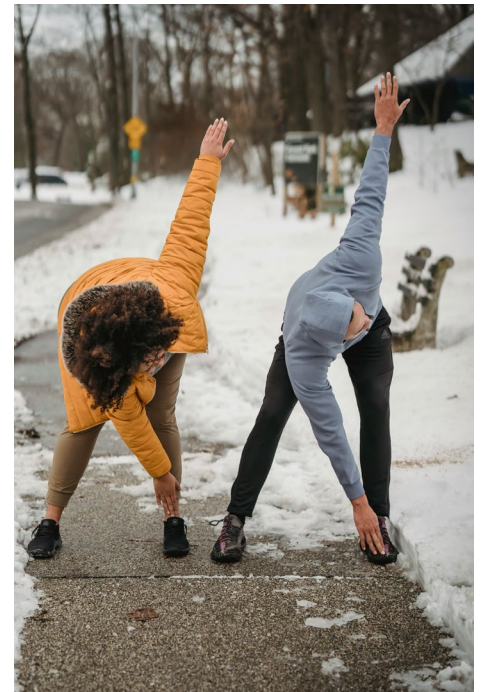


## Stay Active This Winter: Tips for Exercising in the Cold

Winter doesn't have to freeze your fitness routine! With the right preparation and precautions, outdoor exercise can be invigorating and enjoyable. Here are some essential tips to keep moving safely during the colder months.

- **Dress Dry, Not Just Warm:** Staying dry is key to staying comfortable. Opt for moisture-wicking fabrics as your base layer to keep sweat off your skin. Cotton absorbs moisture and can leave you feeling damp and chilly.
- **Layer Up:** Wear multiple thin layers to trap heat and allow for flexibility. Start with a moisture-wicking base layer, add an insulating layer like fleece, and top it off with a waterproof and windproof outer layer to shield against the elements.
- **Wear Bright Colors:** Shorter days and low light conditions can make it harder for others to see you. Bright, reflective clothing and accessories will keep you visible to vehicles, cyclists, and other pedestrians.
- **Protect Your Extremities and Skin:** Cold weather pulls heat away from exposed areas, so wear gloves, a hat, and warm socks. Use a scarf or face mask to shield your nose and cheeks. Don't forget sunscreen and lip balm with SPF—UV rays can still harm your skin in winter.
- **Warm Up:** Muscles are tighter in colder temperatures, increasing the risk of injury. Take 5-10 minutes to do dynamic stretches or light cardio to prepare your body for exercise.
- **Breathe Right:** Cold air can irritate your respiratory system. Breathe through your nose when possible to warm and humidify the air before it reaches your lungs. A scarf or mask over your mouth can help as well.
- **Head Into the Wind First:** Start your workout heading into the wind so you'll have it at your back on the return. This reduces the risk of getting too cold from sweat being pushed against you.
- **Avoid Certain Conditions:** Skip outdoor workouts during extreme weather like freezing rain, heavy snow, or icy conditions to prevent accidents. Instead, consider indoor alternatives like a treadmill or yoga.



Don't let winter weather slow you down. With these tips, you can stay safe, warm, and active all season long!

**Check out the Chris LaCosse Park in Morocco for your winter workouts. There is a paved ½-mile track and our new Fitness Zone featuring 11 pieces of equipment to provide a full-body workout. The physical address is 614 E Michigan Avenue, Morocco (it is just east of the Dollar General).**

# Decluttering for a Fresh Start



January is the perfect time to start fresh by decluttering your home and your life. The thought process behind decluttering is simple: ask yourself whether you truly use or love each item. If you haven't used it in the past year, it might be time to let it go. Divide your belongings into three categories: keep, donate, or throw away. Items you use regularly or hold dear can stay, but consider donating things in good condition that no longer serve you, and toss anything broken or unusable.

To make decluttering manageable, start small. Focus on one drawer, shelf, or closet at a time to avoid feeling overwhelmed. Use tools like the "four-box method," where you label boxes for items to keep, donate, trash, or relocate. Setting aside just 15 minutes a day or dedicating a weekend can make a huge difference. For papers and photos, consider digitizing them to save space while preserving memories.

The benefits of decluttering go beyond a tidier home. A cleaner space creates a calmer environment, making it easier to focus and find what you need. Letting go of unnecessary items can also lighten your mental load, reduce stress, and even improve your health by cutting down on dust and allergens. Start the new year with a renewed sense of order and clarity—decluttering is a gift you give yourself, both now and for the future.

