

Extension Edge

An educational publication of Purdue Extension—DeKalb County



P PURDUE
UNIVERSITY

Image by M. Harris from Pixabay

March 2026

BIRDING IN NORTHEAST INDIANA:

MARCH & APRIL MIGRATION HIGHLIGHTS

Spring is one of the most exciting times of year for bird watchers in Northeast Indiana. As the days lengthen and weather warms, migratory birds begin their journey north — often passing right through our backyards, woods, lakes, and wetlands. Whether you're a seasoned birder or a curious beginner, March and April offer plenty of opportunities to spot spring arrivals and enjoy the rhythms of nature.

What Birds to Look For

In early spring you'll start noticing both resident and migrating species:

Waterfowl & Early Migrants — Ducks, geese, and red-winged blackbirds begin claiming territory and resting in marshes and lakes across the region. March is a great time to scan ponds and water edges for Mallards, Blue-winged Teal, and other dabbling ducks as they move north.

Songbirds Arriving — Eastern Phoebes, Tree Swallows, and Eastern Bluebirds often return by March or early April, filling the air with familiar spring calls.

Raptors & Woodpeckers — Watch the skies for migrating hawks like Red-tailed Hawks and smaller falcons. By mid-April, woodpecker species such as Northern Flickers and Yellow-bellied Sapsuckers are moving through too.

Warblers & Flycatchers — As temperatures warm and trees leaf out later in April, warblers and other neotropical migrants begin to arrive, offering bright flashes of color in woodlands and forest edges.

Where to See Birds in Northeast Indiana

Northeast Indiana may not have a single “mega hotspot” like some Great Lakes shorelines, but it offers several excellent birding areas:

Pigeon River Fish & Wildlife Area — A birder favorite with woodland

warblers, waterfowl, and even owls. Trails and lakes around Nasby Dam and Deep Lake offer diverse habitat and great viewing.

Chain O'Lakes State Park — Thirteen lakes mean lots of opportunities to scan water and shorelines for migratory ducks and early shorebirds.

Local lakes, wetlands, and roadside ditches — In March, leaves are still sparse and open views make it easier to spot warblers, sparrows, and flycatchers moving through.

Best Times & Tips for Birding

Go early morning — Birds are most active at dawn and early morning, especially during migration, as they feed after overnight flights.

Bring optics — A good pair of binoculars (or a spotting scope if you have one) helps you pick out waterfowl and distant flocks.

Use field guides or apps — Tools like Merlin Bird ID or eBird can help you identify species by sight and sound and track recent sightings in our area.

Watch wind direction — On warm days with south winds, migrants often push north in greater numbers — a great time to be out watching the skies.

Make Every Birding Moment Count

Spring migration is dynamic — one week in March may bring lingering winter sparrows and geese, while by late April you'll hear warblers singing and see swallows skim the water. Getting out regularly not only boosts your bird list but connects you with the changing seasons and the natural rhythms of our region.



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Spring Reset —

How a 10-Minute Nature Break Boosts Mental Health

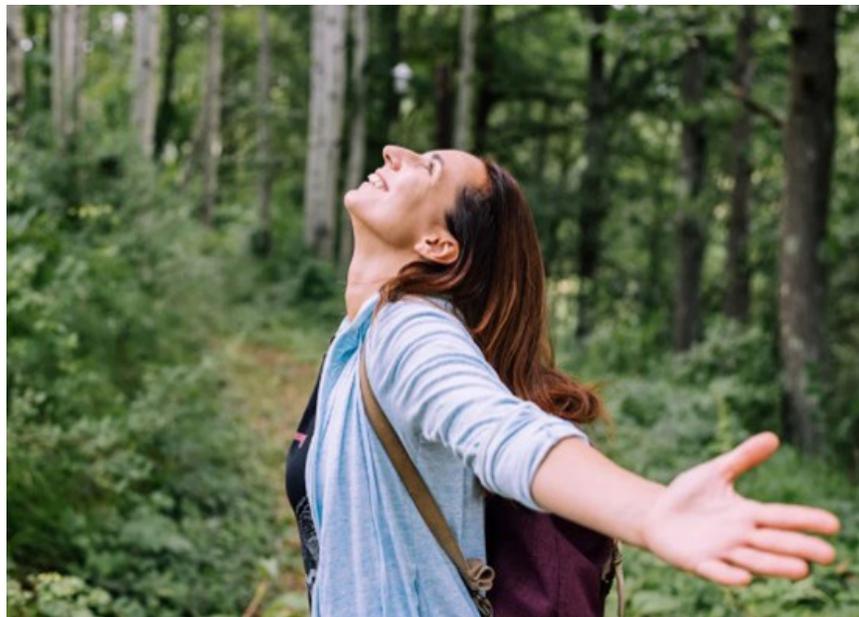
Spring arrives with a quiet invitation: step outside, breathe deeper, and let your senses reset. After months of cold weather, reduced daylight, and more time indoors, our brains are primed for even small bursts of outdoor exposure. Just ten minutes in nature—whether it’s your porch, backyard, a gravel lane, or a walk around the block—can noticeably improve mental well-being.

Studies show that short outdoor breaks lower cortisol, reduce racing thoughts, and increase positive emotions. Spring sunlight also boosts serotonin, which supports energy, motivation, and emotional balance. Even brief contact with nature helps the nervous system shift from “fight-or-flight” into a calmer, more grounded state.

The best part? You don’t need special equipment, free weekends, or a scenic hiking trail. Spring’s natural cues—birdsong, emerging flowers, warmer breezes—provide sensory anchors that gently pull us back into the present moment. And the more consistently we take these small breaks, the more resilient our brains become.

Try This: 10-Minute Reset Ideas for Busy Days

- **The 5-Senses Check:** Name one thing you can see, hear, smell, touch, and taste. It quickly quiets mental chatter.
- **Sunlight Sip:** Drink your morning coffee or water outside, letting your eyes take in natural light.
- **Slow Micro-Walk:** Walk to the mailbox, around the barn, or to the end of the driveway—slowly and intentionally.
- **Grounding Pause:** Stand still and feel your feet on grass, gravel, or a wooden porch.
- **Nature Breathing:** Inhale and think, “Arriving.” Exhale and think, “Here.”
- **Mini-Moment Hunt:** Look for three signs of spring—buds, birds, colors, or cloud shapes.



