

EXTENSION CONNECTION



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Extension - Whitley County

JAN – FEB 2024

In this issue:

Health & Human Sciences

- Homemaker Happenings
- Six Smart Ways to Financially Start 2024
- Where Does Your \$ Go?
- Teach Kiddos about Finance
- Crockpot Chicken Recipe

4-H Youth

- 4-H Calendar
- Enrollment Reminder
- Fish Fry Meal/Silent Auction
- 4-H Enrollment Reminder!
- Open House – Feb. 23
- Scholarships/Loans

Ag & Natural Resources

- Purdue Top Farmer Conf.
- Beginning Farmer Workshop
- Fort Wayne Farm Show
- Indiana Hort Conf. & Expo
- Crop Mgmt. Workshop
- Indiana Small Farms Conf.
- Employer of Choice Program

Dear Friends of Extension:

Happy New Year!! As we enter another year of educational programs and activities, carefully check the calendars in this issue and take note of the times, dates and locations. The Purdue Extension - Whitley County Office offers a variety of research-based information to help you in your day-to-day living and business.

4-H Enrollment . . . Get Enrolled Today!

Enrollment can be completed online at <https://v2.4honline.com> or paper form. If the 4-Her does not have access to a computer, a paper enrollment form may be requested from the Extension Office at 260-244-7615 or schradel@purdue.edu.



2024 Whitley County 4-H Fair Dates - July 12 – 18



REMINDER:

Winter weather can be challenging for travel and schedules. Our winter cancellation policy is as follows: If any public-school corporation in Whitley County is closed for a bad weather day, we may postpone any in-person Extension meeting scheduled for that day or evening. Call the Extension Office (260-244-7615), www.extension.purdue.edu/whitley, or look us up as Purdue Extension – Whitley County at www.facebook.com to check if you're unsure.

Handouts, Publications, Copies

In an effort to be responsible with our Extension Office budget and your tax dollars, we have adopted the following policy for copies and publications.

Educational materials will be provided at no cost. Educational materials include: agendas, secretary minutes, treasurer reports, member/leader contact lists, handouts, publications or flyers for educational programs, calendar of events, awards programs, annual meeting materials.

Non-educational materials will incur a nominal fee & include: fund-raising activities (tickets, flyers, registration forms), parties, cookouts or social activities. **Copy Cost:** Black & White - 10¢/side; Black & White (2 sided) - 20¢; Color - 25¢/side; Color (2 sided) - 50¢; **Laminating Cost:** 8 ½ x 11 - \$1.00; Business card size - 50¢.

Education Store

Are you looking for resources, documentation, facts, figures, plans, guides, and/or research-based information? You may find what you are looking for at the Purdue Education Store. This website, provided by Purdue Extension, includes information in the broad categories of: agriculture; community; environment; food, family and garden; and youth. Information comes in many different forms, such as: print, free online, apps, software, video, workshops and special promotions. Much of the information is free, other resources have a nominal fee. Visit the website: edustore.purdue.edu or call the Extension Office, 260-244-7615.

Purdue Extension Career Website

Are you a recent college graduate looking for a job? Are you mid-career & need a change? Have you recently moved to the area or are looking to enter or re-enter the workforce? Purdue Extension offers unique challenges and a rewarding career.

The website: <https://extension.purdue.edu/careers/current-openings> contains a list of current Extension Educator openings, and information on how to apply, frequently asked questions & employee benefits. Todd Geiger, John Woodmansee and Brittney Schori, Extension Educators are also available to answer questions at: 260-244-7615.



Todd  John  Brittney  Jacki  Lisa  Candy

You are invited to the Whitley County Master Gardener's 8th Symposium

Please join us for the eighth gardening symposium, Nature's Brilliance, in Whitley County on **Saturday, February 17, 2024, from 8:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.** The public is invited to this educational presentation sponsored by the Whitley County Master Gardeners. Our goals for this symposium are to:

- ✓ increase your knowledge of sound gardening practices.
- ✓ provide you with information on current gardening techniques.
- ✓ provide you with options to improve your landscape.
- ✓ introduce you to different types of plants.

Topics and speakers include:

- Container Gardening of all Types, by Jo Ellen Myers Sharp
- It's Only Natural: Backyard Habitat and Native Gardening 101, by Mary Cutler, Naturalist
- Back for the Future: Native Plantings for Water Quality by Brad Clayton, Clayton Garden Center
- Invasive Species, John Woodmansee, Extension Educator
- Hydrangeas, by Kim Jewell, Whitley County Master Gardener

The symposium features several area garden suppliers and crafters along with informational booths. Please stop by and visit them. This is a great opportunity to learn what new and exciting things are in store for the 2024 growing season. Vendors to date include:

- Harold Myers: Woodworking
- Ryan Baker: Country View Greenhouse
- Mary Miller: Embroidered towels.
- Doris and Stan Horn: Bird houses, wood crafts
- Tractor Supply Columbia City: Plant a seed program
- Schaller Greenhouse
- Lisa Bowers: Resin Art
- Clayton's Garden Center
- WC Master Gardeners table
- WC magazine sales table

The cost of the symposium is \$40/person, which includes lunch.

Search for the event at <https://www.eventbrite.com/> or use the QR code above. (There is a small added fee when paying online). We have paper flyers in the Extension office you can pick up, or we can send you a copy. It also has a registration form that can be filled out and returned to the Extension office if you wish to pay by check.



Register online using QR code



Crock Pot Salsa Verde Chicken

This warm, satisfying dish is so simple and delicious! The crock pot is a great way to meld flavors together. The salsa in this recipe mingles with the chicken juices to make a thick, tangy sauce that tastes wonderful. You can serve this inside taco shells, over rice, or mixed with pasta.

