

Agri-Scope

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March 2009

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 Residential Wind Energy

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Purdue University, Indiana
 Counties and U.S. Department
 of Agriculture Cooperating
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CELEBRATE AGRICULTURE – MARCH 20 AND EVERY DAY

American agriculture is responsible for providing the necessities of everyday life ... food, fiber, clothing and even fuel. That's the message of National Ag Day, which is celebrated March 20, 2009. Producers, agricultural associations, corporations, universities, government agencies and countless others across America will pause to celebrate the abundance provided by agriculture on this first day of spring.

The National Ag Day program is committed to increasing public awareness about American agriculture. As the world population soars, there is even greater demand for the food, fiber and renewable resources that the United States produces.

The Agriculture Council of America, Ag Day organizers, believes that every American should understand how food, fiber and renewable resource products are produced and should value the essential role of agriculture in maintaining a strong economy. All folks should appreciate the role agriculture plays in providing safe, abundant and affordable products. For more info, facts, and activities visit www.agday.org.

Locally, 4th grade students got to see and taste a little bit of agriculture during Row Crop's Ag Days at the La Porte Armory on Feb. 25. Over 500 students, their teachers and some parents visited 12 different stations where farmers and others involved in agriculture shared information (dairy provided milk and cheese) with the students.

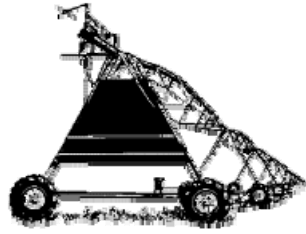
On March 31, La Porte Farm Bureau will be hosting Ag Day at the Fairgrounds for students from Joy Elementary, Michigan City.

As we welcome spring, and farmers get ready for the 2009 growing season, we can never say "thank you" enough for the abundance that we enjoy through agriculture.

Important Dates to Remember

Mar 17	Irrigation Management Workshop	Apr 7	CoCoRaHS Training, Hanna
Mar 18	PARP Training, Rochester	Apr 16	63 rd IBEP Bull Sale
Mar 20	National Ag Day (Spring arrives)	Apr 18	IN Dairy Youth Conf.
Mar 20, 21	IN Natural Heritage Conf, Indy	Apr 25	SWCD Tree Pickup/Workshop
Mar 21	Wild Turkey Wrkshp, Rensselaer	May 1	LP 4-H Plant Orders Due
Mar 24	CoCoRaHS Training, New Carlisle	Jul 19-25	LP County Fair
Mar 27	LP SWCD Tree Orders Due	Aug 7-23	IN State Fair
Mar 31	Residential Wind Seminar	Aug. 19	Pinney PAC Field Day

IRRIGATION MANAGEMENT WORKSHOP



In response to the increasing crop acreage under irrigation, Purdue Extension is offering a workshop to assist farmers in operating their irrigation systems more efficiently. ***Irrigation Management: The Next Level*** was held during the afternoon of March 4 in La Crosse. Another workshop with an identical agenda will be held on **Tuesday, March 17** at the Elkhart County Community Center in Goshen, IN, from 9:30 a.m. until 1:30 p.m. EDT (8:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m. CDT).

Topics will include evaluating irrigation system uniformity, nutrient management of crops under irrigation, overview of irrigation scheduling, and CoCoRaHS (Community Collaborative Rain Hail and Snow) observer network (look for training sessions on CoCoRaHS elsewhere in this newsletter). Certified Crop Advisers can qualify for continuing education hours in nutrient and soil and water management.

There will be a \$15 registration fee to cover materials and refreshments, and lunch will be provided by Dal-Mar Catering of Nappanee at the end of the session. To register, folks should complete a registration form and mail it to the Purdue Extension-Elkhart County office at by Friday, March 13. After that, please call the Elkhart office at 574-533-0554. A registration flyer can be downloaded at www.extension.purdue.edu/laporte; click on *Ag & Natural Resources* and scroll down to the *March 17 Irrigation Management Program*.

Irrigation resources, including irrigation aspects of land rental agreements, are available at www.extension.purdue.edu/laporte; click on *Ag & Natural Resources* and scroll down to *Local Irrigation Resources* under *Current Interest*.