## Don't Skip a Beat this Valentine's Day

Valentine's Day is the perfect time to celebrate love—not just for others but for yourself too. One of the greatest acts of self-love is taking care of your heart, the organ that powers your life. Heart disease remains a leading health concern, but many of its risk factors can be managed with healthy lifestyle choices. Avoiding smoking is one of the most impactful steps you can take to protect your heart. Smoking damages blood vessels, raises blood pressure, and increases the risk of heart disease. Quitting, or never starting, is a gift to your heart that pays lifelong dividends.

In addition to avoiding smoking, a heart-healthy lifestyle includes eating nutritious foods and maintaining a healthy weight. A balanced diet rich in fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and lean proteins helps lower cholesterol and blood pressure. Regular physical activity also supports a healthy weight and strengthens your heart. This Valentine's Day, show yourself some love by committing to these heart-healthy habits. Your heart works tirelessly for you—celebrate it by making choices that help it stay strong for years to come.





### 2024-2025 4-H Online Enrollment

It is that time again! 4-H Online enrollment is now open and free to all youth. This year the Newton County Government has graciously covered the enrollment fee for all 4-H members. Families will be able to access the online system to enroll their youth in the Newton County 4-H program. New families will create a family profile and add youth into 4-H, returning families will use the same login information as 2024. Please make sure to select cash/check and do not make a payment!

Website: [v2.4honline.com](http://v2.4honline.com)

### 4-H Camp Counselor Application

Have you had a positive experience in 4-H and want to help young members enjoy their involvement in the program? Consider being a 4-H Camp Counselor! Counselors must be enrolled in grades 9-12 and be willing to help 3<sup>rd</sup>-6<sup>th</sup> graders have a fun and safe stay at 4-H Camp. This year's camp will be held June 5-9 at Camp Tecumseh. Camp Counselor applications are due by January 8<sup>th</sup>. Contact the Extension Office for an application!



### Club Annual Reports and Financial Info

In January, the required annual Club Report and Financial Info forms will be mailed to one leader per club or project. The club secretary can complete the Club Report, which is a summary of the year's accomplishments. The Treasurer can help complete the 2-page Financial Report. All reports MUST be returned to the Extension Office **January 6<sup>th</sup>**.

### Volunteer Training

Volunteer enrollment is now open! If you are a returning volunteer, please follow the process on 4-H Online. If you are interested in becoming a volunteer, please email [brunton@purdue.edu](mailto:brunton@purdue.edu) to start the enrollment process!

Volunteer Training **MUST** be completed before attending any 4-H meetings and events!

### Scholarships



Looking for a way to pay for college? There are many scholarships available through the Indiana 4-H Program:

- **4-H Accomplishment (Grades 10<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup>):** YOU DO NOT NEED TO BE A SENIOR TO APPLY! This scholarship seeks to recognize youth who have excelled in life skills development through their 4-H activities and involvement. *Due January 25<sup>th</sup>.*
- **4-H Club (Senior in High School):** Awarded based on scholastic ability, financial need, and achievement in 4-H club work. *Due January 25<sup>th</sup>.*
- **Indiana 4-H Foundation Senior Year:** This scholarship is for individuals seeking post high school study or training (i.e., college, trade school, or short course). *Due January 25<sup>th</sup>.*
- **Newton County 4-H Council Scholarships:** This scholarship looks at 4-H achievement and community service. *Due February 1<sup>st</sup>.*

You can access applications on our 4-H Youth Development page at <https://extension.purdue.edu/county/newton/4-h-youth-development/index.html>.

If you missed the scholarship workshop last month, scholarship application information can be picked up at the extension office!

Don't forget Jasper Newton Foundation Scholarships are open through March 1<sup>st</sup>!

## Forget to send your post fair Thank You Cards? It's not too late!

Newton County Youth are very fortunate to have such a large community backing. There are many supporters (alumna, volunteers, and many more) who sponsor trophies and opportunities for youth in the community. **PLEASE make sure you are sending out thank you cards to your trophy donors and scholarship donors.** This is a very important lesson for youth to learn!

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## Life Lessons Virtual Series Workshop

Tuesdays, January 14<sup>th</sup>-March 4<sup>th</sup>, 6:00-7:00PM

Cost \$25

Do you know how to change a tire? How to manage your money? How to get that stain out of your favorite pair of jeans? Join Indiana 4-H's Life Lessons program for these answers and so much more! Adulting is hard, let us help make it easier!

