday-Friday 8 AM-4 PM.

Project Requirements, Handbook, & Club Meetings

This year there were not a lot of significant changes to 4-H projects at the state level. When you received your books or registered you should have also received a print out of your project requirements. If you are missing those they can be found on our website or simply by searching “Indiana 4-H xxxproject”. That will direct you to the state 4-H website that always has the most up to date requirements. When in doubt, call the office.

The Spencer County 4-H Handbook is available on the Purdue Extension 4-H website and also our on Facebook page. Kara worked really hard to convert everything over so it could be put on Facebook. Please use this resource!

Club meeting schedules are also available on the Purdue Extension Spencer County website and our Facebook page. If you have questions about club meeting dates please contact the office and we’re happy to help you get connected!

Upcoming Dates

- April 8 & May 6 - Camp Counselor Training VU Ft. Branch
- April 14 & May 12- Quality Livestock Care 4:30 check-in 5:00 Start
- June 1- 4-H Camp Counselor Training 3 Santa Claus Camp
- June 2-4- 4-H Camp
- June 23- Project Judging
- June 27-30- 4-H Fair

HEALTH & HUMAN SCIENCES

*Bringing University information to the local level to strengthen families,
spend smart, eat right, and live well.*

Spring is Springing! Nancy Hanks School Garden in Full Swing

Students at Nancy Hanks Elementary and other schools across our county are participating in Purdue Extension's *Lettuce Eat Healthy* program. This program consists of three lessons designed to give students hands on learning experiences based on state standards related to science.

Session one is pictured below. Students in both third grade classrooms joined us outside to learn about where our food comes from and what plants need to thrive. After filling their raised garden beds with fresh soil, they worked together to plant spinach, lettuce, radishes, and onions. They have been tasked with caring for the garden from now through the end of the school year. We will return to learn about the parts of a plant in session two and have a final lesson to harvest our vegetables and enjoy their hard work in the form of a salad. We can't wait to see both our students and our gardens grow!



Megan Jaspersen
Health and Human
Sciences Educator
Purdue Extension

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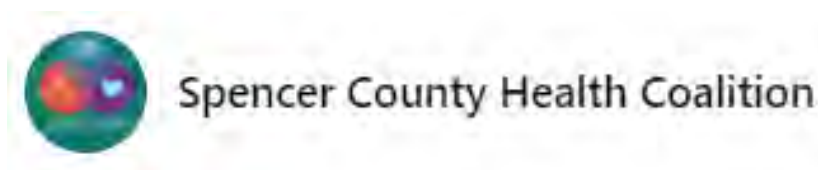
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<https://www.facebook.com/PurdueExtensionSpencerCounty>



<https://www.facebook.com/SpencerCoHealth/>

Make Plans Now to Attend the 4th Annual Mental Health Matters Awareness Walk

The Spencer County Health Coalition is partnering with the Voice, LifeSpring, and the Spencer County Community Foundation to host the fourth annual Mental Health Matters awareness walk. The walk will take place at Jim Yellig Park in Santa Claus on Saturday, April 26 from 10:00-12:00 with registration beginning at 9:30. Make plans to join us now for a fun morning that includes free food, free t-shirts to the first 125 registrants, music, and prizes. This family friendly event will feature bounce houses, face painting, balloon animals, and free activities for youth.

We have seen an increase in participation each year since the event's inception in 2022. It's a wonderful opportunity for our community to reduce stigma and show support for approximately 1/3 of our friends and neighbors who experience mental health issues. If you would like more information or if your organization would like to set up an information table at this event please call 812.449.6800 or email jkincaid@spencer.k12.in.us.



#breakthestigma

4th Annual Mental Health Matters Awareness Walk

- Giveaways/Prizes
- Free Food
- Music
- Resource Booths
- FREE Bounce House
- FREE Activity Stations
- FREE Face Painting
- FREE Balloon Animals

First 125 participants receive a FREE t-shirt!

April 26th • 10:00-12:00 CST • Jim Yellig Park

Santa Claus, Indiana

Registration begins at 9:30 am

Follow this event on Facebook: Spencer County Health Coalition

Text 812.449.6800 for more info or email

jkincaid@nspencer.k12.in.us

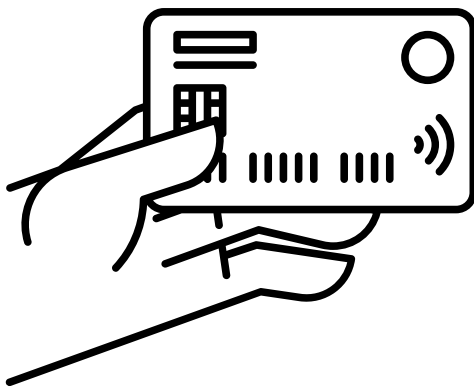
*Cancelled in the event of inclement weather



"MAKING THE HEALTHY CHOICE, THE EASY CHOICE."

