

ALLEN EXPRESS

Welcome to the Allen Express!!

The Purdue Extension - Allen County staff are thrilled to launch this exciting new way to connect with you — our vibrant community of learners, growers, and changemakers! Whether you're passionate about *Agriculture & Natural Resources*, curious about *Health & Human Sciences*, inspired by *4-H Youth Development*, excited to grow with *Horticulture & Urban Agriculture*, or eager to explore *Community Development*, this newsletter is your go-to source for fresh ideas, upcoming events, expert tips, and local impact stories. Each month we will bring you a new edition with the latest from our dedicated educators and volunteer groups, all working to empower Allen County through research-based knowledge and hands-on learning.

You can subscribe to this free e-newsletter at <http://bit.ly/allenexpress>. Anyone in our 4-H Online, MGManager, or Extension Homemakers lists will automatically receive the newsletter each month. If you would like a physical copy mailed to you, please reach out to our office for this service. There is an annual fee of \$20 for a printed newsletter.

Let's grow together—one issue at a time!

James Wolff

County Extension Director
Purdue Extension - Allen County

OUR HIGHLIGHTS

ANNUAL MEETING SEPT. 10

Join us as we highlight the amazing things our staff and volunteers have accomplished during the last year. More information on page 8.

4-H ENROLLMENT OPENS OCT. 1

Enrollment for 4-H members and volunteers begins on Oct. 1. Don't wait to enroll and gain access to exciting youth programs we offer.

JOHNNIE MAE FARM MARKETS

Johnnie Mae Farm will continue to operate its market in September and October on Fridays from 2-6 pm. Come see what we have to offer.



SUMMER HIGHLIGHTS

PLANT, PICK, PLATE LAUNCH PARTY

Purdue Extension and the City of Fort Wayne celebrated the launch of the Plant, Pick, Plate program to be held at Johnnie Mae Farm for the next year. This program aims to teach middle school kids in Southeast Fort Wayne how to grow, harvest, and cook their own food and gives each participant free enrollment in 4-H.

The celebration invited the community to come together for fellowship and engaging activities. Attendees were able to plant herbs to grow at home in jars used by Johnnie Mae, get exercise by making art on the spin art bike, learn to make healthy snacks from produce grown on the farm, and get books from the Allen County Public Library. The event included remarks from Sharon Tucker, Mayor of Fort Wayne, and guests from the US Conference of Mayors and the American Beverage Association, who sponsored the program.

The theme of the day was to encourage development of healthy habits and community engagement. Visit <http://bit.ly/3HWGhAa> for more information on how you can get involved in the Plant, Pick, Plate Program.



BE A TOURIST IN YOUR OWN HOMETOWN

Fort Wayne's annual *Be A Tourist In Your Own Hometown* returns on Sunday, Sept. 7! Come explore our beautiful Display Gardens at the Allen County Extension Office. Carefully planned and lovingly maintained by the Allen County Master Gardeners, these gardens showcase a wide variety of plants that thrive right here in our local climate and soil. You might pick up some gardening tips—and even a little inspiration for your own yard!

Be sure to include us in your adventure on Sunday, Sept. 7 from 12-5 p.m.

Passports will be available for download or pickup at select locations around Fort Wayne! For more information, please visit <https://www.visitfortwayne.com/events/be-a-tourist>

SEPTEMBER EVENTS

07

BE A TOURIST IN YOUR OWN HOMETOWN

Stop by the Allen County Extension Office from 12-5 p.m. on Sept. 7 to explore our beautiful Display Gardens, planned and maintained by Master Gardeners.

10

NEPAC FIELD DAY

Purdue Extension is hosting a Field Day on Sept. 10 at 8:30 a.m. at NEPAC in Columbia City, featuring presentations on crops, soil, and disease management

10

ALLEN COUNTY ANNUAL MEETING

Join us from 4-6 p.m. on Sept. 10 at Citizens Square as we highlight the amazing things our staff and volunteers have accomplished during the last year.

20

NATURE NAVIGATORS

Join us from 10 a.m. - 1 p.m. on Sept. 20 at Chain-O-Lakes State Park as we learn about local flora and fauna while participating in fun hands-on activities

Full calendar at:
puext.in/allen

4-H YOUTH DEVELOPMENT

Rebecca Doerhman
rcclay@purdue.edu



OPEN ENROLLMENT BEGINS OCT. 1!