Register at: <https://4HLifeLessons2025.4honline.com>



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## 4-H Building Rental for 4-H Events/Meetings

Looking for different space to hold a club meeting? Check out our beautiful 4-H Building!

Hear ye! Hear ye! The 4-H Building is ready for some fun. When scheduling your next meeting or activity, consider using the new 4-H Building at the fairgrounds. The building is available rent free for 4-H groups. Schedule your event with Pam, who can be reached at [lattapd@gmail.com](mailto:lattapd@gmail.com).

## Seeking Volunteers!

Do you have a passion for 4-H or a project? Have experience with youth and want to learn more about 4-H and how to get involved? Contact Mercedes at [brunton@purdue.edu](mailto:brunton@purdue.edu) for more information! We are looking for parents and community members to volunteer with the Newton County 4-H program!

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## Join Junior Leaders!

Are you a 7<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> grader? Want the opportunity to be a leader in the Newton County 4-H program? Join the Newton County Junior Leaders.

What do we do?

- Assist with planning Mini 4-H workshops
- Volunteer in the community
- Assist during the fair with 4-H project judging
- And so much more!

Contact Mercedes for meeting information!



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## 4-H Calendar

Want to stay connected? Check out our 4-H Calendar to see what is going on in 4-H Youth Development! You can access the calendar on our 4-H website at Purdue Extension Newton County 4-H Youth Development.



Why are eggs so expensive right now; the most expensive that I've found in the last few weeks was \$10/dozen! That was a value added brand, but there **is** a reason eggs in general are cost more than usual right now. Highly Parthenogenic Avian Influenza H5N1, HPAI for short, is a virus primarily affecting the poultry and dairy industries but has the ability to infect more than just those species.

### Detections in Animals

- **10,718** wild birds detected as of 12/10/2024
- **51** jurisdictions with bird flu in wild birds
- **122,960,216** poultry affected as of 12/13/2024
- **49** states with outbreaks in poultry
- **845** dairy herds affected as of 12/13/2024

**60** Confirmed Total  
Reported Human Cases in  
the United States

But CDC experts suspect that is it more widespread and being treated at home.

The current public health risk is low, the CDC is watching carefully to monitor the situation. If you see a group of dead wild birds with no obvious cause, you can report it to Indiana's DNR. Otherwise look for these signs in any domesticated fowl or cattle.

#### **Cattle:**

- Decreased milk production
  - Cow almost appears to go dry
- Thick, colostrum-like milk
- Reduced feed consumption
- Diarrhea and a rapid heart rate
- Increased fiber passage in manure
- Lots of NASAL DISCHARGE, enough to blow bubbles