- **Outdoor Stretch:** Two minutes of gentle shoulder rolls or neck stretches outdoors feels surprisingly restorative.

These small rituals aren’t about productivity. They’re about giving your brain a chance to breathe, soften, and reset. Spring makes this easier than any other season—take advantage of the natural shift around you.

References

Bratman, G. N., et al. (2019). Nature and mental health: An ecosystem service perspective. *Science Advances*, 5(7), eaax0903. <https://doi.org/10.1126/sciadv.aax0903>

Rogerson, M., & Barton, J. (2015). Effects of short-term nature exposure on mental well-being. *Journal of Environmental Psychology*, 43, 194–199. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jenvp.2015.06.008>



GROUNDING IN THE GARDEN

Why Digging in the Dirt Is Good for Your Brain

As gardens begin to wake up, spring offers a surprising mental health booster: dirt. Digging, planting, and touching soil activate a combination of movement, sensory input, and calming rhythms that support emotional well-being. There's even evidence that certain soil microbes may naturally boost serotonin, helping improve mood and reduce anxiety.

Gardening also provides gentle physical activity that reduces stress hormones and supports relaxation. The repetitive motions—raking, pulling weeds, watering—act like a form of mindful movement. Add in the sensory-rich environment of spring (warm sun, fresh smells, new

growth), and you have a natural, restorative mental health tool right outside your door.

You don't need a full garden to benefit. Even planting herbs in a pot, prepping a flower bed, or turning a small patch of soil can help your brain slow down and reconnect with the present. These moments create a sense of accomplishment and hope—something small growing under your care.

Try This: 5-Minute Garden Grounding

- Put your hands in soil and notice the temperature and texture.
- Take three slow breaths while observing something growing.

- Plant one small item—an herb, seed, or flower.

Your garden doesn't have to be perfect. It just has to be touched.

References

- Lowry, C. A., et al. (2007). *Identification of an immune-responsive serotonin-like system in M. vaccae*. *Neuroscience*, 146(2), 756–767. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.neuroscience.2007.01.052>
- Van Den Berg, A. E., & Custers, M. H. (2011). *Gardening promotes neuroendocrine and affective restoration from stress*. *Journal of Health Psychology*, 16(1), 3–11. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1359105310365577>

Micro-Joy –

The Mental Health Power of Small Spring Moments

Spring is full of tiny, unexpected moments that can brighten a day—a warm patch of sunlight, the first daffodil, the sound of birds in the morning, or a soft breeze through an open window. These small sparks of delight are called micro-joys, and they play a powerful role in mental well-being.

Micro-joys are brief, positive moments that give the brain a quick emotional lift. They're not big accomplishments or major life events; they're the tiny flashes of “oh, that feels good” that often go unnoticed. Research shows that regularly noticing small, positive moments increases resilience, improves mood, and helps people handle stress more effectively.

Spring is the perfect season to practice this skill. Nature offers built-in micro-joys everywhere—from fresh colors and new growth to longer days and warmer light. These small moments act like mental “pressure valves,” releasing stress and helping the nervous system reset.

Try This: A Spring Micro-Joy Scavenger Hunt

- First bird you hear in the morning
- Something in a new color
- A warm sunbeam on your face
- Something growing
- A moment of silence
- A scent that reminds you of spring

Micro-joy isn't about chasing happiness—it's about noticing it when it quietly appears.

References

- Fredrickson, B. L. (2013). Positive emotions broaden and build. *Advances in Experimental Social Psychology*, 47, 1–53. <https://doi.org/10.1016/B978-0-12-407236-7.00001-2>
- Quoidbach, J., et al. (2015). Positive emotion regulation and well-being. *Current Opinion in Psychology*, 3, 20–25. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.copsyc.2015.02.003>

Spring Forward

**HONORING THE PAST,
INSPIRING THE FUTURE**

JOIN US: WEDNESDAY, APRIL 1

FORT WAYNE SPRING DISTRICT MEETING
REGISTRATION: 9:15AM - LIGHT BREAKFAST
(COUNTY PRESIDENTS WILL MEET AT THIS TIME)

MEETING: 10:00AM

LOCATION: WELLS COUNTY 4-H CENTER
1240 4-H PARK RD, BLUFFTON IN, 46714
260-824-6412

**MEMBERS ARE ASKED TO BRING ITEMS
FOR THE SILENT AUCTION**

**PROGRAM: WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE
REENACTMENT**

COST: \$17 A PERSON

Menu for Lunch:

****Please note on the reservation form if
anyone has a dietary restriction.**

**Drinks & Desserts
Dinner Roll
Green Beans
Mash Potatoes & Gravy
Meatloaf**

Mail no later than March 14, 2026 with your \$17.00 check
made payable to DeKalb County Extension Homemakers.
Please include Phone number.

Mail to Sue Carpenter, 2112 Shady Lane, Garrett, IN 46738

Dekalb County
Extension Homemakers

Game Night

MARCH 25TH Join us for a night full of fun, laughter, & friendly competition!
6:00PM

Exhibit Hall
708 S. Union St.
Auburn, IN 46706

BRING YOUR FAVORITE GAME & SNACK TO SHARE!!

ALL ARE WELCOME!

Kindness

DROP A STONE INTO THE WATER
IN A MOMENT IT IS GONE
BUT THERE ARE A HUNDRED RIPPLES
CIRCLING ON AND ON AND ON.

SAY AN UNKIND WORD THIS MOMENT
IN A MOMENT IT IS GONE
BUT THERE ARE A HUNDRED RIPPLES
CIRCLING ON AND ON AND ON.

SAY A WORD OF CHEER AND SPLENDOR
IN A MOMENT IT IS GONE
BUT THERE ARE A HUNDRED RIPPLES
CIRCLING ON AND ON AND ON.