2008 FIELD CROP DISEASE RECAP AND FORECAST FOR 2009

By Kiersten Wise, Purdue Plant Pathologist

Despite favorable weather conditions for disease development in June, 2008 was a relatively quiet year for diseases of corn and soybean in Indiana. Common rust was frequently observed in fields throughout the state, but typically at low levels. Gray leaf spot was present at low levels in most fields late in the season, but moderate to severe infection was generally only observed on susceptible hybrids. Late season stalk rots and Diplodia ear rot were more prevalent in 2008 than in past years.

We did find Goss's bacterial wilt of corn for the first time in Indiana in 2008. The disease was identified on popcorn and hybrid corn in Jasper and Pulaski counties in northwest Indiana, and led to considerable yield loss in affected fields. Goss's wilt is sporadic throughout the Midwest, but usually appears only in limited areas, and is manageable through crop rotation and tillage.

Soybean diseases in Indiana were less severe than in recent years, although some diseases were locally severe. Sudden death syndrome (SDS) was widespread throughout Indiana this year due to cool, wet soil conditions after planting. Wet weather at flowering contributed to white mold outbreaks in northeastern and central Indiana, and substantial yield loss was observed in some fields. Dry conditions late in the growing season in northeastern Indiana may have contributed to the development of charcoal rot. Charcoal rot symptoms were widespread and severe in this region, and reduced soybean yields. Fungal structures produced by the white mold and charcoal rot fungi can survive in the soil for several years, and crop rotation can help reduce the future risk of these diseases in affected fields.

Soybean rust was not detected in Indiana in 2008. The disease developed slowly in the southern U.S. in 2008, and weather patterns were not conducive for soybean rust spore movement into Indiana during the critical

soybean growth stages (R1 to R6). However, if rust were to develop and spread in the southern states at an earlier time next year, spores could reach the Indiana soybean crop at a stage where yield loss could occur.

The most important and unpredictable variable for determining risk of soybean rust infection, and all of our field crop diseases in Indiana, is the weather. It is hard to determine which diseases will require our attention in 2009, but rest assured we will continue to monitor fields for disease problems and let you know what is out there!

For regular updates of pest and crop information for Indiana throughout the growing season, subscribe to the Purdue *Pest & Crop* Newsletter, which is available online at <http://extension.entm.purdue.edu/pestcrop>. Besides the preceding article, the first edition for 2009 (March 6) includes information on corn flea beetles, six alternative winter annual weed hosts to soybean cyst nematode, and a listing of Purdue Field Crop Specialists.

PRIVATE PESTICIDE APPLICATOR TRAINING

Purdue Extension-Fulton County will host a Private Applicator Recertification Program (PARP) training session on **Wednesday, March 18** at 7:30 pm EDT (6:30 p.m. CDT) in the Community Building at the Fulton County Fairgrounds located at 1009 W. 3rd Street near Rochester, Indiana.

The session will be on on-farm chemical storage, a presentation by Dr. Fred Whitford, coordinator of Purdue Pesticide Programs. Dr. Whitford will discuss the bulk storage of pesticides, including problems that have been observed throughout the state and solutions to avoid these problems. This program will meet 1/3 of the PARP requirement for recertification of a private pesticide license.



Part of the program will be on a current state regulatory topic. For those needing PARP credit, bring \$10.00 and your current private applicator license. Others may attend for free.

For further information contact Mark Kepler at Purdue Extension-Fulton County by calling 574-223-3397. Directions are available at www.extension.purdue.edu/fulton.

CUCKOO FOR CoCoRaHS?!

Volunteers interested in observing local precipitation and reporting it online are invited to a weather-related training session.



Dr. Teresa Bals-Elsholz, assistant professor of geography and meteorology, will conduct training sessions on March 24 in New Carlisle and April 7 in Hanna for volunteers interested in joining the *Community Collaborative Rain, Hail and Snow Network* (CoCoRaHS). In addition, Gene Matzat, Purdue Extension Educator for Ag & Natural Resources, will share information about preparing for stormy weather such as severe thunderstorms, tornadoes and floods.

