

October, November, December 2025

Quarterly Newsletter



Welcome to the Quarterly Report!

Purdue Extension- Harrison County strives to improve lives and livelihoods by delivering tested and trusted educational resources. The Cooperative Extension Service is one of the nation's largest providers of scientific research-based information and education. It's a network of colleges, universities, and the U.S. Department of Agriculture, serving communities and counties across America.

Purdue Extension focuses on Agriculture and Natural Resources, Community Development, Health and Human Sciences, and 4-H Youth Development. Then, based on community needs, Purdue Extension- Harrison County is also able to leverage valuable expertise from Purdue's Nutrition Education Program (NEP). NEP works to make the healthy choice the easy choice where limited-resource Hoosiers live, eat, work, play, and shop. It is supported by the U.S. Department of Agriculture and offers unique opportunities here in Harrison County.

Purdue Extension strives to be Indiana's Educational Partner for Life!



Extension - Harrison County

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Letters from the Educators

Agriculture and Natural Resources (ANR)

Ariel Camm-Wilson

County Extension Director, Agriculture & Natural Resources Educator

With 2025 coming to a close, we can turn the page and start 2026. This year has been impactful throughout Harrison County with Extension offering a wide range of programs and events. These include the return of long standing favorites such as the Ag Outlook Breakfast and Cattlemen's Field Day to the first ever Family Ag Day. I also held my first ever Extension Master Gardener Course. As we reflect upon 2025, a lot of participants engaged in agriculture and natural resources education events to help expand knowledge that can be brought back to farms, businesses, gardens, and communities in Harrison County.

Thank you to the participants, supporters, and sponsors for your dedication to agriculture and natural resources in Purdue Extension Harrison County in 2025! I am looking forward to seeing familiar and new faces with programs and consultations in 2026.

Health and Human Sciences (HHS) / Community Development (CD)

Tara Beckman

Health and Human Sciences & Community Development Educator

As fall comes to a close, it's been rewarding to see the impact of programs that support health, learning, and community connection. From helping older adults stay active through Aging Well, to strengthening nonprofit leadership with Building Stronger Boards, equipping library staff in Compassion in Action, and celebrating wellness and local assets with Walktober, each program reflects Extension's commitment to practical, research-based education that meets community needs.

Engaging with participants at senior centers, libraries, and other local sites has been a joy, and I'm grateful for the relationships and collaborations that make this work possible. These programs not only provide knowledge and skills but also foster confidence, connection, and well-being, helping Harrison County continue to grow as a vibrant, supportive community.

4-H and Youth Development

Anna Denny

4-H Youth Development Educator

This quarter brought strong youth engagement, impactful service projects, and continued growth across the Harrison County 4-H program. Our members demonstrated leadership through community service initiatives, club activities, and events beyond county borders. We also celebrated youth achievements at the Indiana 4-H Foundation Luncheon, where Isabelle Abner was recognized with the Premier Civic Engagement Scholarship. Clubs continued to meet regularly, explore project work, and prepare for upcoming seasonal events. Partnerships with volunteers, families, and community organizations strengthened our capacity to offer hands-on learning experiences for youth. Overall, the quarter reflected strong dedication from our youth, and we look forward to building on this momentum in the months ahead.

Agriculture and Natural Resources (ANR)

Sheep and Goat Management Seminar



Cora Reinbolt, Purdue Extension Small Ruminant Specialist, came and discussed with 15 participants about sheep and goat management practices and how to better care for your herd. She discussed what to have on hand for raising sheep and goats with equipment and medicines. Signs of sickness, treatment options, and body condition scoring were also discussed at the class. Cora discussed the importance of caring for your pastures, hay testing, and soil testing. Participants asked a lot of questions to further their knowledge on raising and caring for sheep and goats.

Wreath Making

In December, ANR Educator Ariel Camm Wilson, hosted a wreath-making class that filled quickly and even had a waitlist. Participants enjoyed a hands-on workshop led by Elizabeth of Bundle Sticks Farms, where they created their own evergreen wreaths. The class included instruction on different types of evergreens and how they grow, and each attendee went home with their finished wreath and an informational packet for continued learning.



Agriculture and Natural Resources (ANR)

Private and Commercial Applicator Programs

PARP training session was held at the Crawford County Fairgrounds with 13 participants. It was an informative program covering key agricultural topics. Sessions included updates from the Office of the State Chemist, record keeping, weed prevention and treatment, and the latest information on drone regulations.

This event provided a great opportunity for farmers to enhance their knowledge and earn their commercial and private applicator licenses.



