

July, August, September 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

As fall is around the corner, we have a lot to reflect on from the summer time, from the county fairs, to state fairs, farmer's markets, and bountiful garden harvests. We have a fun and exciting fall and winter ahead. This year has brought the most client consultations I have had since being in my position, which shows growth and that community members know I am here for their agriculture and natural resources needs.

As programs start gearing up here in the later part of fall and winter, please be on the lookout for a wide range of programs being offered that meet multiple different needs and audiences in the county. I always enjoy seeing returning participants as well as new faces in my programs.

With harvest time occurring, please be on the lookout for farm equipment and always be cautious when driving!

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

Tara Beckman

Health and Human Sciences & Community Development Educator

As we transition into fall, this past quarter has been filled with meaningful partnerships and impactful programs focused on health, well-being, lifelong learning, and community connection. From building confidence through fall prevention classes to supporting food safety training and exploring the power of shared meals, each effort reflects Extension's mission to meet people where they are and enhance quality of life through education.

Whether in the classroom, the garden, or around the table, it's been a joy to engage with individuals and organizations working to make Harrison County a healthier, more informed, and more connected place to live. I'm also grateful for opportunities to learn and collaborate beyond the county in order to bring back fresh ideas that help us continue growing together as a community.

4-H and Youth Development

Anna Denny

4-H Youth Development Educator

From Summer 4-H camps to conservation milestones, this summer was packed with moments that reminded us just how impactful Extension programs can be. Each month brought opportunities for youth to shine, families to connect, and our community to celebrate learning in action.

We celebrated agriculture at Ag Day with over 500 3rd graders, cheered on 4-H'ers at the Horse and Pony Show as they demonstrated horsemanship, and witnessed conservation in action at the Hellbender Release in Blue River. The community spirit shined through the Carnival for Cancer event that raised money for the American Cancer Society, while clubs made an impact with projects funded by the YES Grants. Summer was certainly wrapped up with plenty of fun, fellowship, and lifelong experiences.

Now we're looking ahead to October and the start of the new 4-H program year. With the launch of the Beyond Ready 4-H initiative, youth will be building skills not only for today's projects, but tomorrow's careers and communities.

THE GARDEN GAZETTE

FROM VISION TO HARVEST: CORYDON COMMUNITY GARDEN

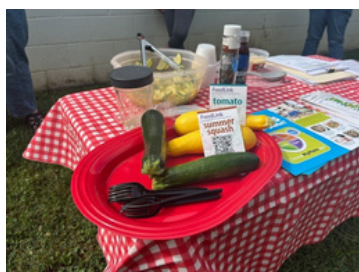
Located in the heart of downtown Corydon, the new Corydon Community Garden is already making a positive impact. This space was made possible through grant support from the "Growing Together" initiative and is the result of a strong collaborative effort between Corydon Christian Church, Purdue Extension Nutrition Education Program (Katie Davidson, Community Wellness Coordinator), Purdue Extension Harrison County Educators (Ariel Camm-Wilson & Tara Beckman), Harrison County Extension Master Gardeners, and other passionate community members.

The garden's foundation was built not only with 12 raised beds, but with thoughtful planning and valuable community input. Earlier this year, Katie Davidson hosted a public forum to hear directly from local residents about what they would want and need to make a community garden successful. That feedback, along with lessons Katie has learned from supporting other gardens across the region, helped shape a space rooted in connection, food access, and shared purpose.

Some exciting outcomes already? Several nearby residents have adopted garden beds this season—building new relationships with neighbors they hadn't known before. Around 20 pounds of produce have also been donated to Harrison County Community Services so far this season, supporting local food access. Then, bringing generations together, the youth Sunday school class at Corydon Christian Church has proudly taken on a garden bed of their own—adding to the sense of shared purpose and community across all ages.

As part of Purdue Extension's commitment to education and support, a recent program brought together hands-on learning, garden education, and health-focused resources in the garden. Adult participants took part in an interactive garden walk and informative presentations led by Extension staff.

Ariel Camm-Wilson, ANR Educator, kicked things off with a discussion on common plant diseases and insect issues that were present on the plants in the garden. She shared how to identify these problems early, provided potential treatment suggestions, and emphasized early detection. She also introduced the idea of cool season crops, sharing tips on planting times based on local frost dates and recommending varieties best suited for the raised beds.



Early signs of something beautiful at the new garden.