Ingredients:

- 1 ½ cups salsa verde
- 1 teaspoon onion powder
- 1 teaspoon ground cumin
- 2 lbs. boneless, skinless chicken breasts
- 1 Tablespoon fresh garlic (I use the stuff in the jar 😊)
- 1 fresh jalapeno (some of the canned stuff will work also)
- Salt and pepper to taste



Directions:

1. Wash and dry produce. If using fresh jalapeno, slice thinly and remove seeds. If you want additional spice, opt to keep some or all of the seeds!
2. Add the chicken, salsa verde, jalapeno, and spices to a 6-8 quart crock pot. Close the lid and set it to low for 6-7 hours or on high for 3-4 hours.
3. When chicken is fully cooked or the internal temperature reaches 165 degrees F, remove and shred with two forks. Add chicken back to your crock pot and stir.
4. Taste and season with salt and pepper if needed. Be mindful that there might be salt in the salsa verde that you use.
5. Serve in taco shells topped with your favorite toppings, over rice, or mixed with pasta and vegetables.

4-H OPEN HOUSE:

WINTER WONDER THRU 4-H

Friday, February 23, 2024

5:30-7:00 p.m.

4-H Center, Whitley County 4-H Fairgrounds

Open to all youth in grades Kindergarten through Grade 12. There will be kid's games, door prizes, etc. Come and learn about the Mini 4-H and 4-H program, new 4-H activities for 2024, meet 4-H Club Leaders and Extension Office Staff.

Maker Experience #3

Wednesday, February 14, 2024

6:00 – 8:00 p.m.

4-H Center, Whitley County 4-H Fairgrounds

More details to come. Be watching your email and our social media pages!!

Open to all youth in grades 3-12

Extension Homemaker Happenings



Date	Event	Time	Location
JANUARY			
1	Office Closed for New Year's Holiday		
15	Office Closed for Martin Luther King Jr Day		
FEBRUARY			
6	President's Council Meeting.....	9:30 a.m.....	Extension Office
17	Souper Saturday.....	11:30 a.m.....	4-H Center West Room
19	Office Closed for President's Day		
22	March/April Newsletter Mailing: (helpers: Jefferson and Tawasi)	10:00 a.m.....	Extension Office
28	Volunteer forms due to your Club President		



THANK YOU ~ to these Extension Homemakers who folded and labeled the November-December Extension Educator: Club 21 – Catherine Weigold and Judy Rhoads and Union Busy Bells – Cheri Geiger.

President's Council Meeting

Feb. 6 - 9:30 am - Extension Office

Extension Homemakers Cookbook

The 2022 Whitley County Extension Homemakers cookbook are at the Extension Office. This cookbook has Whitley County Extension Homemaker and other recipes. The cost to purchase a cookbook is \$10.00. Please bring correct change if you are purchasing a cookbook or make checks payable to: Whitley County Extension Homemakers.



Souper Saturday

All Whitley County Extension Homemakers are invited to a day of food, fun and fellowship for SOUPER SATURDAY on Feb. 17, 2024 from 11:30 a.m. – 3:00 p.m. at the 4-H Center West Room. The officers will be providing soups and all homemakers are invited and should bring a snack to share. Please RSVP by Feb. 9 to the Extension Office.



Volunteer Hours

Extension Homemaker volunteer hours are due February 28, 2024 to your club president.

Spring District Meeting

The Spring District Meeting is March 5, 2024 in Adams County. Check your calendars to see if you are available to attend.

DID YOU KNOW?

INDIANA EXTENSION HOMEMAKERS ASSOCIATION IS THE LARGEST VOLUNTEER ORGANIZATION IN INDIANA WORKING FOR FAMILIES.

MISSION STATEMENT:

TO STRENGTHEN FAMILIES THROUGH CONTINUING EDUCATION, LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT AND VOLUNTEER COMMUNITY SUPPORT.

Whitley Co. Extension Homemaker 100th Anniversary Giveaway



- \$2.00 donation per chance.
- Proceeds to benefit community youth programs.
- Donation locations to be announced.
- Tickets will be available at various community events throughout the year.
- Giveaway at the 2024 Adult Open Show at Whitley Co. 4-H Fair - July 12 – 18.

Whitley County Extension Homemakers celebrating 100th Anniversary in 2024

SCHOLARSHIPS:

Indiana Extension Homemakers sponsor scholarships annually. For a copy of the applications contact Purdue Extension - Whitley County office at 244-7615, 625-3313, email bishop87@purdue.edu or visit the website: www.ieha-families.org/forms. Scholarships available are:

1. Career Advancement Scholarship due March 15, 2024
2. Ruth B Sayre School due May 1, 2024
3. Steps to Success Scholarship due May 1, 2024

Why Belong to an Extension Homemakers Club?

Reason #1 – You Qualify! - Chances are that YOU are already a "homemaker" but just don't realize it! A homemaker is a person who manages a household. It's that simple! A homemaker could be a man/woman, married/single, work/not work, children/no children.

Reason #2 – Education/Training - Becoming an Extension Homemaker provides you with a network of training opportunities to keep your skills sharp and continue lifelong learning. We are partnered with Purdue University and our county Extension educators so that our lessons are based upon researched data. Our creed emphasizes the important principle that "we pass on to others that which has benefitted us." We do this by sharing what we know with each other and with our community.

Reason #3 – Leadership Development - Extension Homemakers provides its members with the opportunity to develop leadership skills on many levels. Members are encouraged to serve on club committees and assist with projects. For those who want more formal leadership training, we offer a three level i-LEaD program. The leadership skills gained can be applied to any role of decision making, whether it is in the home, on the job or within the community.