ERIN MEYER, RDN - COMMUNITY WELLNESS COORDINATOR

Do I Qualify for SNAP?



To qualify for the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, applicants must meet certain non-financial and financial requirements. Non-financial requirements include state residency, citizenship/alien status, work registration and cooperation with the IMPACT (job training) program. Financial criteria include income and asset limits. The asset/resource limits are \$5,000 for most households.

Assets include bank accounts, cash, real estate, personal property, vehicles, etc. The household's home and surrounding lot, household goods and personal belongings and life insurance policies are not counted as assets in the SNAP program. All households (except those with elderly or disabled members) must pass a gross income test (130% of poverty) to qualify for SNAP benefits. The gross income is per household size and based on the gross monthly income received by all household members. For more information, please visit:
<https://www.in.gov/fssa/dfr/snap-food-assistance/do-i-qualify-for-snap/>

Food Connects Us

Food is a connecting factor for many of us. Food connects us to our cultures, our families and our friends. Sharing a meal is an opportunity to learn about its preparation, who made it and where the ingredients were sourced. What's more, health, memories, traditions, seasons and access can all impact our relationship with food.

This National Nutrition Month®, learn more about these connections and how the foods you eat impact your health throughout life.

Connect with food.

There are a variety of ways to connect with food. These include preparing your own meals and snacks and learning about how the ingredients you eat were grown or raised. Your ability to access food is also essential. Many people have a specific amount of money they're able to spend on food, which makes planning extra important when trying to eat healthfully.

Here are some tips for connecting with food:

- When purchasing food from a store, use a grocery list and pay attention to sales. When food is less processed, it's often more affordable.
- Learn about resources in your community that offer access to healthy foods, such as the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), Women Infants and Children (WIC), and food banks.
- Visit a farmers' market to ask about how your food was grown or raised, or consider starting a home or community garden to get hands-on experience with the growing process.

Whether you have a health condition that requires you to eat a certain way, or you just want to make changes to how you eat, preparing your own meals

makes it easier to control the ingredients and their amounts. It's also a chance for children and teenagers to interact with the food they eat and build healthy eating habits for life.



Explore the Connection Between Food and Culture.

Another way to connect with food includes learning about the traditions or history behind what you're eating. Whether a food is traditional or new to you, learning more about how and why it's prepared can be a valuable experience. It may help build a connection to the person that prepared it, teach about sustainability, or provide information about how it affects your health.

Build the Connection Across All Stages of Life.

While the amount of nutrients we need changes from the time we're infants until we're older adults, essential nutrients play a role across the lifecycle. For example:

- Consuming adequate calcium from a young age helps reduce the risk of osteoporosis, or weak bones, as we age.
- The B vitamin, folate (also known as folic acid), is important for metabolism and is of increased concern for anyone who may become pregnant as it can decrease certain health risks in newborns.
- While protein is often the focus of athletes, older adults also should pay extra attention to this nutrient as loss of muscle mass becomes a concern as we age.

For most people, choosing food instead of supplements is the best way to meet nutrient needs. Include fruits, vegetables, whole grains, lean protein foods and low-fat or fat-free dairy or fortified soy milk as the basis of your daily eating routine to get the nutrients you need.



Connect with a registered dietitian nutritionist (RDN).

Registered dietitian nutritionists, also known as RDNs, are food and nutrition experts who help people live healthier lives. RDNs provide medical nutrition therapy, or MNT, and can help you understand the connection between the foods you eat and your health. Make an appointment with an RDN who specializes in your specific needs to jumpstart your plan for personal wellness or ask your physician for a referral for MNT.

To find a registered dietitian nutritionist in your area and get additional food and nutrition information, visit eatright.org.



The Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics is the world's largest organization of food and nutrition professionals. The Academy is committed to improving health and advancing the profession of dietetics through research, education and advocacy.

This tip sheet is provided by:

Erin Meyer, RDN
Community Wellness Coordinator
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