On November 20th, the Area 2 ANR Educators hosted a Commercial Pesticide Applicator program as well as offering PARP credits. This event focused on topics such as pesticide safety, application safety, damaging insects, weather and climatology when spraying, and regulations within the Office of the State Chemist. This program had 37 participants with 7 hours of instruction time. Over 10 participants were representing Harrison County at the event!

Crawford County Ag Day

Ariel had the opportunity to share her passion for the dairy industry with over 90 youth during Crawford County Ag Days! She led an engaging and interactive session covering topics such as the differences between dairy and beef cattle, the milking process, equipment used on dairy farms, and various breeds of dairy cattle.

Students enjoyed sampling cheddar and Colby Jack cheese, comparing and contrasting the two cheeses. They also learned about the different colors of milk caps and what each one represents. The session was a fun, hands-on way for students and teachers alike to deepen their understanding of the dairy industry and the important role it plays in agriculture.



4-H and Youth Development

4-H Awards Banquet

The 4-H Awards Banquet and Annual Meeting took place at the fairgrounds on October 21, with approximately 400 people in attendance. Guests enjoyed a catered dinner by Schnitzelbank prior to the election of new 4-H Council members. The evening concluded with the presentation of awards recognizing the dedication and accomplishments of 4-H members throughout the year.



Harrison County 4-H Youth Recognized at 4-H Foundation Luncheon

The Indiana 4-H Foundation Luncheon on Saturday, November 15, was a proud moment for Harrison County 4-H. Isabelle Abner was honored for her outstanding community service and leadership as she received the Premier Civic Engagement Scholarship.

Joel and Anna Sauerheber of the Blue River All Stars 4-H club also represented Harrison County at the annual 4-H Foundation Scholarship Event on Saturday, November 15. They spoke with Dr. Casey Mull, Program Leader for 4-H Youth Development at Purdue University, about their Seasonal Sensations for Seniors Project. Their club earned \$1,000 YES Grant from the Indiana 4-H Foundation to create thoughtful, seasonal gifts for nursing home residents. Their collection included filled Easter eggs, flower pens, flags, petal pops, leaf magnets, beaded Indian corn, beaded candy canes and Christmas cards. Joel added to the celebration by leading the 4-H Pledge during the event. It was a wonderful day to celebrate youth leadership, creativity and service.



4-H and Youth Development

Cookie Science Workshop

Our 4-H members had a fun and tasty workshop exploring cookie science. Youth tested how changing just one ingredient, like using baking powder instead of baking soda, or melting the butter, could change the way a cookie looks and tastes. The original recipe was our control so everyone could compare their cookie to the regular version.

They made their hypothesis, chose a variable, baked their batches, and enjoyed trying the results. It was a sweet and easy way to learn how experiments work!



Mini 4-H Saturday with Santa & Stone Soup



It was a full house at the annual 4-H Mini's Saturday with Santa workshop. The joyful participants created 6 different Christmas Crafts-a lacey ornament, salt dough ornaments, a wooden angel, a Santa countdown calendar, bird-seeded pinecone, and a snowman snow measuring stick. A big thank you to Limeberry Lumber for donating the paint stir sticks!

The morning was topped off with a visit from Santa who took time to speak with each child, giving them a candy cane and a toy.

We appreciate Santa coming to visit with our Mini's each year. We ended our program reading "How Santa Got His Job" and "The Christmas Cub" and enjoying cookies and lemonade.

It was all hands and knives(!) on deck with our Mini 4-H'ers as we all worked together to make a big pot of Stone Soup. Each child brought and prepared items for either the soup or our sides of corn bread and fresh butter. Starting with a special soup stone, we followed the old folk tale to make a delicious vegetable soup.

With everyone preparing a part of the meal it went together quickly. Best part was sitting down to share the meal and meeting some of our newest Mini 4-H members. Thank you to the Mini's for making this wholesome meal and thank you to the adults for helping not only with the preparation, but also the serving and clean-up.



4-H and Youth Development

Southern Indiana Junior Leader Retreat

Harrison County 4-H teens proudly represented our county at the Southern Indiana 4-H Junior Leader Retreat this quarter. Their leadership, teamwork, and enthusiasm stood out throughout the weekend. We extend our gratitude to the Harrison County 4-H Council for generously covering all retreat fees, ensuring every participant could take part in this valuable experience.

A major highlight of the retreat was the expansion of the Indiana 4-H Foundation YES Grant Birthday Bundle initiative beyond Harrison County. Teens from multiple counties joined together for a meaningful service project, assembling Birthday Bundles, kits filled with cake mix, frosting, candles, and party essentials, to support local food banks. This collaborative effort helped spread joy to families in need and demonstrated the impact youth leadership can have across communities.

Overall, the retreat strengthened regional connections, expanded service-learning work, and showcased the positive influence of Harrison County 4-H teens.