Reason #4 – Community Support - Extension Homemakers are a group who want to make a difference in their communities. Voluntary Community Support is a key component of our organization. Each club and county organization volunteers time and money to support community projects mostly focusing on families. Statewide projects include Purdue Cancer Research, the Riley Cheer Guild, and First Books for Children.

Reason #5 – Families! - Our mission is "To strengthen families through continuing education, leadership development and voluntary community support." Strengthening families is our focus, no matter the shape or size of the family unit. We promote the greatest institution in the work – **THE HOME!**

Reason #6 – Fellowship and Support - Extension Homemakers offers all these opportunities in the framework of fellowship and the support of those who share common cares and causes with you. **Come join us!**



Six Smart Ways to Financially Start 2024

Source: Dave Ramsey

As we begin a New Year, it is the right time to take stock of your budget, debt, and investments! When was the last time that you checked these items against your financial goals? Revisiting your finances at the start of a new year may not seem as exciting as making other resolutions, such as eating healthier, exercising more, or taking steps to reduce stress, but it is important to remember that your financial wellness is often closely connected to your physical and mental health! So, what's the good news? Improving your financial well-being might be easier than you think. We are here to help get you started! Below are a few simple steps that you can take to help set yourself up for financial success in 2024!

Tip #1 – Revisit your household budget. Start the year by revisiting your budget. Access your average monthly income, as well as your fixed and variable expenses, and determine your financial priorities for 2024 to develop an ideal budget. Reassessing your budget may be especially valuable now, as still-high inflation requires households to continue allocating more for essentials, such as groceries.

Tip #2 – Check your emergency fund. It is always a good idea to double-check that you have adequate funds set aside for a rainy day, but that is especially true in times when the economy may be slowing from its robust pace. In an uncertain economy, an emergency fund can help keep you financially afloat in unforeseen circumstances. A general rule of thumb for an emergency fund is to save three to six months' worth of living expenses in a safe, liquid account.

Tip #3 – Tackle Debt. Even if you're already good about managing debt, consider taking steps to help reduce and consolidate it further. For example, if you are expecting a raise or year-end bonus, consider applying the extra income to any balances with the high-interest rates. Then you can think about consolidating any remaining debt, which may help you swap varying interest rates on multiple loans or credit cards for a lower rate on single loan. Reducing the number of loans, you carry can also simplify your overall finances and ease stress about money.

Tip #4 – Make sure you are on track with your goals. Are you still on track to reach your financial goals? This could mean saving a certain amount of money or investing for a comfortable retirement. If recent changes in the market have temporarily thrown you off balance, take steps to get yourself back on course. You might still be on course, and that is great! Are you financially able to establish new goals at this time? For example, in 2023 maybe you were able to boost your contributions to a workplace retirement plan, etc. Think about if you can contribute even more to this account or other accounts in 2024.

Tip #5 – Revisit your asset allocation. Think about revisiting your asset allocation, or how your investments are split within your portfolio among equities, fixed income, and cash. Asset allocation should ideally reflect your life stages and the saving goals associated with them. For example, when you come close to retirement, you might want to consider moving portions of your portfolio into a more conservative asset allocation, such as a fixed income. Or, if recent gains or losses in the financial market have caused your portfolio investments to take a turn from your target allocation it might be time to rebalance. Remember, as you approach retirement age, you have less of an ability to absorb volatility from the stock market.

Tip #6 – Update your estate and insurance plans. Consider creating or updating your estate plan. If you don't have an estate plan consisting of a will and testament, power of attorney, or health care proxy in place, consider completing this and making it a priority this year. Having an estate plan ensures that your assets are distributed according to your wishes. Also, consider updating

DO YOU KNOW EXACTLY WHERE YOUR MONEY GOES?

Are you interested in building back your finances? This FREE workshop will help you dig deeper into their spending leaks, as well as provide guidance on how to establish a spending-saving plan!

- This FREE workshop is broken up into two 60-minute sessions.
- To schedule, contact Brittney Schori via email: bpender@purdue.edu.



and reviewing any life insurance policies. Make sure you have sufficient coverage for your current financial needs. If your employer does not offer an insurance policy, you may want to purchase your own. If you currently have life insurance, it is crucial to access and optimize your coverage to safeguard your wealth, livelihood and loved ones effectively. If your net worth has grown or if there have been changes in your liabilities, now is a great time to ensure that your coverage aligns with your increased needs and provides protection.

Key Takeaways

- Revisiting your finances at the beginning of 2024 can allow you to establish a clear plan and meet long-term financial goals, including preparing for retirement.
- Reviewing your budget, checking your emergency fund, and consolidating debt are all useful strategies to help you financially in 2024.

Take Initiative to Teach Your Kiddos About Finances!

Pre-schoolers: Yes, they might be little, but preschoolers and kindergartners are old enough to count (and no doubt they've seen you spend money). My point is that it is never too early to start teaching your kids about money, and this age is no different!

Teaching Tip: Use a clear jar for their savings! This is a great idea because kiddos can see through the jar. This is a great visual for kiddos. They can see their money growing. Yesterday, they had a dollar bill and five dimes. Today, they have a dollar bill, five dimes, and a quarter. Talk through how when you save money, your money grows. Don't forget to congratulate them on saving their money as their jar fills up!

Elementary & Middle School Students: By this age, kiddos have a better understanding of how money works and what it is used for.

Teaching Tip: Avoid impulse purchases. "Mom/Dad, look at these shoes! They are perfect and I love it! Can we please buy it? Pretty please?" Does this sound familiar? This age group knows how to capitalize on the impulse buy – especially when it's on someone else's dime! – Instead of caving in, tell your kiddo that they can use their hard-earned cash to pay for it. Sometimes it can be a good idea to ask your kiddo to wait to purchase the item. If they wait a day before they buy it then they will have more of a level head when deciding to purchase. They may even forget about the item entirely.