Following Ariel's segment, Tara Beckman, Health and Human Sciences and Community Development Educator, and Cindy Finerfrock, Nutrition Education Program Advisor, led a "Harvest to Health" session. They shared nutrition tips and resources like EatGatherGo.org, provided guidance on garden-to-table cooking and produce storage to reduce waste, and demonstrated how to make a fresh zucchini salad with a zesty lemon vinaigrette. This no-cook recipe was a perfect reminder of how easy and delicious it can be to bring freshly washed produce straight from the garden to the table.

Together, this event offered practical tools and inspiration for better gardening and healthier eating.

The Corydon Community Garden is already planting seeds of lasting impact—not just growing food, but growing community, learning, and well-being thanks to the many community hands and hearts behind it!



Agriculture and Natural Resources (ANR)

Cattlemen's Field Day

Over 50 attendees from eight counties participated in the Harrison County Cattlemen's Field Day on Saturday, August 23rd.

Charlie Sieberns, Farm Operator, discussed their farm operation and techniques they use.

Cheryl Miller, BOAH District 5 Vet-discussed High Path Avian Influenza, Traceability of Beef Cattle and New World Screwworm.

Jason Tower, Superintendent, Southern Indiana Purdue Ag Center, discussed toxic weeds harmful to cattle in pastures, identifying weeds, and life cycle of weeds.

Robert Zupancic, Southeast Area Grazing Specialist, discussed soil health in pastures by minimizing disturbances, living roots to break up soil compaction, and not grazing too short.

Ariel Camm-Wilson, Purdue Extension Agriculture and Natural Resources Educator, spoke about the services and programs that are offered to assist with agriculture and natural resources to community members.



Cattlemen's Members cooked a lunch with ribeyes and hotdogs. This was a great event for cattle farmers to learn from one another and ways to improve their overall herds.

Invasive Species Seminar



The second of the three-part invasive species series was held July 28th at the Extension Office. Kaila Laplace, State of Indiana Cooperative Invasives Management Regional Specialist led the class in discussion on tree of heaven, Japanese honeysuckle and mimosa trees.



Floyd County Ag Day was held on September 19. ANR Educator, Ariel Camm Wilson led a station on dairy education and welcomed approximately 100 youth. The station covered three key areas. Participants learned to distinguish between dairy and beef cattle by physical characteristics, purpose, and breeds. They also explored how dairy cows are milked to understand the milking process, cow comfort, and hygiene practices on a dairy farm and discovered the wide variety of dairy products from milk and cheese to yogurt and butter.



Farm Bureau hosted a farm tour with different locations around the county. The self-guided tour visited a variety of farms with operations in beef cattle, popcorn, corn and soybeans, vegetable growing, flower growing, and sheep production. This was a great way for community members to learn and understand Harrison County agriculture and how it impacts our daily lives.



Ag 101

ANR Educator, Ariel Camm Wilson led Ag 101 which teaches about different areas of agriculture such as animal science, horticulture, and field crops. The class was held at the Corydon Library and at SWAG, Seniors With A Goal, with six participants at each location. This program was a great opportunity for participants to learn about agriculture terminology and where their food comes from.



4-H and Youth Development

Ag Day

Over 500 Youth Attend 2025 Ag Day at Harrison County Fairgrounds

On September 9th and 10th, more than 500 third-grade students from Harrison County schools gathered at the Harrison County Fairgrounds for the 2025 Ag Day. This annual event is a valuable opportunity for youth to explore and learn about agriculture through a variety of hands-on experiences.

Throughout the day, students rotated between interactive stations covering key agricultural topics such as dairy, livestock, soil science, grain bin safety, drones, pollinators, embryology, farm safety, horses, and plant biology. Each station was designed to engage and educate, giving students a deeper understanding of the importance and impact of agriculture in their daily lives.

All participants were provided with lunch and received a goody bag filled with educational materials and fun agriculture-themed items to take home.

Events like Ag Day play a crucial role in helping young people understand the agriculture industry and its vital role in our communities and economy. We're proud to support agricultural literacy among our youth.

A heartfelt thank you goes out to all of our sponsors, guest presenters, volunteers, and supporters who helped make 2025 Ag Day a tremendous success. Your dedication and contributions made this event possible!