The training session on **Tuesday, March 24** will begin at 7 pm EDT (6 pm CDT) at the **New Carlisle-Olive Township Public Library**, 408 S. Bray Street, New Carlisle, Indiana. The training session on **Tuesday, April 7** will begin at 7 p.m. CDT in the Fellowship Hall of the **Hanna United Methodist Church**, 101 W. Hopper Street, Hanna, Indiana.

Each training session will last about 90 minutes. Those planning to attend should call 219-324-9407 (Purdue Extension – LaPorte office) or send an e-mail to ematzat@purdue.edu to be sure that enough free rain gauges are available to distribute to volunteers at the training sessions. Anyone interested in weather, regardless of age, is invited to attend a training session. For more information about CoCoRaHS, visit www.cocorahs.org.

FERTILIZER PRICE AND AVAILABILITY

By Bruce Erickson and Alan Miller of Purdue's Ag Econ Department

Fertilizer markets are adjusting now to a dramatically different economic situation after prices reached unprecedented levels last year. With prices in flux, the wholesale prices paid by agricultural retailers vary dramatically, depending greatly on the fertilizer source and when they were purchased. Correspondingly, retail fertilizer prices can be much different from dealer to dealer this year. As in any year, crop producers should check pricing with more than one dealer, but also especially this year get a good feel for the assurance of supply when you will need fertilizer this spring. Also, carefully weigh the value and possible future benefits of maintaining a good working relationship with your agricultural supplier.

(The preceding was an excerpt from a paper entitled "Factors Shaping Price and Availability in This Year's Fertilizer Market". For a full version of the text go to www.extension.purdue.edu/laporte; click on Ag & Natural Resources and scroll down to the *Current Interest* section to look for the title.)

COVER CROP ADVANTAGES, ACCEPTANCE AND CHALLENGES

By Barry Fisher & Tony Bailey, USDA NRCS with Christian Krupke and Bill Johnson, Purdue Botany & Plant Pathology Department

Cover crops have been used for many different purposes over the years including erosion control, nitrogen fixation and weed suppression. More recently, cover crops have also been promoted for increasing and encouraging no-till adoption, improving soil health, increasing soil organic carbon, retaining nitrogen over the fall and winter, supplemental forage production and after manure applications.

USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), through the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP), has offered payments to eligible and interested producers to plant cover crops. In 2008, EQIP paid producers \$ 22.50/acre to plant cover crops and possibly

more if tied to the Energy Conservation System or manure waste utilization.

The amount of cover crops planted has increased drastically. In 2005 13,000 acres were EQIP contracted, 15,000 acres in 2006, 76,000 acres in 2007 and (drum roll please) 160,000 acres in 2008. The most popular types of cover crops are annual ryegrass, oilseed radish, oats, cereal rye, vetches and clovers.

Cover crops are not without their challenges. Those that stay green late into the spring, can also attract insects and other pests that may need to be controlled, and will require additional crop scouting. The most commonly found insects include the migratory pests black cutworm and armyworm (particularly common on annual ryegrass) – the females of both species are capable of migrating long distances and will deposit eggs in a wide range of hosts. These caterpillars often reach high densities in the cover crop and will often move from the cover crop to the row crop if there is not a sufficient "host free period." To decrease the chances of insect infestation, the cover crop should be killed at least 2 weeks prior to planting the row crop. Regrowth of the cover crop should be treated with an appropriate herbicide mixed with a pyrethroid insecticide. Because reinfestation and hatching of new eggs may occur after treatment, additional scouting for insects will still be needed at, and shortly after, plant emergence to determine whether further insecticide treatments are required.

An additional challenge is the termination of the cover crop at the time needed. While several crop selections will winter kill, such as oats and oilseed radish, many will live through the winter and need a herbicide application for control sometime in the spring prior to planting row crops. For more information on how to control cover crops consult Table 1 on page 16 of the 2009 Ohio and Indiana Weed Control Guide (WS 16) (available online at <http://www.btny.purdue.edu/Pubs/WS/WS-16/BurndownTable.pdf>).