Teenagers: No need to fear the teen years! At this point, your kiddos should have a strong understanding of the money basics. Now it's time to teach them more responsibility and how to use their money with the future in mind! **Teaching Tip:** Teach them the danger of credit cards. As soon as your kiddo turns 18, they'll get hounded by credit card offers. If they choose to attend college, the companies will chase them even harder. Seriously, look out! If you haven't taught them why debt is a bad idea, they'll become yet another credit card victim. Remember it's up to you to decide when to teach them about how to be smart with money. The sooner the better!

See PAGE 2 for Recipe: [Crock Pot Salsa Verde Chicken](#)

4-H Youth Development

Todd Geiger, Extension Educator



January 4-H Calendar

(Events, dates and times are subject to change)

Date	Event	Time	Location
1	NEW YEARS HOLIDAY	CLOSED	EXTENSION OFFICE
8	Cat Club Meeting	6:45 p.m.	4-H Center - West Room
8	4-H Council Meeting	6:30 p.m.	4-H Center - Middle Rm.
9	4-H Clubs, Inc. Meeting.....	7:00 p.m.	Ag Museum
10	Dairy Steer Feeder Calf Club Meeting.....	6:30 p.m.	4-H Center - Middle Rm.
11	Jr. Leaders Gathering.....	6:30 p.m.	4-H Center - West Room
11	Beef Club Meeting\Workshop	7:00 p.m.	4-H Center - Middle Rm.
13	Mini 4-H Workshop & Call-Out	10:00-11:30 a.m.	4-H Center
14	Smith Worker Bees Meeting	2:00 p.m.	Collins Meth. Church
15	Smith Harvesters Meeting	7:00 p.m.	Smith Twp. Fire Station
15	MARTIN LUTHER KING JR. DAY	CLOSED	EXTENSION OFFICE
16	Rabbit Club Meeting.....	7:00 p.m.	4-H Center - West Room
16	Horse & Pony Club Safety Ed & Meeting	7:30 p.m.	4-H Center - West Room
17	Thorncreek Northern Stars.....	7:00 p.m.	4-H Center - West Room
20	Scrapbook Club Workshop.....	9:00-11:30 a.m.	Washington Com. Bldg.
21	Bowling Club Meeting.....	12:30 p.m.	Main Bowl Bowling Alley
22	Union Sodbusters Meeting	6:00 p.m.	4-H Center - West Room
23	Cleveland Showmen Meeting	7:00p.m.	South Whitley Town Hall
23	Thorncreek Sons of the Soil Meeting	7:00 p.m.	4-H Center - Middle Rm.
28	Bowling Club Meeting.....	12:30 p.m.	Main Bowl Bowling Alley
31	Columbia Peaches.....	7:00 p.m.	4-H Center - West Room

2024 FAIR DATES

Whitley County
4-H Fair:
July 12-18

Indiana State Fair:
Aug. 2 – 18
(Closed Mondays)

February 4-H Calendar

(Events, date and times are subject to change)

Date	Event	Time	Location
5	Cat Club Meeting	6:45 p.m.	4-H Center - West Room
7	Tractor Club Meeting.....	7:00 p.m.	4-H Center - West Room
8	Jr. Leaders Gathering	6:30 p.m.	TBD
10	Scrapbook Club Workshop	9:00-11:30 a.m.	Washington Com. Bldg.
11	Smith Worker Bees Meeting.....	2:00 p.m.	Collins Methodist Church
12	March/April Newsletter Articles Due.....	4:30 p.m.	Extension Office
12	4-H Council/4-H Leaders Meeting	6:30 p.m.	4-H Center - Middle/East Rooms
13	4-H Clubs, Inc. Meeting	7:00 p.m.	Ag Museum
14	Maker Experience #3 (See Page 2 for more details)	6:00-8:00 p.m.	4-H Center
14	Dairy Steer Feeder Calf Club Meeting/Workshop	6:30 p.m.	4-H Center - West Room
15	Richland Ramblers Meeting	6:30-7:30 p.m.	Larwill Fire Station
15	Beef Club Meeting\Workshop	7:00 p.m.	4-H Center - Middle Room
15	Sheep Club Meeting.....	7:00 p.m.	4-H Center - West Room
19	PRESIDENTS DAY	CLOSED	EXTENSION OFFICE
19	Etna Troy Hustlers Meeting.....	6:30 p.m.	Etna Troy Com. Bldg.
19	Jefferson Hustlers Call-Out Meeting.....	7:00-8:00 p.m.	Jefferson Twp. Fire Station
19	Washington 4-H Busters/Blue Ribbon Call-Out Meeting.....	7:00 p.m.	Washington Com. Bldg.
20	Rabbit Club Meeting\Workshop	7:00 p.m.	4-H Center - West Room
21	Horse & Pony Club Safety Ed & Meeting.....	7:30 p.m.	4-H Center - West Room
21	Tractor Club Meeting.....	7:00 p.m.	4-H Center - West Room
22	Thorncreek Sons of the Soil Meeting.....	7:00 p.m.	4-H Center - Middle Room
22	Swine Club Meeting/Workshop	6:30 p.m.	4-H Center - West Room
23	4-H Open House: Winter Wonder Thru 4-H	5:30-7:00 p.m.	4-H Center
24	Mini 4-H Workshop.....	10:00-11:30 a.m.	4-H Center - Middle/East Rooms
27	Goat Club Meeting/Carry-In.....	6:30 p.m.	4-H Center - Middle Room
27	4-H Book Pick-Up	8:00 a.m.-6:00 p.m.	Extension Office



4-H Open House: Winter Wonder thru 4-H See Page 2 for Information

Updates & Reminders

4-H Forms & Manual Pick-Up

Tuesday, February 27th the Extension Office will be open until 6:00 p.m. to pick up any 4-H forms or manuals for those who choose to use them for 2024. Updates for the 2024 Whitley County 4-H program will be emailed out soon.