NOTES OF POSITIVITY:

Musical Wellness

HOW TO INCORPORATE MUSIC INTO DAILY LIFE TO REDUCE STRESS & ANXIETY

WEDNESDAY | MARCH 18TH | 2:00PM

**DEKALB COUNTY OFFICE BUILDING BASEMENT
215 E. 9TH ST.
AUBURN, IN**

RSVP by Monday, March 16th to:
Sarah LeCount
(260) 499-0848
arnettsm789@gmail.com

Presented by: Dekalb County Extension Homemakers

Important Dates to Remember:

- MAR 1st-** Ruth B. Sayre Scholarship due to Office; Volunteer Hours due to County President; Club Officers due to Office
- MAR 10th-** Sew Day 9am-3pm
- MAR 11th-** Council Meeting 6pm, Miller's Merry Manor- Garrett
- MAR 18th-** Musical Wellnes 2pm
- MAR 25th-** Game Night 6pm
- MAR 31st-** Due to office: New Members, 25 & 50 year members, Outstanding Homemaker Nomination Forms
- APR 1st-** Spring District Meeting, Wells Co.
- APR 14th-** Sew Day 9am-3pm
- MAY 1st-** County dues turned into Treasurer

DEKALB COUNTY EXTENSION HOMEMAKERS

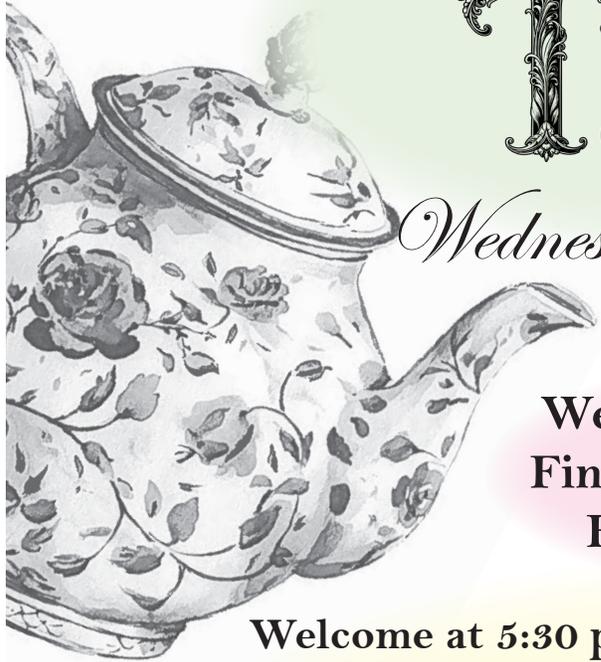
Achievement Night

Tea Party

Wednesday, May 6, 2026

at The Exhibit Hall

**Wear Your Tea Party
Finery and Bring Your
Favorite Tea Cup**



Welcome at 5:30 p.m.

Culture Arts Check in is at 5:00 to 5:45.

Voting until 7 p.m.

Cultural Arts: Projects of any type in any medium.

State Project: Hand/Home-made book or toy for children of any age Maximum of 18"x18"x18" or smaller of any medium.

Dutch Heritage is catering

Cost: Members \$17.00

Non Member \$22.00

Please RSVP

RSVP By Wednesday, April 22, 2026

Name: _____ \$ _____

Guest: _____ \$ _____

Club: _____

Total number of people _____

Please mail reservation and check to Sue Carpenter, Treasurer
2112 Shady Lane • Garrett, IN 46738

Hello Ladies,

I hope everyone is doing well after the cold winter season. I am sure everyone is ready for it to be over. Spring is just around the corner. I am ready for all the spring flowers to bloom and for the birds to return.

We have quite a few programs happening in the next months. Starting off with the Spring District Meeting in Bluffton on April 1st. Then on April 11th you can go check out the Spring Fling. I hear they have an interesting program for the day. On May 6th join us for Achievement Night. Also check the program book for all the other upcoming events.

Thank you to Linda Carunchia for stepping up to be the District Representative for the next two years. I am sure all of us and the surrounding counties appreciate everything you do for the Homemakers.

See you soon,
DeKalb County
Homemaker President,
Michelle VanWye



DeKalb County Extension Homemakers Annual

Spring Fling

Come Flutter with Us

Saturday April 11, 2026

9 a.m. to 2 p.m.

\$10.00 per person lunch provided
Exhibit Hall - 708 S. Union Street - Auburn, IN

Schedule

9 a.m.	Registration, Light Refreshment
9:30 a.m.	Mixer Game
10-11 a.m.	Craft Coaster
11 a.m.-12 p.m.	"Butterfly Favorite Flower" Presented by Marsha Weller - Master Gardener
12-12:45 p.m.	Lunch
12:45 p.m.	Butterfly Craft

RSVP with payment send to Sue Carpenter
by April 2nd.
2112 Shady Lane - Garrett - 46738

Agriculture & Natural Resources

PLAN YOUR GARDEN

John Woodmansee

Spring may seem a long way off, but if you are excited for spring gardening, why not start planning now? Serious gardeners have been formulating their plans all winter long. Whether you fancy yourself growing vegetables or flowers, here are a few tips to get you started.

First of all, if you have never done a soil test on your garden plot, do one this year. Many people guess the type of fertilizers and amendments their vegetables or flowers need, when you could do a little more fine-tuning using the recommendations of a soil test. You'll learn the pH of your soil (acidity or alkalinity), and what your primary nutrient levels are. Most garden plants like a pH range of about 6.0 to 7.0, or slightly acid. 7.0 is neutral.

Second, you need to decide what to grow. If you are planning a vegetable garden, this starts with the vegetables you and your family like to eat. Then, you may consider things such as the size of the garden plot and how much time you and your family members are willing to commit to this project. You may want to start small, experience success, then work up.

If you shop for vegetable seeds in catalogues or online, you may be seeing a lot of "sold out" notices. This is due to several factors, including a surge in demand, delays in packaging, and other COVID-related factors. Start with your local stores this year, explore some smaller companies, and look for seed swaps or seed exchanges.

Your garden location should be in full sun or nearly full sun, well-drained, with a water source nearby. Avoid locations near walnut trees, as walnuts produce a substance called "juglone" that causes many garden plants to wilt and die.

Using the plants you wish to grow, prepare a garden layout on paper. Taller vegetable plants should be positioned toward the north of the garden to prevent shading. Perennial plants, like asparagus, should be in an area best suited to growing that crop year after year. Additionally, group cool season crops together, and consider subsequent plantings of warmer season crops. Some early harvested warm season crops can be followed by a late summer planting of cool season crops for fall harvest. Also consider staggered planting dates to spread out harvest. Consult Purdue Extension publications for suggested planting dates and plant spacings.