4-H BOOSTER/ALUMNI PLANT SALE

Orders are being taken now for the **annual LaPorte County 4-H plant sale**. This is the only county-wide fundraiser that the 4-H program employs. A wide variety of plants, supplied by Mark's Family Market, are being offered this year (geraniums, pansies, marigolds, petunias and impatiens). **Orders need to be placed by May 1st**. Plants need to be picked up on Saturday, May 9th from 8:00 a.m. until 12:00 noon CDT from the Goat Barn at the LaPorte County Fairgrounds. An order form is enclosed. Order forms are also available from any 4-H club or the Extension office; forms can also be downloaded from the Purdue Extension – LaPorte County website: www.extension.purdue.edu/laporte; click on *4-H Program* and select the plant sale link to download a form in .pdf format.



LA PORTE SWCD TREE SALE

La Porte County Soil & Water Conservation District (SWCD) is taking orders now for its 2009 tree/plant sale, the proceeds of which help fund the SWCD's operations and education/information programs. Choose from among 11 different trees and shrubs, including both evergreen and deciduous trees.

Trees are priced in bundles of 5 to 10 trees for each species. Native plant kits (in the form of plant plugs; 38 per flat) for various landscapes are also available to order. **The deadline for ordering trees, shrubs and plants is Friday, March 27.** Order pickup will be from 8:00 a.m. until 4:00 p.m. CDT on Saturday, April 25, in the Conservation Building at the La Porte County Fairgrounds.

Workshops will be conducted during order pickup on April 25 beginning at 10:00 a.m. Public may attend one or all of the informative sessions on tree planting, vermicomposting

(composting with earthworms), planting for pollinators, and rain gardens. Activities for children, prizes and more will also be featured.

For more information about ordering trees/plant and to register for the workshops, please contact the La Porte SWCD at 219-362-6633 Ext. 3. You may also download the tree sale catalog and order form from www.extension.purdue.edu/laporte.

The 4-H Rabbit Food Stand will be open during the day for both breakfast and lunch.

IDNR TREE ORDERS

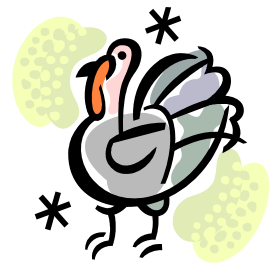
Landowners wanting to order trees in larger quantities (minimum of 100 trees) can still order bare-root seedlings and wildlife packets from the Indiana Department of Natural Resources (IDNR) state forest nurseries.



Orders may be placed by calling the Vallonia State Nursery at 812-358-3621 or emailing vallonianursery@dnr.IN.gov. Order forms are also available at the Extension office. Tree orders are shipped to Jasper-Pulaski State Nursery in Medaryville for pick-up. More information about IDNR trees can be viewed at IDNR's Division of Forestry website at www.in.gov/dnr/forestry/.

WILD TURKEYS: FROM ROOSTING TO ROASTING

A day-long workshop focusing on practical skills for wild turkey enthusiasts is scheduled for **Saturday, March 21**, from 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. CST at the **Jasper County Fairgrounds in Rensselaer, Indiana**. Purdue Extension, partnering with



National Wild Turkey Federation and Prairie's Edge, is planning a mix of educational topics, lunch, special breakout sessions and even a calling contest.

Morning topics include calling, decoying, use of camouflage, field care, skinning and butchering, food safety, and cooking demonstrations complete with taste-testing. Tips for taking kids hunting will also be shared. Afternoon breakout sessions offer choices of winter food access and spring food plots; gun patterning and safety; and photography and videography tips for hunters.

Registration is \$10 per person (pay at the door). Families are welcome and children under 17 are free. Registration includes materials, refreshments and lunch. Please register by calling Prairie's Edge at 219-866-5613 or Purdue Extension-Jasper County at 219-866-5741.