Are you ready to learn, lead, and make lifelong friendships? Starting **Oct. 1**, youth in grades K-12 can enroll in 4-H, a nationwide organization that empowers youth through hands-on learning experiences. Whether you're passionate about animals, science, art, or leadership, 4-H offers something for everyone. Members can explore new hobbies, build public speaking skills, boost their confidence, and prepare for a successful future—all while being part of a supportive community. More information about 4-H is at puext.in/allen4H. Don't miss out—sign up today at 4-H Online and start your journey with 4-H!



PROJECT WARRIORS!

Allen County 4-H, Homemaker, and Master Gardener Volunteers—do you have a hidden talent you'd love to teach? We're looking for volunteers to lead monthly workshops on 4-H project skills like baking, scrapbooking, flower arranging, and more. Workshops can run 1-4 hours and be held at the Extension office, Fairgrounds, libraries, or other local venues. Let us know at least a month in advance so we can promote your session and prep materials. Interested? Email Erin at emcbain@purdue.edu



NATURE LOVER'S HIKING

Explore Indiana's Wild Side! Youth in grades 3-12 can join a four-part adventure series in Indiana State Parks, featuring kayaking, bison feeding, hiking, and tobogganing. Each participant will earn special pins while learning about local wildlife. **Cost is \$30 (includes shirt, fees, activities, pins & snacks)**. Register at NatureNavigators.4honline.com or contact Rebecca at rcclay@purdue.edu or **260-481-6826**. Volunteers welcome!



FALL ARCHERY

4-H Fall Archery registration is open! Orientation will be held on **Sept. 10 from 6-7 p.m.** in the Allen County Fair Grounds Administration Building. Classes will begin **Sunday, Sept. 14, beginners 12-1:30 p.m. and advanced 2-3 p.m.** You must be in grades 3-12 and enrolled in 4-H to participate. If you have any questions, please call Stephenie at **260-481-6440**. Please enroll at <https://bit.ly/3UzPh0V>



MEET YOUR EDUCATOR

CORA HILL, URBAN AG & HORTICULTURE

Cora Hill has been with Purdue Extension - Allen County since June 2024. She has a degree in agricultural education from Purdue University and enjoys helping people learn about plants and gardening.

She is also the coordinator for the Allen County Extension Master Gardener volunteer program. Working with a group of volunteers

who are so dedicated and passionate about making a difference in the community has been a highlight of her role as coordinator.

If you have any questions for Cora, email her at hill272@purdue.edu or call the Extension office at **260-481-6826**.

PLANT PEST ISSUE

POISON HEMLOCK

Poison hemlock is a very common toxic weed in our area, and it can be hard to deal with! This highly toxic weed is most dangerous when ingested by people or animals, but it can also cause skin irritation in some individuals. In addition, burning poison hemlock is not safe, as inhaling the smoke can be harmful.

This plant is a biennial, meaning it grows leaves, stems, and roots during its first year (called vegetative growth), then produces flowers and goes to seed in

its second year (reproductive growth). The best time to control it is during the first year before it flowers. Unfortunately, it often goes unnoticed at this stage because it grows low to the ground and can blend into other vegetation.

In its second year, poison hemlock becomes much easier to spot, growing as tall as three to eight feet and producing clusters of small white flowers. It is commonly mistaken for wild carrot, also known as Queen Anne's Lace, but one key

difference is the presence of purple blotches on poison hemlock's stems.

If caught early, small infestations can be managed by carefully hand-pulling the plants—just be sure to wear gloves, long sleeves, and long pants to prevent skin contact. Herbicides like glyphosate or 2,4-D can be effective in the first year of growth, particularly when plants are still under six inches tall. Once the plant flowers in its second year, the most effective method is mowing since they are

near the end of their life cycle and herbicides are much less likely to be effective. However, keep in mind that if you find second-year plants, there are likely first-year plants growing nearby that will need to be addressed with either hand-pulling or herbicide treatment.

