

EXTENSION HIGHLIGHTS

HOMESTEADING CONFERENCE

**Providing practical skills
to transform lives**

Extension Hosted Its First Homesteading Conference in Northeast Indiana

Rooted and Resilient, hosted by Purdue Extension took place in November. It offered diverse workshops and activities focusing on sustainable living, gardening, animal husbandry, and practical skills like pressure canning, beekeeping, and chainsaw safety.

Family-friendly sessions, called Kidsteader activities, complemented technical sessions led by experts. Networking opportunities and community-building were emphasized through lunches and collaborative discussions. This engaging event aimed to equip participants with knowledge and skills for resilient, sustainable homesteading.



39

BREAKOUT SESSIONS

helped attendees learn about specific areas of interest and develop more in-depth skills with topics including pressure canning, backyard poultry production, berry production, and poultry processing.



Top left: participants practice cutting chicken for canning; top right: Arthur Franke of USDA-NRCS discusses hay quality
Bottom: Duane McCoy of Indiana DNR demonstrates how to safely fell a tree.

EXTENSION HIGHLIGHTS

HOMESTEADING CONFERENCE

Growth, Connection, and Transformation

The Conference inspired attendees with its engaging, hands-on approach to sustainable living. Over 90% of participants planned to implement newfound knowledge, ranging from poultry processing and soil health to beekeeping and food preservation.

The event wasn't just educational—it was empowering. Attendees learned how to grow thriving gardens, care for livestock, use chainsaws safely, and master essential homesteading skills, gaining the confidence to embrace self-sufficiency.

The conference also created an invaluable sense of community. Networking opportunities connected individuals passionate about homesteading and sustainability, fostering collaboration and idea-sharing.

Expert presenters delivered actionable insights through diverse workshops, sparking creativity and providing practical solutions for challenges in agriculture, food systems, and resource management.

Attendees enjoyed the comprehensive range of topics. Many felt motivated to explore new ventures. The hands-on activities, interactive sessions, and practical takeaways left participants inspired to apply these skills in their homesteading journeys. This conference wasn't just an event; it was a catalyst for *growth, connection, and transformation in sustainable living*.



96%

PLAN TO APPLY SKILLS

An overwhelming majority of participants plan to apply one or more of the skills they learned from the conference to their homesteading endeavor in the coming year.

EACH CLASS
BROUGHT ESSENTIAL
PARTS OF THAT
TOPIC BACK INTO
FOCUS FOR ME.
- ATTENDEE

Rooted and Resilient Team:

Tami Mosier, 4-H Youth Development, Steuben
Elysia Rodgers, Agriculture & Natural Resources, DeKalb
Abigail Creigh, Health and Human Sciences, Noble
Cora Hill, Horticulture & Urban Ag, Allen
Molly Hoag, Health and Human Sciences, Wells
Kathryn Jennings, Agriculture & Natural Resources, Elkhart
Robby Kelly, 4-H Youth Development, Elkhart
Ann Kline, Agriculture & Natural Resources, Noble
Amy Rumschlag, 4-H Youth Development, Adams
Geoff Schortgen, Agriculture & Natural Resources, Wabash

Top: participants practice butchering chickens
Bottom: youth participants eat butter they learned to make during *Kidsteading*.