

April / May 2022

PURDUE EXTENSION

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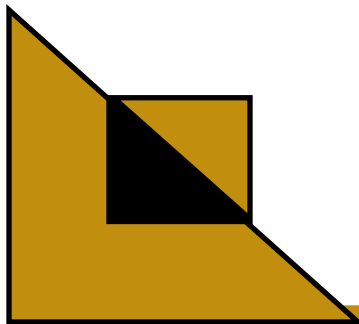
MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of Purdue Extension is to assist people in the identification of their problems and solutions that improve their homes, families, farms, businesses and communities. The county office with professional Extension Educators serves as a link between research at Purdue and the practical application of that research through informal educational opportunities for all people.

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Nicholas Held, Extension Educator
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Community Development

April—May 2022

When is the Best Time to Plant Corn?

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As spring approaches and farmers and agronomists begin to get anxious as corn planting approaches, the question that often arrives each year is when is the best time to begin planting? This question is often argued between farmers and agronomists, with farmers often wanting to plant earlier and agronomists often advising them to wait. This argument is often followed by an “I told you so” by one or the other at the end of the year, depending on growing season conditions and harvest results.

In Indiana, the optimum planting “window” for maximum corn yield potential occurs between April 20 and May 10 of each year. For the southern counties in the state, this “window” may be shifted one week earlier and for the northern counties in the state, this “window” may be shifted one week later. Overall, when examining previous year planting progress for Indiana from USDA-NASS crop reports, planting progress typically begins to increase around the 20th of April, with the majority of planting finishing toward the end of May. Previous research has shown that corn yield potential begins to decrease approximately 0.3% per day once planting is delayed beyond May 1st and approximately 1% per day if corn planting is delayed until the end of May. These decreases in corn yield potential are often contributed to a shortened growing season, elevated pest pressure,



(Purdue Agriculture)

and increased potential for high heat and dry conditions during pollination. However, it is important to understand that delayed planting may only impact potential yield and not actual yield in a specific year. Just because corn was planted late, doesn't mean high yields won't be achieved. Many different factors and conditions beyond planting date can impact actual corn yield throughout the season and in certain instances, late-planted corn can out yield early-planted corn due to exposure to various conditions throughout the season. It is important to remember that chasing a calendar date to get corn planted is often not the smartest decision. For example, chasing a calendar date can result in corn being planted in less-than-ideal soil conditions causing issues such as compaction, poor root growth, uneven

emergence, and seedling disease which ultimately result in lower yield.

Soil temperature is also always a hot topic each year as planting approaches. Pictures of digital thermometers placed in the soil are often shared as everyone waits for the infamous 50oF to be achieved to begin planting. However, it is important to remember that corn typically needs 115 growing degree days to emerge and if the soil temperature is at 50oF and continues to average only 50oF for a length of time, corn can take upwards of 35 days to emerge. Whereas, if corn is planted into a soil with a daily average temperature of 65oF, emergence can occur in 7 days or less. The overall goal is to achieve rapid emergence of corn plants to shorten the period an emerging plant is exposed to certain stresses, limit the potential for uneven emergence, and also achieve more stress tolerant plants. The bottom line is that when corn planting season is approached, it is more important to pay attention to specific soil conditions and the upcoming weather forecast, rather than chasing a specific calendar date or a specific soil temperature of 50oF when choosing to make the decision to start planting.

-Dan Quinn, Purdue Extension Corn Specialist

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Indiana 2022 Spring Climate Outlook

The big question for this spring revolves around how quickly Indiana can shrug off La Niña and return to El Niño-Southern Oscillation (ENSO) neutral conditions. Until that happens, the likelihood of a wet spring remains high. The national Climate Prediction Center (CPC) provided new guidance for the spring now that we are quickly approaching the beginning of the meteorological spring season.

Prominent in the latest guidance is a prediction of above-average precipitation over the eastern Corn Belt. On a map, the trend looks like a bullseye with Indiana in the center. Meanwhile, predictions for the eastern half of the United States are favoring above-average temperatures in March, April and May. This warmer, wetter, early-spring trend is associated with an extension of wintertime La Niña conditions, focusing the moisture on the front half of the three-month period.