As always, when using herbicides or any pesticide, it's essential to read and follow the label directions—the label is the law.



NEPAC FIELD DAY

SEPT. 10 - FREE PROGRAM

Purdue Extension is hosting a field day for farmers and agribusiness professionals on Sept. 10 at 8:30 a.m. at the **Northeast Purdue Agricultural Center (NEPAC)**, 4821 E. 400 S, Columbia City, IN.

Presentation topics include cover crops, soil fertility, crop disease update, and a corn production update. Participants can receive private applicator recertification program credit. Indiana Corn Marketing Council and Indiana Soybean Alliance will be sponsoring the individual \$10 fee. Commercial applicator CCHs and Certified Crop Adviser CEUs are also available.

Register online at <https://purdue.link/NEPAC2025> by Sept. 3. You may also contact the Whitley County Extension Office at **260-244-7615**.

*If you have any need for accommodations to attend this program, need an interpreter or translator, or special dietary needs, please contact **John Woodmansee** by **Aug. 27** at **260-244-7615** or jwoodman@purdue.edu.*

Anyone under 18 must be accompanied by a parent or guardian. Purdue University is an equal access, equal opportunity university.



AG CLIMATE DASHBOARD

FROM PEST & CROP NEWSLETTER

The **Midwestern Regional Climate Center (MRCC)**, with support from the United Soybean Board, has launched the Ag Climate Dashboard; a digital hub offering streamlined access to integrated climate and agricultural data and decision-support tools for producers, advisors and researchers in the Midwest.

Designed to support on-farm decision-making, the dashboard offers up-to-date weather data, National Weather Service forecasts, Climate Prediction Center outlooks, historical records and interactive tools for monitoring crop growth, pest threats, climate anomalies and extreme weather events.

The dashboard also connects users to regional ag climate products and a variety of state-specific resources. Full article at <https://bit.ly/46VCQE7>

PESTICIDE APPLICATORS

INDIANA FOOD VISION

As we head into harvest season, we are also quickly approaching the end of the calendar year when many private pesticide applicators need to renew their licenses.

Here are a few tips to help make sure you maintain your license.

1. Verify you have three (3) credits by calling the Extension office, State Chemist, or visiting

<https://bit.ly/palookup>

2. If you need a program (or two), you can find upcoming programs listed at <https://bit.ly/paeast>

3. You will receive a letter around October. Complete the form and return with payment to the Office of the **Indiana State Chemist (OISC)**.

If you have questions, you can call the OISC at **765-494-1492** or your local Extension Office.

HOME-BASED VENDORS (HBV)

HANDBOOK AVAILABLE

Purdue and the **Indiana Dept. of Health (IDOH)** is proud to publish the Indiana Home-Based Vendor Handbook. With the integration of academic resources and state laws, this handbook is intended to serve as a guide to identify food products that can be safely prepared and sold within the State of Indiana under HBV Regulations.

If HBVs have questions regarding allowable products, they should contact the local health department where they intend to sell the product. Questions may also be submitted to the IDOH Retail Food Program by emailing retailfoodprogram@health.in.gov. Questions related to product formulation, testing, and potential projects can be directed to Purdue's **Food Entrepreneurship and Manufacturing Institute (FEMI)** by emailing femi@purdue.edu.

[View Handbook Here](#)



MEET YOUR EDUCATOR

CAROLINE EVERIDGE, HEALTH & HUMAN SCIENCE EDUCATOR

Caroline Everidge joined the Allen County Purdue Extension team in January 2025 after working with Huntington County Purdue Extension for 5 years. She holds a Bachelor of Social Work from Ball State University, a Master of Social Work from Indiana University, and is currently pursuing her Ed.D. in Adult and Community Education at Ball State.

As a Licensed Social Worker, Caroline is passionate about social justice. Her Extension work focuses on supporting adults involved in the justice system and those in substance use recovery. She also leads anti-poverty efforts and serves on the statewide Bridges Out of Poverty team. Caroline is proud to serve the Allen County community.

A graduate of R. Nelson Snider High School, she grew up in Southeast Fort Wayne and previously worked with local anti-poverty initiatives before Purdue Extension.

