

# DAVENPORT DIGEST

FALL 2025 EDITION

As the days grow shorter and the fields turn golden, we find ourselves at one of the most anticipated times of the year, harvest. It's a season that embodies both reward and responsibility. Months of planning, preparation, and hard work come together in these weeks, as farmers bring in the fruits of their labor.

Harvest is a time of abundance, and it's natural to celebrate the yields that provide for families, communities, and beyond. Yet, in the midst of long days and countless tasks, it's also important to remember the value of safety. Whether you are running equipment, hauling grain, helping in the field, or just stuck behind a slow moving vehicle taking those extra precautions ensures that everyone makes it home safely at the end of the day. Remember that is somebody's everything in those tractors.

This season also calls for patience and trust. Weather conditions, equipment challenges, and market pressures can add stress, but harvest reminds us that farming is as much about faith as it is about effort. Trusting the process—from the first seed planted in spring to the final load hauled in fall—helps keep perspective on the bigger picture of agriculture's cycles.

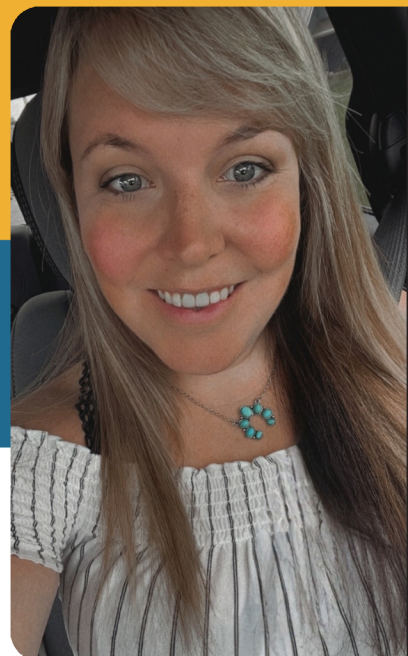
As you enter the fields this season, may you find joy in the work, gratitude in the results, and peace in knowing that every harvest, big or small, plays a vital role in sustaining our world. Wishing you a safe and bountiful harvest.

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# PINNEY PURDUE FIELD DAY RECAP

The annual Pinney Purdue Field Day was held on August 20, drawing more than 450 participants from across the region. This signature event gave farmers, landowners, and community members the chance to hear from Purdue specialists and local experts on timely topics impacting agriculture.

Educational sessions covered a wide range of issues, including managing crop diseases, addressing weed pressure, and improving corn management practices. Attendees also participated in a “Stop the Bleed” training, equipping them with valuable skills for responding to on-farm emergencies.

Beyond the learning sessions, the field day served as an excellent opportunity for networking, idea-sharing, and connecting with Purdue Extension resources. The strong turnout and positive feedback reflect the continued importance of providing practical, research-based information to support Indiana’s agriculture industry.

A special thank you goes out to our speakers, sponsors, and partners who helped make the day possible and continue to support the mission of Purdue Extension.



# HOT, DRY HARVESTS LEAD TO COMBINE FIRES

## – TAKE PREVENTIVE STEPS NOW!

EDWARD J SHELTON

Combine fires cost farmers millions of dollars each year and too often lead to injuries or even deaths. With dry conditions and hot weather in the forecast, the risk is especially high during Harvest '25.

Farmers are encouraged to regularly inspect machinery, fuel lines, bearings, belts, electrical systems, and exhausts throughout the season. Dust, dry crop residue, and worn or leaking parts can quickly lead to overheating and sparks. Even a small issue can escalate into a major fire.

End-of-day inspections are especially important. Overheated components can ignite hours after fieldwork is finished. A hand-held thermal camera can also help detect hot spots before they become dangerous.

Pay close attention to electrical systems as well. Starter motors and other high-demand parts can overheat, and frequently blown fuses are an important warning sign of trouble.

Stay proactive this harvest—regular checks and quick repairs can prevent costly downtime and protect both lives and equipment.



Every fire requires three elements: ignition, fuel, and oxygen. Removing any of these reduces the risk, so when inspecting combines, other machinery, or buildings, consider where these elements might come together.

In case a fire does start, always carry a cellphone or two-way radio, and equip large equipment with at least two 20-pound ABC fire extinguishers—one in the cab or just outside the door. Inspect extinguishers regularly to ensure they are ready for use. Remember: their first purpose is to allow the operator to escape safely, not necessarily to save the machine.

Another line of defense is having a tractor and disc on standby to create a firebreak, but never put yourself at risk of being trapped. Because insulated cabs may delay detection, fires can spread quickly. Even small fuel or hydraulic leaks can cause temperatures to soar over 1,000°F in seconds, often destroying equipment before flames can be controlled.

Beyond equipment loss, consequences include crop damage, spreading field fires, and operator injury or death. As Professor Bill Field says, “Ultimately, the only good fire is a contained one that keeps us warm. Keeping it that way in the field should be part of every farmer’s management plan this fall.”

# EVENTS UPDATE

## Row Crop Annual BBQ

The LaPorte County Row Crop Annual BBQ was held this year at Minich Dairy Farm, providing a unique opportunity to showcase agriculture to those less familiar with the industry. Community members were invited to experience firsthand what it takes to be part of the ag sector while connecting with local farmers and learning about the challenges and opportunities they face.

The event served not only as a celebration of agriculture but also as a platform to advocate for the industry, highlight its importance to the local economy, and strengthen relationships between producers and the wider community. Guests enjoyed good food, conversation, and the chance to gain a deeper appreciation for the role agriculture plays in LaPorte County.

## Master Gardener Basic Training

The Master Gardener Basic Training course is already halfway through the 14-week program, with participants diving into a wide range of horticultural topics. We are currently in Week 7, and it has been exciting to watch the knowledge and skills of our future Master Gardeners continue to grow. LaPorte County is represented by four dedicated participants this year, who are gaining valuable insight into plants, soils, pests, and best practices in gardening.

We look forward to seeing how these trainees will use their experience to give back to the community once their certification is complete. Stay tuned for more updates as they continue their journey toward becoming Purdue Extension Master Gardeners!

## Purdue on the Farm

Our Purdue on the Farm efforts have wrapped up for the season. This year's late-season scouting included estimating yields and monitoring fields for disease presence. These visits provide valuable insight into how crops are performing in real-world conditions and help strengthen the connection between on-farm practices and research-based recommendations.

Looking ahead, we are already planning for next year. If you are interested in participating in Purdue on the Farm in 2026, be sure to reach out to our office to get your name on the list. It's a great opportunity to engage with applied research and gain field-specific insights that can benefit your operation.

# UPCOMING EVENTS

## October

- October 6: Harvesting your Voice in Rochester
- October 7: Jamboree

## November

- November 5: UAV Workshop held at Miami County Fairgrounds
- November 19: Marshall County PARP

## December

- December 4: Porter County PARP Westville PNW
- December 8: Montgomery County PARP
- December 12: Porter County PARP
- December 16: Porter County PARP in Kouts - Location TBA,

For more information on the PARP held by other neighboring counties, please contact them directly.

Porter County: 219-465-3555

Marshall County: 574-935-8545

Montgomery County: 765-364-6363

## Reminder

Follow our Facebook page or check the Purdue Pesticide Program page for all upcoming PARP events as they are added.





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