Experts at the CPC say that regarding ENSO there is relative confidence that La Niña will remain in place throughout the spring, with a transition to ENSO-neutral conditions beginning in May. With this transition, less predictability in the long-range forecasts exists and the possibility for the wet signature to fade increases towards the end of the planting season.

The warming signature, according to CPC, is trending two-thirds of a degree warmer than normal over the period, which does not seem like much. However, parsing that guidance a little further, the CPC gives Indiana a little less than 15 percent chance of having a top ten percent warmest spring, with only a five percent chance of a top ten percent coolest spring. In other words, Indiana has a one in seven chance of a very warm spring and a one in twenty chance of a very cool spring.

The wet signature varies across the state, with southern Indiana expected to have more extreme wetness than northern Indiana. The predicted anomaly is 1.35 inches above average in the south and 0.83 inches above average in the north. Once again, due to the La Niña, that deviation towards wetness is likely to be felt more greatly in March than in May. CPC guidance gives similar odds for wetness as temperatures. Indiana has a one in seven chance of a very wet spring and a one in twenty chance of a very dry spring.

As we look forward to getting outdoors and farmers begin to work ground, we may initially have limited windows where soils are dry enough to do anything, but those windows look to grow longer towards the end of the spring. For more information, please contact the Purdue Extension office in Posey County via hschmitz@purdue.edu or 812-838-1331.

“Prominent in the latest guidance is a prediction of above-average precipitation over the eastern Corn Belt.”

Stem Girdling Roots a Common, Preventable Cause of Tree Decline

Determining the cause of dieback and decline symptoms in landscape trees can be very difficult due to the many cultural, environmental, and biological factors that could be involved. The first place you should look for a culprit when dealing with this type of tree problem is the base of the trunk and the roots. Stem girdling roots (SGR) are one of the most common and preventable causes for long-term tree decline.

An SGR is as it sounds: a root that girdles the stem. This is important because it is the tree unintentionally killing itself as it grows, leading to long-term decline. Root and trunk diameter increase as they grow and if they are in contact with each other, they will create a layer of compression that begins to strangle the tree, disrupting the flow of water and nutrients moving from the roots and carbohydrates moving down from the leaves (Figure 1, 2). The rate of root and trunk growth is not exceptionally fast and the effects of the SGR takes time to become apparent, if it is apparent at all. Some trees do not exhibit the typical decline symptoms, but instead they may begin leaning in the landscape or fail and fall over during heavy winds due to the roots completely girdling the trunk, creating acute compression at one point, and leading to structural instability. These types of situations can cause trees to either have a one-side trunk flare, no trunk flare (especially if the SGR is below the soil line), or have a thickened area at the root-trunk interface (Figure 3, 4, 5).

SGRs tend to develop due to external factors such as adverse site conditions or improper planting procedure. If the soil is severely compacted or the roots come into contact with an impermeable surface, the roots will grow in a direction in order to get around the impediment. If the roots are unable to grow around the compacted area, it may circle back towards the tree and begin to encircle the tree. These roots may eventually grow into the stem and become SGRs.

How do SGRs develop if your soil is not compacted or the tree isn't planted in an enclosed space with limited



A single root girdling to primary roots and part of the trunk of a tree (Purdue)

Girdling Roots (cont.)

area? Planting a bare-root tree into a hole that is too small for the root system can lead to forcing roots into different directions or even circling the planting hole. If a tree is planted at the correct depth, you can cause SGRs to develop by applying too much mulch (i.e. volcano mulch). The tree can be tricked into thinking that the soil line became higher and put out adventitious roots into this “new soil” and potentially become encircling roots, although this is not always the case.

One of the most common problems that lead to SGRs are pot-bound nursery stock (Figure 6, 7). The longer a plant is grown in a container, the greater the chance there will be roots that hit the side-wall of the pot and begin to grow around the outer edge. If the tree was re-potted with some force, the roots can be pushed into different directions that might lead them SGRs as well. Air pruning containers can get around this issue since the roots stop growing as soon as they come into contact with air and are being used with greater frequency in the industry.