NEW UPDATE: 4-H Animal ID Enrollment Deadline

ATTENTION 4-H families that exhibit animals!!! Just like previous years ALL animals to be exhibited at the Whitley County 4-H Fair and the Indiana State Fair must be enrolled in 4-H Online by May 15, 2024. **However**, this year this is a **statewide ABSOLUTE deadline**. Any animal that is not entered into 4-H Online by the May



15th deadline is not allowed to be shown at the county and state level. In the past our 4-H Council has been able to allow youth to still exhibit their animal at the county fair that was entered late with the consequence of not being eligible for champion. This year that will not be allowed. Please make sure that you enter ALL of your animals into 4-H Online by May 15th!!

4-H Recruitment

The best way to get others involved in a program is by personal contact. Most people say they become involved because they have a friend in that organization. Have you talked to your friends about 4-H? **Invite a friend to join 4-H!**

4-H Enrollment Reminder!!!

Are you or your kids enrolled in 4-H yet? Enrollment has been open for about three months now!! Please don't forget to enroll or re-enroll by January 15th!! Visit www.v2.4honline.com to get enrolled for the 2023-2024 4-H year!! Don't hesitate to contact the Extension Office if you need help!

Those 4-H members who will be involved in livestock projects need to be enrolled by January 15th in order to not miss important livestock project deadlines and events.

Internet note: 4HOnline no longer supports Internet Explorer 10 and older due to security concerns. Please make sure that you use Firefox, Google Chrome, or Safari when accessing 4HOnline and FairEntry.

Premise ID Info

Anyone who buys, sells or exhibits livestock must have a Premise ID. A Premise ID is an identification number for the physical location in which animals are housed and is necessary to protect animal agriculture and the livestock industry. In an emergency, animal health officials will be able to rapidly communicate disease spread with producers. All 4-Hers are required to know the Premise ID number for the property in which their animals are located and this number is recorded in 4-H Online when enrolling the animals to be exhibited at the 4-H Fair and Indiana State Fair.

If you own a horse or poultry it is strongly encouraged for you to get a Premise ID number, but it is not required to exhibit at this time.

Club News

Mini 4-H News

Do you have a kindergarten through 2nd grade child? Are you looking for a hands-on, educational, and fun program for them to be a part of? Then check out the Whitley County Mini 4-H Club!!! We will be having a Mini 4-H call out workshop on Saturday, January 13 from 10:00 – 11:30 a.m. at the Whitley County 4-H Center. We will have enrollment forms there so that you can sign your kids up for Mini 4-H at the event and our Mini 4-H Leaders will have fun activities for the kids to take part in!! The February Mini 4-H workshop will take

If you do not currently have a premise ID number, you may apply for one through the Indiana State Board of Animal Health at <http://www.in.gov/boah> for the quickest response or call (317) 544-2400.

You MUST have a premise ID to show at the Whitley County 4-H Fair and the Indiana State Fair for cattle, swine, goats and sheep.

4-H Teen Leaders



Youth in grades 7-12 are you interested in exploring beyond the traditional exhibition projects and the 4-H fair? Then check out teen leadership with Junior Leaders! A group of adult advisors and Todd work with a group of youth every month doing service-learning projects, plan events, fun activities, socialize, and learn leadership skills and teamwork. This is a great opportunity for youth seeking volunteer opportunities and even community service hours. Junior Leaders meet usually on the second Thursday of each month from 6:30-8:00 p.m. at the 4-H Center. For more details contact Todd at geigert@purdue.edu.

Looking for 4-H Camp Counselors

Are you in grades 9-12 and interested in serving as a 4-H Camp Counselor this summer? Camp Counselor applications are due on February 1st. We will begin our planning and meeting with counselors from other area counties starting in March. 4-H Camp will be held June 5-7, 2024 for youth in grades 3-6. Counselors will be at camp from June 4-7, 2024. Be looking for more details about this great opportunity for youth to grow their leadership skills and helping plan fun activities for younger youth with peer counselors. You can request an application by contacting Todd at geigert@purdue.edu.

4-H Silent Auction

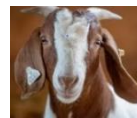
4-H Council is again holding a Silent Auction at the 4-H Annual All-You-Can

place on February 24 from 10:00 – 11:30 a.m. at the Whitley Co. 4-H Center also.

Goat Club News

We are excited to kick off another great year with the Goat Club. We will be having a carry-in banquet on Tuesday, February 27 at 6:30 p.m. at the 4-H Center Middle Room. The club will be providing the meat, drinks and table service. Each family is asked to bring a dish based on the first letter of your last name:

- A-G Cold Side Dish/Salad;
- H-R Dessert
- S-Z Hot Side Dish



Eat Fish Meal on Friday, March 15th. Donation of new items, filled gift baskets or cash donations will be accepted. This is a great opportunity for 4-H clubs to provide community service by making up a themed gift basket.

Proceeds from the Silent Auction will go toward the 4-H program and 4-H Fairgrounds projects in 2024.

Thanks for your generosity and support of the Whitley County 4-H Program.

Helping Hands 4-H Endowment Fund

The Helping Hands 4-H Endowment Fund provides scholarships for Whitley County youth who continue their education. It would be great to add more scholarships for the future, and in order for this to happen the principal amount must grow.