When planning flower plantings, consider successive bloom times. If

the bed is only visible from one side (e.g. it's against a structure), position taller flowers toward the back of the bed. If the bed is visible all around (an "island" in your landscape), put taller plants in the center. Also consider color – what colors do you like best, and what colors "go together" in your mind? Clustered plantings of flowers tend to make a better impression than single or sparse plantings. Foliage texture can also add interesting features, especially in shady areas where many showy flowers may not perform well.

When weather warms up, make sure your soil is dry enough to work into a granular soil structure. If you work the soil too wet, it will tend to slab over, compact, and provide an environment unfriendly to roots. Also consider minimum-till or no-till options.

If you plan to plant frost-tender plants, wait until the danger of the last frost is past. This is usually around Mother's Day in northern Indiana, but can be earlier or later depending on the year. Recent weather data from the Indiana State Climate Office states that the average date of the last 32-degree frost in Whitley County is April 22-28. Remember – an average date is not a guarantee. This is Indiana, after all.

During the growing season, we begin to deal with weeds, insect pests and plant diseases. This is the period of time many tend to lose enthusiasm for gardening. Contact the Purdue Extension office about pests you don't understand. Purdue plant doctor apps (tomato, annual, perennial) may also prove useful. Stay vigilant and you will reap a harvest soon.

Lastly, Purdue Extension has resources to help you. Search for publications on the types of plants you plan to raise at Purdue Extension's Education Store, at www.edustore.purdue.edu. For vegetable gardens, start with HO-32-W, "Home Gardener's Guide." For flower growers, find "Growing Annual Flowers," and "Growing Perennial Flowers." Find Indiana State Climate office information at: <https://ag.purdue.edu/indiana-state-climate/>.



UPCOMING EVENTS AG IMPORTANT DATES 2026

MARCH 12	Fruit Pruning Workshop at Purdue Meig's Farm-1 to 4:30 PM (See Page 9)
MARCH 21	Internal Parasites of Sheep and Goats Workshop at Elkhart County Fairgrounds (17746-D County Rd 34, Goshen, IN 46528) - 10 AM to 2 PM (See Page 9)
MAY 6 & 7	Composting workshops (See Page 11)
MAY 9	Master Gardener Plant Sale-7:30 to 10 AM, Exhibit Hall-DeKalb County Fairgrounds (See Page 11)

INTERNAL PARASITE MANAGEMENT

SHEEP & GOATS



DATE: SAT MARCH 21ST 2026

TIME: 10AM-2PM

LOCATION: 17746 COUNTY RD
34 GOSHEN, IN - BEEF/DAIRY
ARENA

COST: \$30/PERSON (COVERS COST OF
FAMACHA CARD)

REGISTRATION: CONTACT KATHRYN
JENNINGS
(574)533-0554
JENNIN30@PURDUE.EDU

If you have any special dietary needs, please contact Brandy Cavanagh at (574) 533-0554, bcavanag@purdue.edu two weeks in advance.

weeks in advance.

If you are in need of accommodations to attend this program, please contact Brandy at (574) 533-0554

jennin30@purdue.edu two weeks in advance.

If you need an interpreter or translator, please contact Kathryn (574) 533-0554, jennin30@purdue.edu two weeks in advance.

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Extension - Elkhart County

FRUIT PRUNING WORKSHOP

GRAPES - FRUIT TREES - BRAMBLES

MARCH 12TH • 1:00-4:30 P.M. (EST)
WEATHER DATE: MARCH 18TH • 1:00-4:30 P.M. (EST)



\$10 PAYABLE AT THE DOOR
LIGHT REFRESHMENTS PROVIDED

Time/Schedule: EST

- 12:30-1:00 Registration
- 1:00-1:05 Introductions
- 1:05-1:25 Pruner Cleaning Demo
- 1:25-1:40 People Mover Loading
- 1:40-2:20 Station 1
- 2:30-3:10 Station 2
- 3:20-4:00 Station 3
- 4:10 Return
- 4:10-4:15 Evaluations
- 4:15-4:30 Door Prizes



PLEASE REGISTER BY MARCH
9TH, 2026

<https://tinyurl.com/yeytefev>

MEIG'S
HORTICULTURE
RESEARCH FARM
9101 SOUTH 100 EAST,
LAFAYETTE, IN 47909

FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION,
CONTACT:

SUMMER BRINKMAN,
BROW1744@PURDUE.EDU OR 219-270-7857

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Reasonable Accommodation Statement: If you are in need of accommodations to attend this program, please contact Summer Brinkman prior to the meeting at 219-270-7857 or brow1744@purdue.edu by 3/9/26.

Language Access Statement: If you need an interpreter or translator, please contact Summer Brinkman prior to the meeting at 219-270-7857 or brow1744@purdue.edu by 3/9/2026.

SUPPORT PURDUE EXTENSION DEKALB COUNTY ON PURDUE DAY OF GIVING - APRIL 29, 2026

On April 29, 2026, Boilermakers everywhere will come together for Purdue Day of Giving—a 24-hour opportunity to support the Purdue programs that make a difference in our local communities.

This year, we invite you to consider supporting Purdue Extension DeKalb County.

Gifts made during Purdue Day of Giving directly strengthen local Extension efforts, including:

- ▶ 4-H Youth Development Programs
 - Support for 2026 4-H Alaska Trip
- ▶ Agriculture and Natural Resources Education
- ▶ Health and Wellness Initiatives



Every \$10 donation helps us continue delivering research-based education, hands-on learning opportunities, and practical resources that benefit DeKalb County residents of all ages.

Even more exciting — participation matters! Many bonus funds and matching opportunities are awarded based on the number of donors, meaning every single gift makes an impact, no matter the size.

Mark your calendar for April 29 and consider making a gift to support Extension programming right here in DeKalb County. Together, we can continue building strong youth, strong farms, and strong communities. Online donations can be sent through a link that will be available closer to April 29.

Thank you for supporting local impact through Purdue Extension!

PLEASE FILL OUT THIS LOWER PORTION AND RETURN TO THE DEKALB COUNTY EXTENSION OFFICE WITH YOUR \$10 INCREMENT DONATION TO THE 2026 PURDUE DAY OF GIVING!

Name	
Address	
Phone Number:	
Email:	
Amount:	

Please send payment with form back to

Purdue Extension-DeKalb County
 215 E 9th Street, Ste 300
 Auburn, IN 467806



Extension - DeKalb County

OFFICE USE ONLY	
Date Received	Amount: Cash Check

Stay Safe – and Well – on the Farm This Spring

From Corteva Agriscience

Spring brings long days in the tractor cab, constant weather checks, and big decisions that will shape the entire growing season. The pressure to prepare fields, plant, and spray can make the pace feel relentless. But in the rush of spring work, protecting your physical health and mental well-being is just as important as protecting your crop.