Removal of girdling roots, when identified, can remediate the issue if the SGR is not too severe (very large root proportional to age/size of tree OR very deep compression into stem). In many cases the roots that need to be removed are fairly large in diameter still play an important role of providing a conduit for secondary and tertiary roots to move water and nutrients into the body of the tree. If multiple SGRs are present on one tree, it may be necessary to remove the worst affecting root first and allow the other to remain for some time (one or two seasons) to acclimate to the loss of a major root before removing the other root.

Where possible, it is a much easier and less damaging task in preventing SGRs from developing. This means ensuring you have good soil conditions (not compacted), adequate space for the planting hole, and screening your trees either prior to purchase or planting for encircling roots and SGRs. Please see the following link for recommendations concerning tree installation.

<https://www.extension.purdue.edu/extmedia/FNR/FNR-433-W.pdf>

-John Bonkowski, Plant Disease Diagnostician, Purdue Botany and Plant Pathology



A newly planted tree with an existing encircling root that will develop into an SGR. (Carrie Tauscher)

Advice for First-time Gardeners: Start Small

(Originally released in 2020) As so many of us are spending much more time at home these days, this might be the perfect time to think about starting a vegetable garden! In addition to adding fresh produce to your diet, gardening can offer both physical and mental therapeutic benefits.

Anyone can develop a green thumb, as long as they're willing to invest a little time, patience and elbow grease.

Good planning is essential to successful gardening. Start your garden off right by selecting a location that receives at least six hours of direct sunlight daily, if possible. Good drainage of excess water is critical. Observe the site during these rainy days to avoid areas where water tends to stand. Try to steer clear of trees and shrubs that would compete with your garden plants for water, light and nutrients. Walnut trees in particular produce a substance called juglone that is toxic to some garden plants.

Once you've selected your site, sketch your plans on paper. Decide how big the garden will be, what crops you want to grow and where to place them. Beginners tend to go overboard, not realizing how much work lies ahead. It's best to start out small and gradually add to your patch each year as needed. A 100-square-foot plot should be plenty for your first venture. Or consider making a small raised bed garden. Those without adequate space can consider gardening in containers.

Many different vegetables will produce well in Indiana. Most new gardeners start out by picking up a few seed packets at their local grocery. This is an acceptable way to get started, although there is no guarantee that the cultivars of vegetables being sold are best suited for Indiana conditions. Garden centers are more likely to have a wider choice available. More-experienced gardeners often order online to supplement what is available from local garden centers, taking time to pick out cultivars that have the particular characteristics they're interested in.

Before heading out to the garden to plant, you'll need to gather some tools and properly prepare the soil. A hoe, rake, spade, sprinkler, string and stakes are about the minimum tool supply you'll need. It's a good idea to have your soil tested as early as possible to learn how much of what kind of fertilizer to apply.

“Anyone can develop a green thumb, as long as they're willing to invest a little time, patience and elbow grease.”

April—May 2022

Advice for First Time Gardeners (cont.)

Next, prepare a good planting bed, but make sure the soil has dried sufficiently before you work it. Working wet soil will damage the soil's structure. Squeeze a handful of soil, and if it crumbles away easily, it's ready. If it sticks together in a muddy ball, you'd better hold off. When it's ready, work the soil at least 6 inches deep. A rototiller makes this job pretty easy, but for small plots a spade and strong arms will do. Then rake the soil surface level.

Most seed packages will list planting directions such as depth and spacing. When setting out transplants, be sure to dig a hole larger than the soil ball of the plant to aid root establishment. Most transplants are sold in containers that must be removed before planting. The exception is those sold in peat pots (brown, fibrous pots) that can be planted but do need a little modification. Tear off the rim of peat pots to ensure that no part of the pot will stick out of the soil. And, if roots are not growing out of the bottom of the pot already, it's helpful to tear or poke holes through the bottom of the pot to allow for easier root penetration. Transplants dry out and wilt rapidly, so be sure to get those transplants watered thoroughly as soon as possible.

The job doesn't end with planting. There are always weeds, insects and diseases to battle. There are numerous cultural types of controls and preventive measures along with chemicals. No one chemical will control all problems on all crops, so you'll need to identify your problem correctly and then choose the proper control strategy. A pesticide is not necessarily the best method.