If you would be interested in helping with this fund, you may drop off your donation at the Extension Office or at the Whitley County Community Foundation. Checks are payable to: Helping Hands 4-H Endowment Fund.

Indiana 4-H Foundation

The Indiana 4-H Foundation helps to fund and grow Indiana 4-H. Most state and national 4-H trips and conferences and most 4-H leader conferences are financially supported by the 4-H Foundation.



For questions, please contact Shelly Bingle, Executive Director, at 765-494-8483 or visit www.in.4h.org.

33rd Annual 4-H All-You-Can-Eat Fish Meal
March 15, 2024 ~ 4:00 – 7:30 pm ~ 4-H Center

Project News

State 4-H Project Updates

Please go the Indiana 4-H website at: <https://extension.purdue.edu/4h/Pages/projects> to see the guideline updates for 4-H projects for 2024.

We will have a short meeting after the meal to pass out club information, fundraiser packets and answer questions. If you know someone who is wanting to show goats but may have not been contacted, please pass the info on to them.

Please use this link to join our Facebook page the "Whitley County Goat Club": <https://www.facebook.com/groups/978058582324143>

If you have any questions prior to next week, feel free to reach out to me by e-mail or phone at 260-213-1551.

~Lynnette Bridegam/4-H Goat Leader

Mini 4-H Animal Mentor Program

Mini 4-H'ers who are taking the "farm animals" project can sign up for this program in 2024. Mini 4-H'ers will be able to select a specie and then will be partnered with an older 4-H livestock member (a mentor). They will have the

opportunity to work with their mentor several times before the fair. Learning about their animal, how to care for it, and how to raise it. Then, Mini 4-H'ers will have the opportunity to participate in the Mini 4-H Animal Mentor Exhibition Showcase during the week of our 2024

fair! Information on the date and time of the showcase will be coming in early 2024.



Youth Activities

Upcoming 4-H Trips: Don't Miss Out!

- 4-H Camp: June 5-7, 2024 @ Epworth Forest (Open to youth in grades 3-6)
- 4-H Academy: June 12-14, 2024 @ Purdue University (Open to youth in grades 9-12)
- 4-H Round-up: June 24-26, 2024 @ Purdue University (Open to youth in grades 7-8)

Contact Todd or Candy Sroufe at the Extension Office to find out more information on these awesome trips and get a registration form!

4-H Scholarship Opportunities

ALL applications are due electronically to the Extension Office on or before January 25, 2024. Scholarship application forms and information are available at extension.purdue.edu/4h/pages/scholarship_ip.aspx

• 4-H Senior Year Scholarship: 4-H members who are seniors in High School may apply for this one-time award to use for a post high school study or training. Approximately 150 scholarships selected.

• Indiana 4-H Accomplishment Scholarship: 4-H members who are in grade 10 through the year following the final year of 4-H eligibility. There are ten different projects/activity-based categories, with a \$1,000 minimum award per category. Finalists will be interviewed in the Spring at Purdue University. At least 20 scholarships are selected.

• 4-H Club Scholarship: 4-H members who are seniors in High School and have participated in 4-H at least 4 years. Student must enroll in the College of Agriculture or College of Health and Human Sciences at Purdue University, West Lafayette and have a FASFA application submitted by March 1 to receive this scholarship. Scholarships are awarded on the basis of (1) scholastic ability; (2) financial need; (3) achievement in 4-H club work. Scholarships must be used no later than the first fall semester after the scholarship awards are announced.

Ag Plus Scholarship

This program is available to any local student pursuing a career in agriculture or landscape. The scholarship program annually awards a \$1,000 scholarship to students enrolled in any two or four-year

college in an agriculture curriculum. The scholarship amount is \$1,000 per individual and the program offers four scholarships for this year.

The scholarship program is available to any student meeting the following criteria:

- 1) The student must major in an agricultural field that includes forage, turf, or landscape-related programs.
- 2) Scholarships will be available to any high school senior or college student in their freshman, sophomore, or junior year of studies as of the 2024 fall semester.
- 3) The student must demonstrate both leadership abilities and academic performance.
- 4) The student must live in the Ag Plus trade area.

Ag Plus believes that students expressing leadership abilities and an interest in agriculture are needed to fill various positions in the agricultural industry. The scholarship program Ag Plus is offering is our way of encouraging students to pursue their dreams of studying and working in a career in agriculture or related fields.

The 2023 recipients, Austin Liepe, J Brent Studebaker, Maggie Wolf, and Rachel Bleke, all share a strong interest in agriculture and pursuit to influence the industry.

All applications must be submitted to the South Whitley office of Ag Plus by **March 1, 2024**, to be eligible. The applications can also be obtained and submitted from our website

at <https://www.agplusinc.com/scholarship>. The scholarship committee will notify the scholarship winner by **April 19, 2024**.

Please share the attached application with students that you believe would fit the criteria for the scholarship. For additional information about the scholarship program, please get in touch with Kenna Hull at the South Whitley office of Ag Plus at 260-723-5141 x 403.

Youth Loans

The Farm Service Agency makes loans to youth to establish and operate agricultural income-producing projects in connection with 4-H clubs, FFA and other agricultural groups. Projects must be planned and operated with the help of the organization advisor, produce sufficient income to repay the loan and provide the youth with practical business

and educational experience. The maximum loan amount is \$5000.

Youth Loan Eligibility Requirements:

- Be a citizen of the United States (which includes Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands, Guam, American Samoa, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands) or a legal resident alien
- Be 10 years to 20 years of age
- Comply with FSA's general eligibility requirements
- Be unable to get a loan from other sources
- Conduct a modest income-producing project in a supervised program of work as outlined above
- Demonstrate capability of planning, managing and operating the project under guidance and assistance from a project advisor. The project supervisor must recommend the youth loan applicant, along with providing adequate supervision.