Harrison County 4-H Awarded Grants for Programming

Harrison County 4-H is celebrating big news! The program has been awarded three incredible grants to take youth programming to the next level. 4-H Educator Anna Denny, wrote two Indiana 4-H Foundation STEM Grants and one Premier Ag Grant.

The UAV Expansion Grant provides a 12-pack CoDrone EDU Classroom kit along with storage and charging equipment. This will give students hands-on experience with drones, prepare them for the state 4-H drone competition, and allow for thrilling drone demonstrations at the county fair.

The Robotics and 3-D Design Lab is getting a major boost with a new Bambu Lab P1S 3-D printer, a filament starter pack, workstation desk, two SPIKE robotic kits, and replacement laptops. Young makers will now have the tools to explore robotics, 3-D printing, and cutting-edge STEM projects like never before. Thanks to a Premier Ag Grant, Harrison County 4-H will now have its very own Blender Bike. This exciting addition will be featured at Ag Days and used to teach fun, hands-on lessons about nutrition, fitness, and healthy living.

These grants are more than just equipment. They are opportunities for Harrison County youth to explore, create, and lead in STEM and agriculture. The future is bright for 4-H.



Collaborations: ANR and HHS

Orchard to Table: Healthy Ways to Enjoy Apples

In celebration of National Apple Month and the Indiana Great Apple Crunch, our very own Ariel Camm-Wilson (ANR Educator) and Tara Beckman (HHS/CD Educator) brought apples to life through two vibrant, hands-on educational sessions at the Harrison County Public Library's Corydon and Elizabeth branches. With over 15 enthusiastic participants, our Orchard to Table experience honored Indiana agriculture, local produce, and healthy living—right in the heart of our community.



Ariel shared valuable tips on backyard apple growing, apple seasons, and common varieties plus how to identify which ones are resistant to plant diseases. Tara highlighted the health benefits of apples, how to select and store them, and creative, nutritious ways to enjoy them every day. Through a guided 5-senses tasting experience, participants engaged with apples like never before- smelling, touching, inspecting, crunching, and savoring every bite.

We crunched into three delicious varieties, each with their unique characteristics: Pink Lady, Gala, and Golden Delicious, and paired with a virtual orchard tour and fun apple trivia that had everyone thinking and smiling.

This event was part of the "Crunch Heard Around the State", a collaborative initiative between Purdue Extension and the Indiana Department of Education. It unites Hoosiers of all ages in a statewide (and region-wide!) CRUNCH to spotlight local agriculture and support farm-to-school efforts.

Grow It, Cook It: Spinach

As part of the Master Gardener Fall Speaker Series, Grow It, Cook It: Spinach welcomed 18 enthusiastic participants for an evening of hands-on learning and delicious tasting!

Ariel led the gardening portion, sharing valuable tips on how to grow spinach successfully, covering everything from planting and harvesting to proper storage and choosing the right varieties for different seasons.

Tara followed with a cooking demo featuring two tasty recipes: a spinach smoothie and a spinach pesto pasta. She highlighted spinach as a powerful superfood, explaining its many health and nutrient benefits, and offered creative ideas for preparing and cooking it at home.

Attendees enjoyed sampling both dishes and shared their own creative ideas for using spinach in meals. The group especially had fun exchanging inventive ways to use the delicious spinach pesto from panini sandwiches to omelets and beyond! It was a fun, engaging evening filled with education, great conversation, and delicious inspiration centered around this leafy green powerhouse: Spinach!



Walktober 2025: Innovative Participation for Community Wellness & Engagement



This October, our monthly Extension Challenge Kit program introduced Walktober 2025, a refreshed approach to how our monthly kits are offered. Traditionally, kits are produced in a set quantity and distributed on a first-come, first-served basis. For Walktober, we expanded access by offering both in-person and digital options, allowing participants to engage in a way that fit their schedules while removing participation limits. Of our 51 participants, 11 (approximately 22%) took advantage of the digital kit option.

The Walktober Kit was designed to encourage physical activity, exploration, and creative engagement.

Each kit included:

- **Movement Tracking Tool:** A chart or for participants to log minutes of activity throughout the month.
- **Flat Scarecrow Craft:** A fun, color-and-go craft that could be decorated, attached to a popsicle stick, or taken along on outdoor adventures.
- **Regional Trail Maps & Local Activity Ideas:** Resources to help participants explore local parks, trails, and community assets close to home.
- **SMART Goals for Success Worksheet:** A tool to support meaningful, achievable goal setting throughout the month.
- **Outdoor Scavenger Hunt:** A family-friendly activity to encourage outdoor movement for all ages.