For more information on growing vegetables, see our Purdue Extension Home Gardeners Guide, and Container and Raised Bed Gardening and our publication for soil testing.

-Rosie Lerner, Purdue Extension Consumer Horticulture Specialist (retired)



Time, patience, elbow grease and planning go a long way to creating a successful garden (Lerner)

Spotlight on Corn & Soybean Basis

After a month of volatile crop basis—mostly as a result of the conflict in Ukraine—corn and soybean basis levels have appeared to settle in near their historical averages for this time of year in many locations. In the past month, average central Indiana corn basis varied from \$0.17/bu. over to \$0.15/bu. under July '22 corn futures and is currently \$0.11/bu. under July '22 corn futures, which is \$0.06/bu. weaker than the historical 3-year average.

Soybean basis has followed a similar pattern in many locations, although the highs and lows were not quite as pronounced. We are approaching the time of year where when forecasting basis becomes much more difficult. Current market uncertainty will likely make crop basis this spring and summer particularly volatile, including upside potential and downside risk.. Visit the Purdue Crop Basis Tool at <https://ag.purdue.edu/commercialag/home/> to check current corn and soybean basis levels and historical basis trends for your local area.

-Purdue Center for Commercial Agriculture

“Current market uncertainty will likely make crop basis this spring and summer particularly volatile...”



Perry-Spencer Crop Day Recording Available

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 [Purdue Extension-Spencer County](https://www.facebook.com/Purdue-Extension-Spencer-County)

The recording of the presentations at the 2022 Perry-Spencer Crop Day program is now available. This year's program included corn and soybean production updates from Dr. Dan Quinn and Dr. Shaun Casteel, as well as a review of pesticide mini-bulk storage regulations.. Crop Day is an annual collaboration between Purdue Extension and Soil & Water Conservation Districts in Spencer and Perry Counties.

If you missed the program or would like to revisit any of the presentations, please see <https://youtu.be/bS7gynyC1hl> to view the recording.



HEALTH & HUMAN SCIENCES

*Bringing University information to the local level to strengthen families,
spend smart, eat right, and live well.*

Community Good Grant Funding Received for Life Skills Classes

“Teamwork makes the dream work” seems like an overused, cliché phrase, but we have found it to be absolutely true. In partnership with NOW Counseling in Rockport, Purdue Extension has been granted \$13,440 through the Spencer County Community Foundation’s Community Good Grant to provide life skills classes. The primary audience has previously been individuals utilizing NOW Counseling services, but the classes are open to anyone interested. Our focus is on goal setting, time management, stress management, job skills, nutrition, physical activity, and finances. We are so thankful to have strong community partners who are integral in helping us further our mission to bring university information to the local level and help people strengthen families, spend smart, eat right, and live well. For more information on life skills classes contact Megan at mjaspers@purdue.edu or call the Spencer County Extension Office.



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Substance Use Education Campaign

As part of a grant from the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), Purdue Extension offers a free online video series to educate communities about substance use. This series provides introductory education about what substance use looks like for different populations/environments, and how to start conversations about substance with someone you know. The latest video provides information about the rising concern of stimulant use in rural communities just like ours.

Please visit www.extension.purdue.edu/opioids to engage with the Substance Use Series.

To view the newest video about Stimulant Use in Rural Communities, visit:
www.extension.purdue.edu/opioids/#SSeries



Food Preservation Workshops Coming to our Area



If you are interested in learning how to preserve food, brushing up on the skills you already know, or trying new methods, you won't want to miss our upcoming food preservation workshops. There are multiple upcoming opportunities taking place at various locations. See the included flyers for additional details and information on how to sign up.



HOME PRESERVATION: BASICS OF FREEZING



Join us for a hands-on workshop that covers the basics of freezing fruits and vegetables safely.