RESIDENTIAL WIND ENERGY SEMINAR



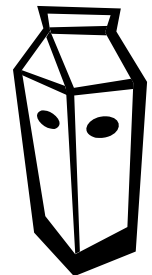
Increasing interest in harnessing energy from the wind has spawned the offering of a free Purdue Extension program entitled, **Introduction to Residential Wind Seminar**, to be conducted on **Tuesday, March 31** from 8:00 a.m. until 4:00 p.m. CDT. The Purdue Extension-La Porte County office will be one of the hosting sites for this statewide program to be viewed via interactive IP Video. Please reserve your spot soon (space is limited) by calling 219-324-9407. Refer to the enclosed flyer for more details.

This workshop is designed for people who have an interest in residential size wind systems for their home or business. Cris Dorman, Indiana Office of Energy Development, will teach what wind energy is, how it works and what it can do for them. Topics will include wind resources, basic system components, system types, turbine types, applications and tower types.

Purdue now maintains a Renewable Energy website that has more information about wind and other forms of energy. You can view information and publications on wind, solar, bioenergy, biofuels co-products and on-farm energy efficiency by visiting www.extension.purdue.edu/renewable-energy.

INDIANA DAIRY YOUTH CONFERENCE

The 2009 Indiana Dairy Youth Conference and Dairy Ambassador Contest are scheduled for **Saturday, April 18**, at the Dairy Adventure Center located at Fair Oaks Dairy Farm near Fair Oaks, Indiana.



Activities will include a skillathon, bus tour of the dairy, and interactive break-out sessions including a visit to the birthing barn. Besides lunch with the Purdue Dairy Club, snacks will include cheese and ice cream.

Objectives of the conference are to learn about educational opportunities for Indiana youth involved in dairy; provide a hands-on learning laboratory to enhance knowledge of the dairy industry; learn educational aspects of raising and showing dairy; provide networking opportunities with other youth who are involved in the dairy industry.

The Dairy Youth Ambassador contest will take place during the Conference. Young people with a passion for promoting the dairy industry are invited to apply and compete. The junior division includes youth of high school age; the senior division includes college students. Incentives for participating include scholarships up to \$1,000. Applications are due by April 6, 2009. For more info about the Dairy Youth Ambassador Program, visit www.extension.purdue.edu/Kosciusko/IDA07.htm. Registration paid by April 8 for the Conference is \$15, which includes a T-shirt, admission to Fair Oaks Dairy Adventure, breaks, meals and handouts. You can download a registration brochure at www.extension.purdue.edu/laporte; click on *4-H Program* & scroll down to *4-H Links*.

63RD IBEP BULL SALE IS APRIL 16

Nearly 135 tested bulls will sell during the 63rd Indiana Beef Evaluation Program bull sale to be held on **Thursday, April 16, 2009** beginning at 6:00 p.m. EDT (that's 5:00 p.m. LaPorte time). The "live" auction sale will take place at the Springville Feeder Auction near Bedford, Indiana. Interested parties can also place bids at five video sale sites located around Indiana. The closest video sites include the Fulton County Fairgrounds in Rochester and the Tippecanoe County Extension office in Lafayette.



Cattle breeds to sell include Angus, Charolais, Gelbvieh, Gelbvieh Balancer, Herford Lim-Flex, Red Angus, Simmental, SimAngus and Simmental-Maine. Only top-indexing bulls of each breed that pass the structural and breeding soundness exams sell. A sale catalog is available online at www.ansc.purdue.edu/ibep/.

Entries for the 2009 summer bull test are due by Monday, April 6. The IBEP auction for these tested bulls will be Saturday, October 17, 2009, at the Springville Feeder Auction. Test rules, entry forms, and online entry are available at the website above.

INDIANA FARMERS RECEIVE TOP CONSERVATION AWARDS

Five Indiana producers received the **2008**

Conservation Farmer of the Year Award at the 66th

Annual Conference for Indiana Soil and Water Conservation Districts, which was held in January in Indianapolis. The 2009 conference theme was *The Power of Conservation: Building a Sustainable Future*.

The award was presented to producers who actively practice conservation on the land. The recognition is sponsored by the Indiana Farm



Bureau, Inc. and the Indiana Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts (IASWCD). 2008 Conservation Farmer of the Year recipients were: Mike Craig, Wayne County; Larry Nieman, Decatur County; Scott Singleton, Spencer County; Denny Wilson, Scott County; and **Tuholski Farms represented by Dale Tuholski, LaPorte County**. Tuholski Farms was honored at the 2009 La Porte County Soil & Water Conservation District annual meeting held on February 28, 2009. Copies of the District's annual report featuring Tuholski Farms are available from the office.