By redesigning the kit format this month, Walktober 2025 expanded participation opportunities, fostered community connection, and reinforced our mission to support health and wellness across the region. This new approach demonstrated how the monthly Extension Challenge Kits continue to evolve to meet the needs of our community.

Compassion in Action: Supporting Patrons at Harrison County Public Library



In October, Tara had the opportunity to design and lead “Compassion in Action: Supporting Patrons” during Harrison County Public Library’s All Staff Development Day. Offered in three rotating sessions, the program reached employees from all branches and was designed to increase staff capacity and equip them to support the community in innovative and impactful ways.

Library staff serve as essential community connectors, and many encounter patrons who express needs beyond traditional library services. During the sessions, participants explored the research behind compassion, learned best practices for person-centered interactions, and gained tools to connect patrons with local support services, all while maintaining professional boundaries.



Staff left the sessions feeling more confident and prepared to engage with patrons compassionately, making a meaningful difference in their community. This initiative highlights HCPL’s commitment to strengthening its role as a hub for connection, support, and community well-being, and Purdue Extension was proud to partner in supporting staff development and community impact.

Aging Well: New Partnership with Joe Rhodes Senior Center



This fall, Tara launched a new partnership with the Joe Rhodes Senior Center, through LifeSpan Resources, in Corydon to offer an Aging Well program series for older adults, focusing on Fitness, Mental Health, Nutrition, and Social Health. With 52 participants across four sessions, the program delivered evidence-based education designed to help participants stay active, build confidence, and maintain independence.

The sessions fostered peer learning and discussion, creating a supportive environment where participants could share strategies and experiences. The Joe Rhodes Senior Center has quickly become a valued partner, helping Purdue Extension expand access to practical, confidence-building resources and laying the groundwork for continued impactful programming in the future.

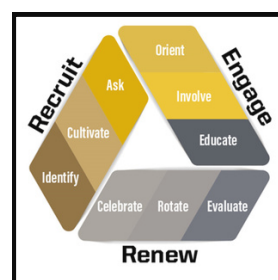
Building Stronger Boards: Empowering Leaders Across Southern Indiana

On November 5th, 13 participants from across southern Indiana gathered at Patoka Lake Winery for the Building Stronger Boards full-day workshop. Representing five counties and 15 nonprofit organizations, the group gained practical knowledge and increased confidence to serve effectively on nonprofit boards. The workshop also demonstrated a regional team effort among Extension Educators, who coordinated local connections, logistics, program delivery, and day-of support to make the experience impactful for all involved.

The workshop focused on the Board Development Cycle, with emphasis on board member recruitment, engagement, and renewal. A highlight was a panel of three expert speakers: Christine Harbeson (Executive Director, Community Foundation of Crawford County), Sandy Neukam (President, Indiana State Fair Board), and Amber Warden (Executive Director, Daviess County Visitors Bureau), who shared successes, challenges, and best practices. Participants asked questions ranging from recruitment strategies to building active engagement and community trust, leaving with actionable ideas for their own boards.

Feedback indicated that all participants increased their knowledge of board development and felt more confident in their ability to participate effectively. Beyond the workshop, the skills and connections gained will strengthen the work of the nonprofits represented and support broader community impact.

Building Stronger Boards continues to provide both new and experienced community members with the knowledge and confidence to enhance nonprofit governance and strengthen local communities. To bring this workshop to your nonprofit or region, contact Tara, Steve Yoder at yoder46@purdue.edu, or visit the Purdue Extension website. Give your board the tools to lead effectively and maximize the impact of the organizations that serve our community.



Nutrition Education Program (NEP)

Cindy Finerfrock, Nutrition Education Program Advisor (NEPA) for Harrison County, delivers evidence-based, hands-on programming that helps Hoosiers of all ages make smart choices about eating and physical activity.

This fall, Cindy has been leading a series of interactive classes designed to build practical skills and improve nutrition knowledge. Parents and caregivers at Harrison Head Start Birth to Five and teens at the Harrison County Youth Advocacy Center explored strategies to address food insecurity by understanding nutritional security. The sessions emphasized food affordability and availability, as well as safe food preparation for holiday gatherings and winter weather ahead.

Through these programs, Cindy is helping families and youth navigate challenges while promoting healthier, more confident choices in their daily lives.





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Accommodations

If you are in need of accommodations to attend a program or access this newsletter, please contact the Extension Office.

Harrison County Extension Inclement Weather Policy:

ALL Extension Activities (4-H events, adult workshops, meetings, classes, etc.) are cancelled when schools are closed due to inclement weather. This includes any events at the Extension Building, Harrison County Schools, etc. If the event is on the weekend, please contact the event host, or your club leader to confirm cancellation! We will do our best to share this information through Facebook posts and emails.