Start with safe equipment.

Before heading to the field or road, conduct a thorough equipment inspection. Check safety guards, lights, and Slow Moving Vehicle (SMV) signs. Make sure all PTO units are properly shielded and equipment is folded into transport position. Keep goggles, gloves, tools, and plenty of water in the cab. A few extra minutes spent checking equipment can prevent injuries and reduce stress later.

Share the road responsibly.

Spring is one of the busiest seasons for farm equipment on public roads. Ensure all lighting works properly, SMV signs are visible, and turn signals are used consistently. Know the height and width of your equipment to avoid hazards like overhead lines and bridges. Following traffic laws and staying alert helps ensure that you — and everyone else — make it home safely.

Handle chemicals with care.

Always read and follow the product label. Inspect protective gear before the season begins and replace worn gloves or goggles. Wear recommended protective clothing, including chemical-resistant gloves, long sleeves, long pants, and appropriate respiratory protection. Mix products carefully in well-ventilated areas and avoid rushing. Taking your time protects both your health and the effectiveness of your application.

Prioritize your health.

Farmers are often quick to put the farm first — but your health is foundational to everything else. Fatigue, dehydration, and

poor nutrition increase the risk of accidents and decision-making errors. Schedule breaks, drink water, eat balanced meals, and aim for adequate sleep. Protect yourself from the sun with hats, sunglasses, and sunscreen with UVA and UVB protection.

Just as important is your mental health. Spring stress is real. While some stress sharpens focus, too much can take a toll. Pay attention to signs of burnout, irritability, or exhaustion. A quick call or text to a neighbor, friend, or family member can ease isolation. Staying connected reminds us we are not carrying the season alone.

Communicate clearly.

Post daily field schedules, including field addresses and emergency contact information. Make sure everyone working can reach each other in case of breakdowns or emergencies. Clear communication reduces uncertainty and helps everyone feel safer and more supported.

A successful spring isn't just measured in acres planted — it's measured in farmers and farm families who stay safe, healthy, and connected throughout the season.



2026 COMPOSTING WORKSHOPS
SAVE THE DATE!

Identical workshops, two dates - choose the location most convenient to you!

Wednesday, May 6th 6:00 PM - 7:00 PM DeKalb County Rieke Park Lodge 1600 N. Indiana Ave. Auburn, IN 46706	Thursday, May 7th 6:00 PM - 7:00 PM Steuben County Carnegie Public Library 322 S. Wayne St. Angola, IN 46703
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DeKalb County SOIL & WATER Conservation District | SOIL GUARDIANS | DeKalb County Soil & Water Conservation District



SAVE THE DATE!
MAY 9, 2026
DeKalb County
MASTER GARDENER PLANT SALE!

Exhibit Hall
708 S Union Street, Auburn, IN
7:30 - 10 AM

AIR RIFLE & ARCHERY

UPCOMING DATES

Pistol/Rifle disciplines are always on Thursday nights. Archery disciplines are always on Tuesday nights. All classes take place at the Exhibit Hall with the exception of .22 Rifle (advanced students) which takes place at the Auburn Conservation Club.

Advanced Air Rifle will begin March 19. Also runs for 8 weeks, same time, same location. Completion of the Beginner course (in the same or a previous year) is a prerequisite to the Advanced course. Cost is \$25. All equipment/materials are provided.

.22 Rifle runs after the Advanced course, typically mid-May through June, at the Conservation Club. Completion of at least 1 year of the Advanced course is required before participation in .22 Rifle (can be done in the same year). Cost is \$25. All equipment/materials are provided but students may utilize their own rifle/equipment, upon instructor approval.

Archery is divided into levels 1, 2, and 3. The beginner course is Level 1 and it will start in January, roughly commensurate with Air Rifle. **Level 2 will start March 17**, roughly commensurate with

Advanced Air Rifle. Level 3 is taking place right now. Advancement is at instructor discretion. The course is based on the NASP program and all equipment is provided at the Level 1 course. Cost is \$25. As students advance, utilization of their own equipment is permitted, at the instructor's discretion.

Note class/course cost. Households can receive a discount (\$5 for each additional child) but they must make the request at sign-in, the instructors will not automatically know.

Information is primarily disseminated through email--to receive the emails, members must be on the Shooting Sports Club enrollment list. Most information is then also posted to our Facebook page. Individual courses might establish their own text/messaging setup that is specific to that course for purposes of cancellations, etc.

If you have any questions, contact us through email (dekalb.shootingsports@gmail.com) or the FB page (<https://www.facebook.com/DeKalbShootingSports>).

NE-IN 4-H
CAMP
6.3.26 - 6.5.26

PURDUE UNIVERSITY IS AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY / EQUAL ACCESS UNIVERSITY.

The graphic features the text 'NE-IN 4-H CAMP' and the dates '6.3.26 - 6.5.26' in large, outlined green letters. Below the text are several Polaroid-style photos showing various camp activities: a group of people at a table, a person working at a computer, a group of people in a field, a person on a horse, and a person on a water slide. At the bottom, it reads 'PURDUE UNIVERSITY IS AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY / EQUAL ACCESS UNIVERSITY.'