Contact the Farm Service Agency - Farm Loan Programs office that covers Northeast Indiana at 788 W Connexion Way, Columbia City, IN 46725 for help preparing and processing the application forms. They can also be reached at (260) 244-6266, extension 105. (Amanda Borne Email Address: amanda.borne@usda.gov)

Upcoming Whitley County 4-H Awards & Scholarships

BV Widney Award - Current 4-H member in Grades 6-9 as of January 1; Deadline: May 1, 2024

Hester Adams Award - Current 4-H members in Grades 10 and above; Deadline: May 1, 2024

Jim Teghtmeyer Award - Any 4-H member with outstanding community service; Deadline: May 1, 2024

Lester and Joy Worrick Memorial Scholarship - Current 10-year 4-H member; Deadline: May 1, 2024

Helping Hands 4-H Endowment Fund Scholarship - Senior attending post-secondary education; Deadline: May 1, 2024

Extension Homemakers Scholarship - Current 4-H Member who is a Whitley County resident, a senior enrolled in post-secondary education and who has completed at least 5 years of 4-H; Deadline: May 1, 2024





Date	Event	Time	Location
JAN: 5 16-18	Purdue Top Farmer Conference (Hybrid in-Person + Virtual Conf.)		Purdue's Beck Ag Center
22-23	Fort Wayne Farm Show		Allen Co War Mem. Coliseum
23, 24, 25	Indiana Hort Conference & Expo		Hendricks Co Fairgrounds, Danville, IN
FEB: 1	Purdue Crop Management Workshops		(January 23 in Wells Co)
Feb 5 – Mar 25	Whitley Co. Master Gardeners Association	6:30 p.m.	Woodlands Sr. Activity Center
17	Beginning Farmer Workshop (virtual multi-week workshop, Monday evenings)		Indian Springs Middle School
MAR: 1-2	Whitley County Master Gardeners Symposium		Danville, IN
7	Indiana Small Farms Conference		Woodlands Sr. Activity Center
	Whitley County Master Gardeners Association	6:30 p.m.	Woodlands Sr. Activity Center



[Visit the Agriculture & Natural Resources Page on County Website](#)

I've put a lot of effort into providing the most current information relating to agriculture, natural resources, horticulture and other related areas on our new website. Please visit www.extension.purdue.edu/whitley, then scroll down to the "Agriculture and Natural Resources" link that is under the banner photo. Or, access the page directly at: <https://extension.purdue.edu/county/whitley/ANR.html>.

[2024 Purdue Top Farmer Conference](#)



The 2024 Purdue University Top Farmer Conference will be held on Friday, January 5, 2024, from 9 a.m. - 4 p.m. (EST) at Purdue's Beck Agricultural Center in West Lafayette, Indiana. When registering for the conference, you will have the option to attend in person or join remotely. At the conference, you'll have a chance to stimulate your thinking about agriculture's future and how you can best position your farm to be successful in the years ahead. This year's conference will provide you with insights into Federal Reserve policy and the key factors influencing the U.S. economy from the former president of the St. Louis Federal Reserve Bank, the future of biofuels and the impact on soybean markets from one of the nation's top biofuel researchers; the next farm bill's development and the outlook on farm policy and crop insurance decisions in 2024 from a long-time farm policy analyst; and what's in store for corn and soybean prices from an award-winning commodity outlook economist.

For details, go to: <https://ag.purdue.edu/commercialag/>

[home/program/top-farmer-conference-2024/](#)

[Beginning Farmer Workshop](#)

Are you a beginning farmer, but eager to enhance and improve your management practices? Are you interested in starting a farm, but unsure of how to get started or where you can find help? Purdue Extension's online Beginning Farmer Workshop can help put you on a path to success! During the series (evenings of Feb. 5 – March 25), you'll learn about the following:

- Assessing your farming assets
- Addressing the realities of starting a farm
- Defining realistic goals
- Creating feasible plans to achieve your goals

Outside the weekly workshop sessions, you'll complete individual work to give you a clear perspective on planning farm projects and moving forward with confidence. Program participants will have the opportunity to hear from Purdue Extension Educators and farmers on a range of topics including asset mapping, goal setting, technical assistance, finding resources, and more. The program is geared more toward smaller farm start-ups, but all are welcome.

Contact the Purdue Extension office if interested (260-244-7615). Registration has not opened for the program as of this newsletter's publication date.

[Fort Wayne Farm Show](#)

Come to the 2024 Fort Wayne Farm Show at the Allen County War Memorial Coliseum:



- ❖ Jan. 16: 9:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.
- ❖ Jan. 17: 9:00 a.m. – 8:00 p.m.
- ❖ Jan. 18: 9:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.

The show will feature a major farm manufacturing and distributor trade show, and educational seminars sponsored by Area XI (northeast IN)

Purdue Extension and Northeastern Indiana Soil and Water Conservation Districts. The schedule of educational sessions has not yet been finalized, so check back on the agriculture and natural resources section of our county website for a downloadable schedule soon: <https://extension.purdue.edu/county/whitley/ANR.html>

[Indiana Hort Conference and Expo](#)



The 2024 Indiana Horticultural Conference & Expo will be January 22-23, 2024 at the Hendricks County Fairgrounds, 1900 E Main St, Danville, IN 46122. The lineup includes small fruit production (grapes and spotted lanternfly update), fruit production (apples), food safety, controlled environment agriculture, business/marketing/agriculture, farming basics, poster session, cider contest, and more. The Indiana Horticultural Conference & Expo will offer many opportunities for networking with fellow Indiana and other Midwestern farmers and vendors. The standard registration fee of \$125 includes admission to both days of the event, as well as all meals and the evening social.