APR. 14TH @ 5:30 PM
LIBRARY MEETING ROOM

Registration Required 812-749-3559



Safe & Simple Home Food Preservation

Learn safe and simple ways to preserve food in your own home! All workshops include lecture with resources and hands-on practice



Fermenting

May 11, 2022
5:30-7:30

Jams & Jellies

May 18, 2022
5:30-7:30

Pickling

May 25, 2022
5:30-7:30

Salsa

June 1, 2022
5:30-7:30

COST: \$25 per session (includes hands-on workshop and take-home product)

**scholarships available*

SPACE IS LIMITED – REGISTER TODAY!

Location: Ascension St. Vincent YMCA (516 Court St., Evansville)

To register, call Ascension St. Vincent YMCA at 812-423-9622
For more information, including scholarships, contact Meagan Brothers at 812-435-5287 or brotherm@purdue.edu

"Making the healthy choice, the easy choice."

Erin Meyer, RD, CDE
Community Wellness
Coordinator



National Public Health Week 2022
April 4-10, 2022

"Public Health is Where You Are"

Where we live impacts our communities' health. And we can make our communities healthier, stronger and safer! We're excited to announce our 2022 NPHW theme is **"Public Health is Where You Are."**

Start thinking about:

- Having support and feeling included within our social communities can have a positive effect on our mental and physical health. This lets us give back to our communities' health and make it stronger.
- While there are public health resources available where we live, some barriers may make it hard for us to get and use them. These could be physical, mental, financial, cultural and language barriers.
- Some communities have had a harder time than others. It is important to listen to the Black community and other communities of color, the LGBTQ+ community and people with disabilities. This way we can make sure public health is fair for all.

If you're already excited, APHA has been hosting NPHW events entirely online, to protect our partners and neighbors during the COVID-19 pandemic. Learn more about what APHA is doing, and what you can do to prepare without panic.

Working together, we can build healthier communities and, eventually, the healthiest nation. We need your help to get there. Join us!

<http://www.nphw.org/>

Shop Healthy on a Budget

With a little know-how and advance planning, you can enjoy nutritious foods while sticking to a tight budget.

Plan around Sales

The key to smart, budget-friendly grocery shopping is planning ahead. Plan meals around fresh produce, lean protein foods and low-fat dairy items that are on sale and in season to save money while eating healthy.

Check store sale flyers and available coupons on the same items for additional savings. Compare national brands and private store labels for the lowest price. Once you've identified sale items, incorporate them into simple meals – baked, grilled or broiled lean meats or fish served with vegetables and whole grains are delicious and healthy with few added ingredients. Also, use the unit price to compare cost between different sized packages of the same product.

Create a Shopping List

Use your weekly eating plan to create a master grocery list and stick to it. Prioritize your food dollars for nutrient-rich vegetables, fruits, low-fat dairy, lean protein foods and whole grains. To keep your grocery list from growing too long, prepare meals that include similar ingredients throughout the week.

In the Produce Section

When it comes to fresh vegetables and fruits, shop seasonally. Local, seasonal produce is at its peak flavor and is generally more abundant, so it's usually sold at a lower price.

Frozen or Canned Alternatives

If the produce item you want isn't in season or doesn't fit in your budget, consider purchasing it frozen or canned. Fresh, frozen, canned or dried fruits and vegetables can be good for you. Canned and frozen fruits and vegetables are picked at peak freshness and can be just as nutritious as fresh foods because canning and freezing preserves many nutrients. Canned and frozen foods offer an alternative to fresh and may be more budget friendly. Be sure to check the ingredients list to avoid items with added sugars or salt.

At the Meat Counter

Consider purchasing a larger quantity of meat that is on sale and preparing enough for two or more meals. Enjoy leftovers later in the week or freeze for future use. Because meat is often the highest dollar ingredient in a recipe, consider planning meatless meals a few nights each week, or try replacing half the meat in dishes such as chili, meatloaf or burger patties with beans, finely minced mushrooms, or chopped vegetables. Incorporating more non-meat proteins, including beans, nuts and eggs, can be cost-effective and nutritious.

Whole Grains and Dry Goods

Whole grains and dried beans are generally inexpensive and are an easy way to get more nutrition for your buck. Stock up on these nonperishable items when on sale or take advantage of the bulk bin by purchasing only the amount you need. Dried beans, peas and lentils are great options to keep on hand. You can buy in bulk, prepare ahead of time and then freeze so you always have protein and fiber-rich foods on hand.