DEKALB COUNTY 4-H
Beef

2026 Important Dates:

___ MAR 23	QLC—10 am, Exhibit Hall Must Pre-register
___ APR 12	Beef/Dairy Beef ID (Steer/Beef Heifer) 2-4 pm, Beef Barn
___ MAY 15	<u>4HOnline</u> entry for Beef Steers, Registered and Unregistered Heifers
___ MAY 16	QLC—9 am, Exhibit Hall Must Pre-register
___ AUG 1	QLC—10 am, Exhibit Hall Must Pre-register
___ SEP 8	<u>4HOnline</u> entry for Beef Prospects <u>FairEntry</u> - Make Class Selections for Fall Fair
___ SEP 8	Worksheets Due in Extension Office QLC/YQCA Due

**WORKSHOP DATES
TO BE ANNOUNCED**

*State Fair Deadlines: www.indianastatefair.com



Extension - 4-H Youth
Development

215 E. 9th St. - Ste. 300 • Auburn, IN 46706 • (260) 925-2562



DEKALB COUNTY 4-H
DAIRY BEEF

2026 Important Dates:

___ MAR 23	QLC—10 am, Exhibit Hall Must Pre-register
___ APR 12	Beef/Dairy Beef ID (Steer/Beef Heifer) 2-4 pm, Beef Barn
___ MAY 15	<u>4HOnline</u> entry for Dairy Beef Steers
___ MAY 16	QLC—9 am, Exhibit Hall Must Pre-register
___ MAY 30	Dairy Beef Feeder ID 8-11 am, Fairgrounds
___ JUL 1	<u>4HOnline</u> entry for Dairy Beef Feeders
___ AUG 1	QLC—10 am, Exhibit Hall Must Pre-register
___ SEP 8	<u>FairEntry</u> - Make Class Selections for Fall Fair
___ SEP 8	Worksheets Due in Extension Office QLC/YQCA Due

**WORKSHOP DATES
TO BE ANNOUNCED**

*State Fair Deadlines: www.indianastatefair.com



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Development

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DEKALB COUNTY 4-H
DAIRY

2026 Important Dates:

___ MAR 23	QLC—10 am, Exhibit Hall Must Pre-register
___ MAY 16	QLC—9 am, Exhibit Hall Must Pre-register
___ JUL 1	<u>4HOnline</u> entry for Dairy
___ AUG 1	QLC—10 am, Exhibit Hall Must Pre-register
___ SEP 8	<u>FairEntry</u> - Make Class Selections for Fall Fair
___ SEP 8	Worksheets Due in Extension Office QLC/YQCA Due

**WORKSHOP DATES
TO BE ANNOUNCED**

*State Fair Deadlines: www.indianastatefair.com



Extension - 4-H Youth
Development

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4-H/Youth Development



DEKALB COUNTY 4-H Swine

2026 Important Dates:

___	MAR 23	QLC—10 am, Exhibit Hall Must Pre-register
___	MAY 16	QLC—9 am, Exhibit Hall Must Pre-register
___	MAY 21	Swine Workshop —6 pm, Mike Smith's farm, 6245 CR 64 Saint Joe IN
___	JUNE 20	Swine ID & Free Tagging —8-10 am, Horse Pavilion ** all tagging must be witnessed by swine committee member and tags are free for 2026 Can't make this date? The Swine committee is available to do on-farm tagging for \$20 (100% donated to the 4-H Council Swine account for Swine projects)
___	JUL 1	4HOnline entry for Swine
___	AUG 1	QLC—10 am, Exhibit Hall Must Pre-register
___	AUG 20	Swine Workshop —6 p.m. Exhibit Hall
___	SEP 8	FairEntry - Make Class Selections for Fall Fair
___	SEP 8	Worksheets Due in Extension Office QLC/YQCA Due

If exhibiting Swine at **State Fair**, tags and hair sample envelopes are available at the Extension Office.

*State Fair Deadlines: www.indianastatefair.com



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DEKALB COUNTY 4-H Sheep

2026 Important Dates:

___	MAR 1	Sheep Workshop - 4 pm, Exhibit Hall
___	MAR 23	QLC—10 am, Exhibit Hall Must Pre-register
___	MAY 16	QLC—9 am, Exhibit Hall Must Pre-register
___	JUN 20	Sheep/Goat ID 8-10 am, Sheep Barn
___	JULY 1	4HOnline entry for Sheep
___	AUG 1	QLC—10 am, Exhibit Hall Must Pre-register
___	SEP 8	FairEntry - Make Class Selections for Fall Fair
___	SEP 8	Worksheets Due in Extension Office QLC/YQCA Due

*State Fair Deadlines: www.indianastatefair.com

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DEKALB COUNTY 4-H Goat

2026 Important Dates:

___	MAR 1	Goat Workshop - 3 pm, Exhibit Hall
___	MAR 23	QLC—10 am, Exhibit Hall Must Pre-register
___	MAY 16	QLC—9 am, Exhibit Hall Must Pre-register
___	JUN 20	Sheep/Goat ID 8-10 am, Respective Barns
___	JUL 1	4HOnline entry for Goat Summer Does FairEntry - Make Class Selections for Goat Summer Does
___	JUL 1	Worksheets Due in Extension Office Goat Summer Does YQCA Due for Summer Does
___	JUL 1	4HOnline entry for Goat Wethers/Market Does
___	JUL 11	4-H Summer Doe Show —8 am
___	AUG 1	QLC—10 am, Exhibit Hall Must Pre-register
___	SEP 8	FairEntry - Make Class Selections for Goat Wethers/Market Does
___	SEP 8	Worksheets Due in Extension Office for Wethers/Market Does QLC/YQCA Due



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*State Fair Deadlines: www.indianastatefair.com

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DEKALB COUNTY 4-H
Poultry

2026 Important Dates:

- ___ MAR 1 Poultry Workshop - 2 pm, Exhibit Hall
- ___ MAR 23 QLC—10 am, Exhibit Hall
Must Pre-register
- ___ MAY 16 QLC—9 am, Exhibit Hall
Must Pre-register
- ___ JUL 1 Poultry Nomination Forms (Paper) Due in the Extension Office
- ___ AUG 1 QLC—10 am, Exhibit Hall
Must Pre-register
- ___ AUG 22 Poultry ID/Banding
8-10 am, Petting Zoo Overhang
- ___ SEP 8 FairEntry - Make Class Selections for Fall Fair
- ___ SEP 8 Worksheets Due in Extension Office
QLC/YQCA Dues

*State Fair Deadlines: www.indianastatefair.com



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Development

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DEKALB COUNTY 4-H
Rabbit

2026 Important Dates:

- ___ MAR 1 Rabbit Workshop - 1 pm, Exhibit Hall
- ___ MAR 23 QLC—10 am, Exhibit Hall
Must Pre-register
- ___ MAY 16 QLC—9 am, Exhibit Hall
Must Pre-register
- ___ JUN 28 Rabbit ID & Workshop - 14 pm, Exhibit Hall
- ___ JUL 1 **4Honline** entry for Rabbit
Nomination Forms due to Extension Office
- ___ AUG 1 QLC—10 am, Exhibit Hall
Must Pre-register
- ___ AUG 30 Rabbit Events - Rabbit Barn Set-up/
Clean-up, Fryer, Meat pen, and
Litter ID, and Show Remark Card,
12:00 pm (noon) for Clean Up and
3:00 pm for Show Remark Cards/
Pen Reservations
- ___ SEP 8 FairEntry - Make Class Selections for Fall Fair
- ___ SEP 8 Worksheets Due in Extension Office
YQCA due