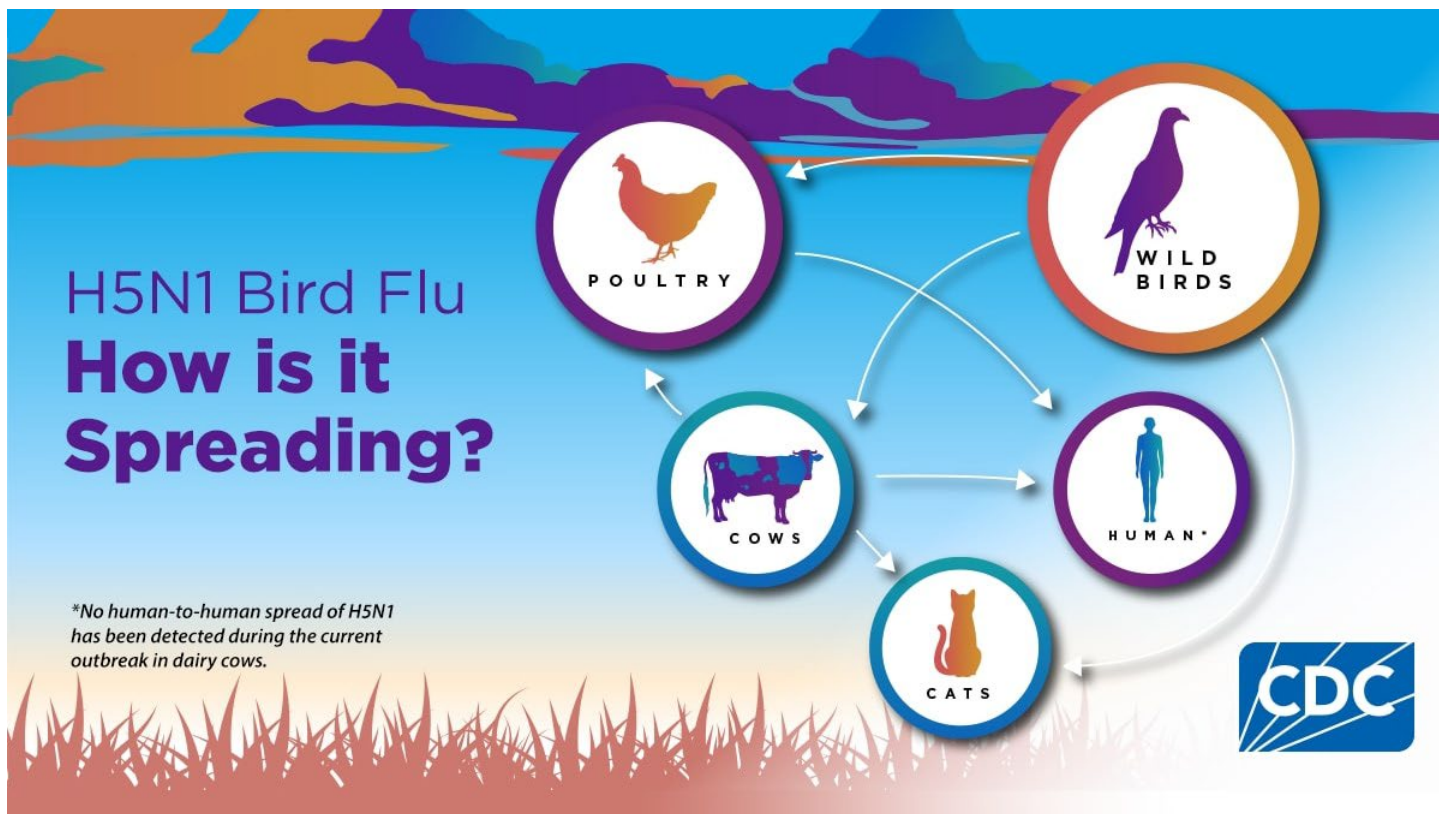
#### **Poultry:**

- Lack of energy, appetite, and coordination
- Purple discoloration or swelling
- Diarrhea
- Nasal discharge, coughing, sneezing
- Reduced egg Production
- Soft-shelled or misshapen eggs

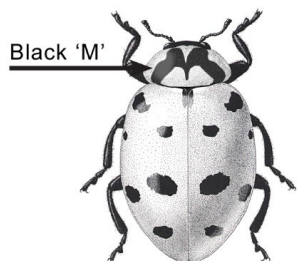


<https://www.aphis.usda.gov/livestock-poultry-disease/avian/avian-influenza/hpai-livestock>

Barn cats are serving as a canary in a coal mine for this disease. Watch your cats because they become unusually lethargic, lose coordination, and blindness is common. Jason Hartschuh, a dairy specialist from OSU, said that if you can walk up to a feral cat that previously wouldn't let you get close, it's a good sign to look for dead birds around feed and water.



## Featured Insect: Harmonia axyridis or Asian Lady Beetle



**Description:** The particular species of lady beetle has become a home invading pest and is relatively new to our area. This species looks like most other lady beetles and is also effective in controlling some pests but it is known for congregating in large groups in and on buildings during the colder months.

**Identification:** Color and spot pattern varies from beetle to beetle. The most apparent identifying character that Asian lady beetles share is a black 'M' inscribed on their thorax, just above the wing covers. Some M's are darker and more obvious than others, but their presence is generally a good diagnostic tool.

**Damage:** They do not directly damage anything in the home, do not infest stored food and do not destroy household furnishings. Their presence is simply an annoying nuisance. Not only do Asian lady beetles become a nuisance by flying into living areas, dropping from light fixtures, and bumping into people but they also release a foul smelling material when handled or disturbed. A more serious threat may be that if accumulations of dead beetles are not cleaned up, particles of dried and crushed beetle bodies may become airborne and complicate allergies or asthma if inhaled by occupants.

**Management:** My personal tactic is to use a vacuum, just make sure you empty the container afterwards because live beetles can crawl back out. Chemical methods of control can also be used, but that leaves dead beetles lying around and may not reach all beetles that may be hiding inside walls. Perimeter pesticides in the late fall will help prevent beetles from getting into the home. In most circumstances, a combination of several control methods is the best answer to Asian lady beetle problems. Preventing beetles from entering the home is the best and most effective control practice.



Link: <https://extension.entm.purdue.edu/publications/E-214/E-214.html>