ADVISORY BOARD CALL-OUT MEETING

Your perspective is crucial in shaping our programs. You're invited to join our first Health & Human Sciences Advisory Board meeting on Sept. 16 at 12 p.m. at the Extension Office (4001 Crescent Ave). A light lunch will be provided. Please RSVP by emailing Caroline at cneverid@purdue.edu by Sept 9.



JMF FALL HEALTH FAIR ON OCT. 4

Join us for a hands-on, family-friendly wellness event on Saturday, Oct. 4 from 9-11 a.m. at the beautiful Johnnie Mae Farm, located at 2518 Winter Street in Fort Wayne.

This gathering will focus on health, wellness, and community connection, featuring interactive activities, seasonal refreshments, and local resources.

Vendors and community partners are welcome to participate! If you're interested in being a vendor or partner, please register by Sept. 19 at <http://bit.ly/4oWnGF6>.



PROGRAM HIGHLIGHT

ARTS-BASED WELLNESS WITH KOSCIUSKO COUNTY JCAP

Through hands-on art activities, participants in the Kosciusko County JCAP program explored self-expression, emotional regulation, and personal growth in a supportive, judgment-free environment. These weekly sessions use creative projects like painting, collage, and mixed media to encourage reflection, build confidence, and promote healing as part of the recovery journey.



COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Cheyanne Geideman
cgeidema@purdue.edu

MEET YOUR EDUCATOR

CHEYANNE GEIDEMAN, COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Cheyanne Geideman joined the Purdue Extension - Allen County team in February 2025 as the Community Development educator. Originally from northeast Indiana, she went to Purdue University for college where she earned a BS in Visual Communication Design. Then, she worked at **Purdue Center for Regional Development (PCRD)** while pursuing her Masters in International Community Development.

She has focused her career on addressing the digital divide in Indiana. Cheyanne helped lead the creation of Indiana's first state-wide Digital Opportunity plan, as well as community and regional level plans to address broadband access and adoption in Indiana and Illinois. She is excited to continue this work to help Allen County residents take full advantage of the digital age.

In addition to digital divide elimination programming, Cheyanne plans to bring other successful Purdue Extension Community Development programming to the county including the Beginner's Guide to Grant Writing Workshop and the Facilitative Leadership training. To check out these programs and more, visit **cdext.purdue.edu**.

Cheyanne brings lots of ideas to Allen County. She enjoys meeting new people, listening to their stories, and helping them build strong, thriving communities. She would love to get to know you and your organization to better know the community. If you are interested in connecting with Cheyanne, you can email her at **cgeidema@purdue.edu** or give our office a call at **260-481-8626**.





Extension

COMING SOON

THE DIGITAL

AMBASSADOR

PROGRAM

HELP YOUR COMMUNITY GET CONNECTED

BECOME A DIGITAL AMBASSADOR VOLUNTEER

SCAN QR CODE TO JOIN OUR INTEREST LIST



The Digital Ambassador Volunteer program trains community members across the state of Indiana to act as digital experts in their communities. Volunteers will learn about digital applications and adult learning concepts to serve as experts for their families and fellow community members. If you are interested in becoming a volunteer, visit:

<https://bit.ly/davolunteernow>.

ALLEN COUNTY ANNUAL MEETING

Join us for the Allen County Extension Board Annual Meeting!

4-6 p.m., Omni Room, Citizens Square, 200 E Berry St, Fort Wayne

This open house will showcase the impact of Purdue Extension programs in Allen County. Enjoy updates from our educators, networking opportunities, and light refreshments.

Remarks will be given by James Wolff at 5 p.m., followed by a brief business meeting.

If you are in need of accommodations to attend this program, please contact Purdue Extension - Allen County office

prior to the meeting at **260-481-6826** or **allences@purdue.edu** by Sept. 3, 2025.

If you need an interpreter or translator, please contact the **Purdue Extension - Allen County** office prior to the meeting at **260-481-6826** or **allences@purdue.edu** by Sept. 3, 2025.

If you have dietary restrictions, please contact the Purdue Extension - Allen County office prior to the meeting at **260-481-6826** or **allences@purdue.edu** by Sept. 3, 2025.



PURDUE EXTENSION - ALLEN COUNTY

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