*State Fair Deadlines: www.indianastatefair.com



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Development

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DEKALB COUNTY 4-H
Summer Projects

2026 Important Dates:

- ___ MAY 15 4-H Enrollment Deadline (last day to pay the enrollment fee)
- ___ JUNE 1 FairEntry Opens for Summer Judging—families can now go in and enter what projects they will be bringing to Summer Judging
- ___ JULY 1 FairEntry Deadline for Summer Judging projects
Add/Drop Deadline— final decision on what projects you will be taking
- ___ JULY 13-15 Summer Judging—please check your June Newsletter or page 8 of the 4-H Handbook for check-in/judging times
- ___ JULY 16 4-H Open House—4-6:30 pm, Exhibit Hall (all non-State Fair projects should be picked up)
- ___ JULY 16 Summer Awards Program— 7:00 pm, Middaugh Hall
- ___ SEPT 20 Fall Fair—Project Drop-off for Display—1:00-4:00 pm, Exhibit Hall
- ___ SEPT 24 Fall Fair—Project Drop-off for Display—6:00-8:00 pm, Exhibit Hall
- ___ SEPT 26 Fall Fair—Project Drop-off for Display—12:00-3:00 pm, Exhibit Hall



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Development

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LIVESTOCK NEWS

**2026 Beef/Dairy Steers
Beef Heifers ID/WEIGH-IN
Sunday, April 12, 2-4 PM**

MAY 15 4-H Online Deadline

ALL Beef Steers, Registered & Unregistered Heifers, Dairy Steers, Horse & Pony, Draft Animals, and STATE FAIR ELIGIBLE ANIMALS' MUST (excluding Poultry and Rabbit) be entered into 4HOnline.

2026 ESSAY LAMB CONTEST

The DeKalb County 4-H Sheep Committee has partnered with Slentz Farms to provide a great opportunity for anyone interested in joining the DeKalb County 4-H Program & Sheep Project! Slentz Farms has donated a lamb that will be ready for exhibition in the 2026 DeKalb County Free Fall Fair. All essays will be examined by the sheep committee as well as an outside judge to choose the winners. Essay requirements are listed below. For questions please see the contact information at the bottom of this sheet!

REQUIREMENTS:

- 1) Never exhibited or completed the sheep project.
- 2) Must enroll in the DeKalb County 4-H Program.
- 3) Must have the ability to be compliant with the animal possession rules in the 2026 4-H Handbook.

- 4) 1 page – typed or written – on the following topics
 - a. Why are you interested in the sheep project?
 - b. What do you hope to learn or gain from the sheep project?
- 5) **Due Date:** Monday, March 30, 2026 to the Extension Office or either contact below.

CONTACT INFORMATION:

Sheep Superintendent –

Logan Rinehold
(260)908-6343
lrinehold@yahoo.com

4-H Extension Educator –

Effie Campbell
(260)925-2562
Campb314@purdue.edu



2026 4-H IMPORTANT DATES

March 1	Workshops for Rabbit 1:00 PM, Poultry 2:00 PM, Goats 3:00 PM, and Sheep 4:00 PM, 1:00-5:00 PM - Exhibit Hall
March 2	Junior Leader Meeting, 6:15 PM - Exhibit Hall
March 6 & 27	Dog Club Meeting, 6:00 PM - Exhibit Hall
March 7	Doubletrees Meeting, Halter/ground drive / 4 cart Meeting/animals if vaccinated, 1:00 pm - Lindsay Clifford's property
March 8	Cut-Ups Club Meeting, 6:00 PM - Exhibit Hall Jackson Blue Ribbons, 3:00 PM - Club Meeting & QLC Training - Jackson Twp Community Hall 3390 CR 60, Auburn
March 9 & 23	Horse & Pony Club Meeting, 6:00 PM - Exhibit Hall
March 10	Nevershirk 4-H Club Meeting, 6:30 PM - Butler Elementary
March 11	Cut Ups Coterie Pizza Fundraiser, 11:00 AM until close - Coterie Pizza in Garrett 4-H Council Meeting, 7:00 PM - Exhibit Hall
March 12	4-H Power Meeting, 7:00 PM - Riverdale Elementary 6127 State Rd. 1, St. Joe
March 15	Smithfield Busy Bees Meeting, 4:00 PM - Exhibit Hall
March 18	Richland Cornhuskers Meeting, 6:00 PM - Exhibit Hall
March 19	Fairfield Farmers Meeting, check with club leader on time - Fairfield Community Center
March 21	Doubletrees Meeting, Halter/ground drive/anatomy / 4 cart Meeting/animals if vaccinated, 1:00 PM - Lindsay Clifford's property
March 23	QLC Training, 10:00 AM - Exhibit Hall
March 27-29	Teen Leadership weekend at Camp Tecumseh, grades 7-12

4-H/Youth Development

Have you signed up for MINI 4-H yet?



What are you waiting for!

Mini 4-H is for youth in grades K-2 (as of 10/1/25)



Our theme this year is Backyard Wildlife!

We hold monthly meetings in May through September
Watch for monthly emails to members starting in January!

Here are our 2026 meeting dates!

Monday, May 4 (6pm)

Kick off Night @ Exhibit Hall

Monday, June 8 (6pm)

Meeting @ Exhibit Hall

Tuesday, June 9

Mini Day Camp @ Exhibit Hall

Monday, July 6 (6pm)

Meeting @ Exhibit Hall

Monday, Aug 17 (6pm)

Meeting @ Exhibit Hall

Saturday, Sept 19 (10am)

Mini Project Judging @ Exhibit Hall



Want to be a part of a once-in-a-lifetime trip?

Travel 3,300 miles from home to explore the majesty of Alaska! The team is looking for enthusiastic teen teachers and brave adventurers to teach local 4-H members about "The Art of Nature". Only 6 DeKalb, Huntington, and Allen County 4-H members get to go (2 per county).

Applications are due in the Extension Office on/before April 1, 2026.