Following is an excerpt from the award application package:

Tuholski Farms, LaPorte County

Dale Tuholski says that "addressing erosion addresses water quality in LaPorte County, because the county is highly ditched and has permeable soils." The Tuholski brothers farm on a variety of soils which include both those subject to water and wind erosion. Some of the land is considered highly erodible and they maintain the residue levels necessary to keep soil loss under tolerable limits on all their fields. Conservation tillage is utilized on all of the 5,800 acres of the Tuholski Farm. 2,100 acres are no-till and the remaining 3,700 acres are mulch-tilled.

Conservation crop rotation is also implemented consisting of corn, beans, milo, seed corn, wheat and rye cover crop after the corn silage is harvested. Additionally, there are 150 acres of hay. Approximately 2,000 acres are irrigated and the irrigation is managed so that water is never over-applied. This prevents runoff from occurring.

The Little Kankakee River flows through the property of the Tuholski Farm. In order to prevent erosion and sedimentation, livestock are excluded from the river using fencing. Additionally, there is both forested and herbaceous buffers along the banks. The Tuholski Farm also utilizes grassed waterways and critical area plantings on approximately two acres of their farm.

A PUBLIC CONFERENCE TO FOCUS ON THE NATURAL HERITAGE OF INDIANA

Indiana's Natural Heritage: A Public Conversation will be **March 20-21, 2009** at the Indiana State Museum in Indianapolis. The conference is part of a multi-year project that has resulted in the WFYI award-winning four-part documentary *The Natural Heritage of Indiana*. More about the project, the conference agenda, and conference registration is available at www.naturalheritageofindiana.org. Pre-conference registration deadline is March 14.



A major goal of the conference is to raise Hoosiers' awareness of Indiana's natural resources and environment. The conference plenary and concurrent sessions will have three major focuses: *The Power of Place and Stewardship*, *Human Interaction with the Natural World*, and *Where Do We Go from Here?*

On Saturday, March 21 the program starts at 8:30 a.m. EDT. Presenters include Judy O'Bannon, host of Communities Building Community and Judy O'Bannon's Foreign Exchange on WFYI, speaking about historic preservation and the green movement; and John Janssen, former Mayor of Greensburg, Kansas, speaking about the rebuilding of his town as a 'green' community following its destruction by a tornado. Other presentations will address the birth of Monroe Reservoir, environmental justice, restoration of abandoned Indiana lands, conservation farming, the Marion College Ecolab and more. Exhibits will be available throughout the day. The conference will provide information and resources for educators and other interested citizens.

INDIANA COMPANIES TO WATCH AWARDS PROGRAM

The 2009 *Indiana Companies to Watch* awards program honors second-stage companies headquartered in the state of Indiana. These companies demonstrate high performance in the marketplace or exhibit innovative products or processes. The program seeks businesses from **all industries** (including agriculture) **and all regions of the state**. Individuals can nominate deserving companies through March 27, 2009. For eligibility, online nominations, and other information, visit <http://Indiana.CompaniesToWatch.org>.

FOOD PANTRIES ARE BARE

There are almost thirty food pantries in LaPorte County and they need our help! In 2005, more than 10% of Indiana households were unable to provide enough food for themselves and their families. Non-perishable canned and boxed items as well as cleaning and personal products are needed.



Contact the Purdue Extension-La Porte County office for a list of pantries and find the one in your neighborhood or bring a donation to the Extension office. Donations, including money, can also be given to the Food Bank of Northern Indiana which serves LaPorte, Elkhart, Kosciusko, Marshall, St. Joseph, and Starke counties. Their address is P.O. Box 11365, South Bend, IN 46634 or call toll-free at 800-879-7040. For more information please contact Allison Goshorn, Consumer and Family Sciences Educator at Purdue Extension-La Porte County, by calling 219-324-9407.