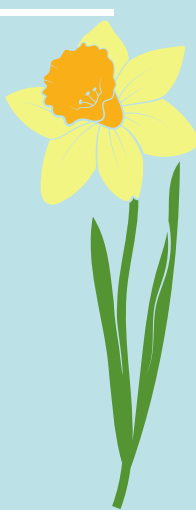
Reduce Waste

Once you've done your shopping, make the most of your food spending by cutting down on waste. Plan to use highly perishable items – such as fish and seafood, salad greens, berries and fresh herbs – early in the week, and save more hearty items for later in the week. Enjoy leftovers for lunch or create new meals from leftover ingredients. Cooked meat and vegetables can be revamped as a filling for a casserole, frittata or soup.

<https://www.eatright.org/food/planning-and-prep/smart-shopping/shop-healthy-on-a-budget>



APRIL-MAY 2022 4-H NEWSLETTER



4-H Fair T-Shirt

Southern Indiana Power generously donates our 4-H Fair t-shirts yearly. Each youth and volunteer will need to go into 4HOnline and under your profile in "Events", there will be a place to input your t-shirt size. Please have this done by May 1st. If you do not have a t-shirt size in by this time we can not guarantee you will have a fair shirt. If you need any assistance with registration or selecting projects, please contact the office at (812) 362-8066.

4-H Camp

4-H Camp applications are currently open for all 3rd-6th grade youth. Applications are being taken this year through 4HOnline under "Events". Payment will need to be dropped off or mailed to the Spencer County Extension Office.

Please note, due to a change in University Minor Safety Policy, youth will not be allowed to leave camp and return. I know this is a change from previous years so please contact me if you have any questions.

Take Off with Rocket College

April 30th we will again host a rocket workshop, or Rocket College, depending on which 4-H'er you ask. Youth will build and have the opportunity to launch their own rocket. Call the Extension Office to register and cost of participation is \$10/youth. You do not need to be a current 4-H'er to attend this event.

If you do not launch your rocket the day of the event this will meet the requirements of the aerospace project for beginners at the 4-H fair.

4-H Trip Award Winners

Congratulations to our 2022 4-H Trip Award Winners:

4-H Round-Up

Madeline Schaefer
Emma Aldridge
Hadley Leiberling
Kendra Hagedorn
Samantha Dilger
Cora Lasher
Oliver Pund

4-H Band

Quinn Keller



We look forward to more applications next year and another great group of youth attending trips!

Project Check-In Reminder

This year the 4-H Fair dates will be June 24th-27th with fair clean-up the 28th. Project check-in will be the Saturday before fair on June 18th in the morning. As we have done in the past, if you are unable to be present on the 18th for community judging we will work with you to have your projects judged. A fair set-up date will be sent out after the April 4-H Association meeting. The 4-H Fair schedule is also being finalized and will be sent in April/May.

Important Dates

Please mark your calendars with these important dates

- April 18- Camp Counselor Training 1 VU Ft. Branch
- April 30- Rocket College Workshop
- May 9th- YQCA (required for all youth exhibiting livestock)
- May 10- Camp Counselor Training 2 VU Ft. Branch
- May 16- Leaders Meeting
- June 5- 4-H Camp Counselor Training 3 Santa Claus Camp
- June 6-8- 4-H Camp
- June 18- Project Judging
- June 24-27- 4-H Fair

Purdue Extension—Spencer County

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Extension Mailing List Update

Last month you should have received a letter in the mail regarding our effort to update our mailing list, along with a return postcard to indicate your preferences on how you would like to receive information from Purdue Extension. Since then, we have realized return postage was not included on the postcards as originally intended and that a few letters did not contain postcards. We apologize for this.

Please feel free to affix your own postage to the postcard and return via mail, drop the postcard off at the Extension office, or respond online at the link below. If you did not receive a postcard, please let us know or update your info at the link below. We hope to hear from you!

<https://bit.ly/3LNiiLx>

To ensure you continue receiving our newsletter and other updates, please update your contact information and preferences at the link or QR Code at the right at your earliest convenience.



Extension - Spencer County