Dates: August 2-9, 2026

Grades: 9-12

Cost: See application



4-H ENROLLMENT

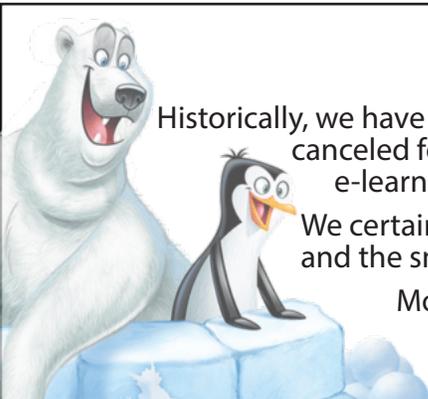
If you missed the enrollment goal date of January 15th, it's not too late to sign up for 2026. Go to v2.4honline.com to enroll and pay the fee.

Cost: \$25 4-H Program Fee* (Grades 3-12). There is no charge for Mini 4-H (K-2nd Grade), only \$5 for club dues at their first meeting in the spring. The 4-H Program Fee is non-refundable. The fee is assessed at the time of registration and can be paid online by credit/debit card, or paid at the Extension Office by cash, check or money order (Extension Office cannot process credit cards).

*\$25 each for up to three children, \$10 for each additional child.

If you have questions, call the Extension Office at 260-925-2562

Graduation is approaching, which means hundreds of outstanding 4-H'ers across the state are nearing the culmination of their 4-H experience! We want to hear what 4-H has meant to you. Please complete this survey at puext.in/2026_4H_Graduating_Member_Survey by April 1st, and you'll receive a commemorative 4-H graduate tassel.



Winter Cancellation Policy

Historically, we have followed schools in regards to meeting and event cancellations. If one school canceled for the day, we canceled all events for that day. However, with schools offering e-learning days, we think they will be quicker to react and cancel.

We certainly care about your safety, but want to be mindful that sometimes the fog fades and the snow is cleared by evening.

Moving forward from this point on, we will use cautious discretion and/or consult with the Sheriff's Department regarding cancellation of DeKalb County 4-H programs, events, activities, and meetings.

2026 4-H Reminder Dates

<p>May 15th</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 4-H Online entry for Beef Steers, Registered and Unregistered Heifers, Dairy Steers, Horse & Pony, Draft Animals, State Fair Animals
<p>July 1st</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FairEntry for Summer Static Projects (Drop/Add Date for Summer Projects) • 4-H Online entry for Fall Fair Animals • 4-H Online entry for Summer Goats; FairEntry for Summer Goats; Worksheets for Summer Goats due in Extension Office; QLC/YQCA due for Summer Goats • Nomination forms for Rabbits and Poultry due in Extension Office
<p>Sept 8th</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FairEntry for Fall Fair Animals and Crops Exhibits (Drop/Add Date for Fall Projects) • QLC/YQCA and Animal Worksheets due for Fall Fair • 4-H Online entry for Beef Feeders

HAPPY
ST PATRICK'S DAY



DeKalb 4-H Hub

Your go-to resource for everything Dekalb 4-H!



WHAT IS ON THE HUB?

- FALL FAIR CHECKLIST- SEE WHAT YOU STILL NEED TO COMPLETE TO BE ELIGIBLE TO EXHIBIT
- SUMMER JUDGING CHECKLIST - SEE WHAT YOU STILL NEED TO COMPLETE TO BE ELIGIBLE TO EXHIBIT
- 10 YEAR MEMBER TO-DO LIST!
- LIST OF IMPORTANT DATES/WORKSHOPS
- MONTHLY NEWSLETTER
- GENERAL RECORD SHEET
- 4-H HANDBOOK
- APPLICATIONS FOR EVENTS/TRIPS
- 4-H FAMILY GUIDE, 4-H PROJECT MAGAZINE
- INSTRUCTIONS FOR 4-H ONLINE AND FAIRENTRY
- LIST OF IMPORTANT WEBSITES
- ALL LIVESTOCK WORKSHEETS!



USE THE LINK OR SCAN THE QR
CODE WITH YOUR PHONE CAMERA
[HTTPS://BIT.LY/DEKALB4HHUB](https://bit.ly/dekalb4hhub)

Indiana 4-H Quality Livestock Care Program



All 4-H youth enrolled in a LIVESTOCK PROJECT (Beef, Dairy Beef, Dairy, Goat, Poultry, Rabbit, Sheep and Swine) must be QLC certified or have a YQCA online completion certificate.

If you choose to complete the YQCA option, you will register for the online course at <https://yqcaprogram.org/> Cost of the online YQCA course is \$12.

After completing the course, you must email the 4-H Educator your certificate to receive credit.

If you prefer to take the QLC in person (Instructor-Led), the cost is \$3 per child and will be located at the Exhibit Hall (Fairgrounds); Registration is open now in 4-H Online!

Quality Livestock Care training sessions are:

Monday, March 23, 10:00 AM

Saturday, August 1, 10:00 AM

Saturday, May 16, 9:00 AM

After attending the course or submitting a YQCA online training certificate, you will be marked complete in the DeKalb 4-H Hub (Fall Fair Checklist)

**This certification does NOT replace the workshop/worksheet requirement.*

Poster Board Backing for Summer Posters

ATTENTION, ALL SUMMER JUDGING PARTICIPANTS!

Starting this year the Extension Office will be selling the STIFF BACKING needed for posters, along with the SLEEVES.

Each BACKING is \$3.00 and SLEEVES are \$2.00

STAFF:

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SAVE THE DATE



WHETHER YOU'RE PASSIONATE ABOUT AGRICULTURE, HEALTH, OR 4-H, YOUR GIFT – NO MATTER THE SIZE – HAS A DIRECT IMPACT ON PURDUE EXTENSION'S ABILITY TO THRIVE AND CONTINUE ITS LEGACY OF EXCELLENCE.

LET'S MAKE THIS PURDUE DAY OF GIVING A SUCCESS, TOGETHER!

Purdue University Cooperative Extension Service is an Affirmative Action, Equal Access/Equal Opportunity institution. If you are in need of accommodations or a translator or interpreter to attend any DeKalb County Extension program, please contact our office prior to the meeting at 260-925-2562 or email eberry@purdue.edu.



RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

County Office Building
215 East 9th Street—Ste. 300
Auburn, IN 46706