4-H and Youth Development

Popcorn Festival honors 4-H and FFA as Grand Marshalls

Harrison County 4-H and FFA were honored to serve as Grand Marshalls for the Popcorn Festival Parade, where youth proudly represented their clubs and celebrated with the community!



Horse and Pony 4-H Fair Show

The Harrison County 4-H Horse and Pony Fair Show kicked off with the 4-H Color Guard and Contesting, followed by a full day of fun competition in Hunter, Western, Saddle Type, and Gaited classes.



Hellbenders Release in Blue River

A group of about 53 Hellbender supporters, including representatives from DNR, Purdue University, the Ft. Wayne and Mesker Zoos, Blue River All Stars 4-H Club and other entities, gathered to release 53 hellbenders in Devil's Elbow on Blue River.

Carnival for Cancer

The Blue River All Stars 4-H Club and Blue River Hills Extension Homemakers sponsored the 2025 Carnival for Cancer. It was a huge success and raised \$10,300 with more donations coming in! This amount will be matched by the Betty Goldman Endowment through the HCCF. Every person that attended, purchased items, and donated is so appreciated! Special thanks to Steve Morris for his auction services and the countless individuals that donated auction items, provided food, and put endless hours into the event to make it a success! Next year will be the 50th Annual Carnival for Cancer on Friday, September 18, 2026.

YES Grant Seasonal Sensations for Seniors

The Blue River All Stars 4-H Club received a \$1,000 YES Grant from the Indiana 4-H Foundation for "Seasonal Sensations for Seniors" to create seasonal decorations and favors for nursing home residents. Club members worked together to make Filled Easter Eggs (Easter), Flower Ink Pens (Spring), Desktop Standing Flags (Flag Day/4th of July), Lollipop Flower Bouquets (Summer), and Autumn Leaf Magnets (Fall). Blue River All Star will finish off "Seasonal Sensations for Seniors" with Christmas Gifts to be delivered when the club visits residents for caroling during the Christmas Holiday season.



4-H and Youth Development

Mini Day Camp: Around the World in 6 Hours!

Mini Day Camp: Around the World in 6 Hours!

Our campers went on a whirlwind global adventure! In just six hours, they journeyed across continents, immersing themselves in fun and culture from around the world. They met some chilly friends in Antarctica and crafted their very own penguin to take home! While visiting Europe, they learned how to brew the perfect pot of tea, then they rolled up their sleeves and made delicious pretzels from scratch.

In Asia, they practiced using chopsticks and mastered the technique!

In South America – They made colorful maracas. In Africa, they learned about many different animals and made an amazing sunset.

To top it all off, everyone joined in a high-energy "Around the World" relay race!

It was a day full of discovery, creativity, and global exploration—and many stamps added to their passport!



Mini 4-H -- Why do leaves change color?

It was another wonderful workshop with the Mini 4-Hers on Wednesday, Sept 10. In line with our theme, Amanda Uhl, a 4-H volunteer and Coach for our Forestry Team, talked about her upcoming Forestry workshops and the Area Forestry Judging contest. Minis as well as traditional members are invited to attend.

The Minis created 3 lovely leafy crafts: leaf shadows with black paper and colored chalk, air-dry clay leaf bowls, and colorful leaf rubbings. The class was followed by a reading of the book, *Summer Green and Autumn Gold*, explaining the leaves changing color (much better than Miss Mary) and the usual lemonade and homemade cookies.



Collaborations: ANR and 4-H

Nature Camp

On July 22, 2025, over ten youth attended Nature Camp and learned about invasive plants, native flowers, tree identification, relaxing in nature, and making compost. The day was filled with fun and education!



FALL MARKET SEASON!

LOCATIONS, DATES, & TIMES VARY

- **Corydon Farmer's Market, 4-7pm on Fridays**
 - At 124 S. Mulberry Street, Corydon
- **Elizabeth Farmer's Market, date/times TBD**
 - 5101 Main St. SE, Elizabeth
- **Harrison County Farmer's Market, 8-NOON on Saturdays**
 - 1390 Old Highway 135 NW, Corydon
- **Palmyra Farmer's Market, 9-NOON on Saturdays**
 - 14485 Green St. NE, Palmyra

Extension Delivers ServSafe Food Manager Training at Harrison County Lifelong Learning Center



Tara Beckman facilitated a one-day ServSafe Food Manager training and certification exam at Harrison County Lifelong Learning in July. The event welcomed 15 participants, most of whom had never attended a program through Lifelong Learning or Purdue Extension, making this a valuable opportunity to raise awareness of both organizations as trusted community resources.