Find details and registration information at: <https://www.indianahortconference.org/>

[Purdue's 2024 Crop Management Workshop](#)

John Obermeyer, Purdue IPM Specialist, announced that the 2024 Crop Management Workshops will be Jan. 23, 24, and 25. The workshops may be attended in-person or virtually on Jan. 25. For information and registration, visit: <http://www.purdue.edu/conferences/Crop>

In-Person

- Tuesday, January 23: In-Person only, Wells County Community Center, Bluffton, IN
- Wednesday, January 24: In-Person only, Pines Evergreen Room, Seymour, IN
- Thursday, January 25: In-Person, Beck Ag Center, W. Lafayette, IN

Virtual

- Thursday, January 25: Livestream, Beck Ag Center, W. Lafayette, IN
In-Person – 8:30 am to 4:00 pm (Eastern), \$90 (includes handouts, refreshments, and lunch)
Virtual – 8:45 am to 4:00 pm (Eastern), \$60 (email address required)
Questions? Contact Purdue Conferences, 866-515-0023, confreq@purdue.edu

Indiana Small Farms Conference



Save the date: The Indiana Small Farms Conference will be taking place Feb. 29-March 1, 2024. More information should be available soon at:

https://extension.purdue.edu/anr/teams/dffs/small_farm_conference/index.html

Becoming the Employer of Choice Program

If you ask farm managers and small business owners what some of their top management issues are, finding and retaining good labor is usually among the top issues. To help you become an employer of choice that will attract and retain good people, Whitley and Huntington County Extension are in the planning stages to potentially offer this program sometime in the March-April period. Topics that would be covered include:

- From managers to leaders
- Developing a motivated workforce
- Hiring the right people
- The farm business culture
- Strategic leadership and on-boarding
- Reviews & feedback
- Managing conflict

If you are interested in this program, please contact me at 260-244-7615.

USDA Releases Updated Plant Hardiness Zone Map

The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) recently released its updated Plant Hardiness Zone Map. The USDA Plant Hardiness Zone Map uses weather data to map average annual extreme minimum temperatures (winter lows) over a recent 20-year period. The most recent release covers weather data from 1991-2020. The previous version, released in 2012, covered weather data from 1976-2005.

The map tells gardeners what plants are likely to survive winter temperatures in their area based on recent history. It also helps vendors of landscape plants to communicate to purchasers the range of zones for which particular plants are suited.

The plant hardiness map contains 13 zones, representing 10-degree-F ranges. Each zone is further subdivided into two half zones, a and b, representing 5-degree ranges. Zone 1 starts in Alaska, and Zone 13 ends in Hawaii and Puerto Rico. Florida, famous for their palm trees, has zones from 8b to 11b. Palm trees won't survive winters in Indiana.

Indiana now ranges from Zone 5b in the northwest, with average annual extreme minimum temperatures of -15 through -10 degrees F, through 7a, with average annual extreme minimum temperatures of 0 to 5 degrees F along the Ohio River. All of northeastern Indiana, including Whitley County, is in Zone 6a, with average annual extreme minimum temperatures of -10 to -5 degrees F. In the previous map, most of northern Indiana, including Whitley County, was predominantly in Zone 5b.

"Average" is the operative word on this map, based on recent 20-year temperature measurements. Winters with colder or warmer temperatures have and will continue to occur.

Find the USDA Hardiness Zone Map at <https://planthardiness.ars.usda.gov/>.

Do You Need to Obtain an Applicator License?

If you need to obtain a private applicator license (to apply pesticides or CFO fertilizer to your own crops, *not* for hire), go to this website for your options:

<https://ag.purdue.edu/department/extension/ppp/private-applicators/index.html>

If you need to obtain a commercial applicator license (to apply pesticides for hire), go to: <https://ag.purdue.edu/department/extension/ppp/commercial-applicators/index.html>

Commercial applicator categories are:

- Category 1 - Agricultural Pest Management
- Category 2 - Forest Pest Management
- Category 3a - Ornamental Pest Management
- Category 3b - Turf Management
- Category 4 - Seed Treatment
- Category 5 - Aquatic Pest Management
- Category 6 - Industrial Weed Management
- Category 7a - Industrial, Institutional, Structural and Health-Related Pest Management
- Category 7b - Termite Control
- Category 7d - Fumigation
- Category 8 - Community-Wide Mosquito Control
- Category 11 - Aerial Application
- Category 12 - Wood Destroying Pest Inspection
- Category 13 - Limited Certification
- Category 14 - Agricultural Fertilizer Application
- Category RT - Registered Technician (Per new rules in 2023, RTs may now only apply general use pesticides for a business under the supervision of a licensed applicator, not restricted use pesticides, or RUPs.) For more information about new RT rules, visit:

1) https://oisc.purdue.edu/pesticide/pdf/2023_new_pest_rules_outreach.pdf,

2) https://oisc.purdue.edu/pesticide/how_do_i_rt.html,

3) https://oisc.purdue.edu/pesticide/pdf/2023_rule_changes_021023.pdf

If you have further questions, feel free to call the Purdue Extension office at 260-244-7615.





Whitley County Office Phone:
260.244.7615 or 260.625.3313

www.extension.purdue.edu/whitley

Facebook: www.facebook.com/Purdue Extension Whitley County

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Office Hours: 8:00 a.m. – 4:30 p.m. Monday thru Friday

Extension Educator available online at www.extension.purdue.edu/whitley

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