This partnership with Harrison County Lifelong Learning reflects a shared commitment to meeting adult learners where they are and providing accessible, workforce-ready training that benefits individuals and the broader community. Special thanks to Tom Fields, Executive Director of Harrison County Lifelong Learning, for his support in helping make this collaboration possible and promoting the opportunity to local residents and businesses.

At the conclusion of the training, participants had the chance to meet with Christa Ridenour, Chief Foods Inspector with the Harrison County Health Department, who graciously joined to answer questions and provide insights into local food safety practices— adding a practical and relevant local perspective to the day's learning.

This event stands as a strong example of how local partnerships can increase access to education and essential certifications for the community.

Building Confidence, Connections, and Reducing Fall Risk Through Education



Health & Human Sciences Educators Tara Beckman (Harrison County) and Emma Finerfrock (Clark County) recently wrapped up an 8-session “A Matter of Balance” program in partnership with the Floyd County Family YMCA. The program brought together 11 participants from Harrison, Floyd, and Clark Counties, all committed to improving their strength, confidence, and strategies for preventing falls.

A Matter of Balance is an evidence-based program designed to help older adults manage concerns about falling and increase their physical activity. The sessions include structured group discussions, gentle exercises, and practical strategies to help participants remain active and independent.

During one of the sessions, participants had the opportunity to hear from special guest Alex Dilger, Physical Therapist, who shared expert insight on maintaining mobility, preventing injury through movement and posture awareness, and how to use a sturdy chair to recover from a fall when you may be alone (pictured above).

Participants have shared positive feedback, highlighting increased confidence, a more solution-focused mindset when facing challenges, greater daily movement, and meaningful conversations about creating safer homes and communities for aging in place.

Thanks to the dedication, curiosity, and community spirit of the participants, the program has created a supportive environment where individuals are empowered to take proactive steps toward safer, healthier, and more independent living.

Mealtime Matters: Backed by Research, Rooted in Connection



Tara Beckman recently partnered with the Harrison County Public Library and Extension Homemakers to promote the importance of shared meals through the “Together at the Table” initiative.

At the library, 8 participants explored simple, research-backed ways to make mealtimes more enjoyable and meaningful—ending with a hands-on activity building whole wheat muffin pizzas together to showcase how easy and fun shared meals can be.

For Extension Homemakers’ International Day, Tara Beckman and Cindy Finerfrock led a joint session exploring Scandinavian food traditions and the power of gathering around the table. With 44 adults and 3 youth in attendance, Tara used research-based materials to highlight how shared meals support mental health, language development, and family bonding, while Cindy discussed the nutritional benefits of traditional Scandinavian ingredients.

Both events served as reminders that mealtime is about more than food—it’s about connection, tradition, and togetherness.

Expanding Digital Skills and Access: Bringing Statewide Programs to Harrison County



Tara Beckman recently represented our community by co-leading a breakout session at the Indiana Public Health Association (IPHA) Conference. Alongside Lupe Valtierra, Community Development Educator from Purdue Extension–Lake County, Tara presented on the Indiana Digital Ambassadors: Improving Digital Competency and Engaging Online Resources initiative.

With 26 participants, the session showcased the statewide efforts of Purdue Extension’s Digital Transformation Team (DTT), a group of 12 educators from various program areas and regions across Indiana, including Tara, who are committed to improving digital literacy and access to online resources for Hoosiers. Their goal is to help residents feel more confident and capable using technology to enhance their daily lives and strengthen communities.

Featured programs include the Digital Skills Lessons, which Tara can offer locally upon request to help build essential internet and computer skills. Also introduced was the upcoming Digital Ambassador Volunteer program, inspired by the Purdue Master Gardener model. This initiative will train volunteers to become local digital experts and trusted technology mentors within their own communities. By equipping and connecting trusted community members, these efforts strengthen our local networks—empowering neighbors to support one another and ensuring no one is left behind in an increasingly digital world.

Tara’s work on the core team and recent IPHA presentation reflect Purdue Extension Harrison County’s commitment to providing practical, people-focused programs that help residents build digital skills and stay connected, informed, and empowered through trusted community networks and research-based solutions.



Pictured above: Active conversations and shared ideas filled the room during the breakout session



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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.