

# Agri-Scope

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## ENCLOSURES:

2008 Michiana Crops Conference
2009 Crop Cost & Return Guide
Considerations in Setting a Cash Rent

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Extension Service

Purdue University, Indiana Counties  
and U.S. Department of Agriculture  
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## A Note of Thanks

Reflecting on the past growing season allows us to pause and give thanks for the many blessings of the past year. Despite early and late flooding and dry periods in between, most farmers produced a bountiful crop for which they can be thankful. The pain of high energy and fertilizer prices was offset to a degree by the opportunity to sell commodities at record level prices (even if you could/should have sold more). The year certainly taught us that we probably need to hone our skills in marketing and other areas of management to take advantage of opportunities offered.

Purdue Extension-La Porte County would like to thank you for the opportunities you have given us to be of service to you by providing information or helping solve agricultural and natural resources problems. We would like to extend heartfelt wishes to you and your families for a joyous holiday season. We stand willing and ready to meet your information needs with objective, research-based publications and university-backed resources. Please read and review the many opportunities for you to increase your knowledge and management skills through the variety of Extension programs offered in the next few pages.

## Important Dates to Remember

### 2008

Dec. 4	Vegetable Variety Showcase	Jan. 12	Area X IBCA Beef Meeting
Dec. 4	Kiwanis Ag Luncheon	Jan. 13-15	Fort Wayne Farm Show
Dec. 5	Michiana Crops Conference	Jan. 19-21	Indiana Hort Congress
Dec. 6	NW IN Regional Forum	Jan. 21-22	Midwest Organic Conf.
Dec. 8	Ag Outlook Meeting	Jan. 21-22	Heart of America Grazing Conf.
Dec. 16-17	Indiana CCA Conference	Jan. 26	Crop Management Wkshp, Valpo
Dec. 19	4-H Poultry orders due	Jan. 27, Feb.	<i>Managing Margin Risk</i> Series

### 2009

Jan. 2, 3	4-H Beef ID Days	Feb. 4-5	Women in Ag Conference
Jan. 6	Illiana Vegetable Growers School	Feb. 7	Purdue Ag Alumni Fish Fry
		Feb. 11-14	National Farm Machinery Show



## Vegetable Variety Showcase

Purdue's commercial horticulture program will host a **Vegetable Variety Showcase** on Thursday, Dec. 4, 2008, starting at 5:45 p.m. until 8 p.m. CST at the **Pinney Purdue Ag Center** near Wanatah. Topics (and speakers) will include "Gummy stem blight of muskmelon and watermelon and fungicide resistance" (Dan Egel, Purdue Plant Pathologist at Southwest Purdue Agricultural Center, Vincennes); "Performance of sweet corn varieties and powdery mildew resistant pumpkins" (Liz Maynard, Purdue Commercial Horticulture Specialist in northwest Indiana); and "Managing insects in sweet corn" (Rick Foster, Purdue Entomologist). They will report on vegetable field trials conducted during 2008, including variety trials for watermelon, muskmelon, pumpkins and sweet corn. The information should be of interest to vegetable producers growing any of these crops.

For more information about this meeting, please contact the La Porte County Extension office at 324-9407 or visit [www.hort.purdue.edu/fruitveg/](http://www.hort.purdue.edu/fruitveg/).

## Kiwanis Ag Recognition Luncheon

The La Porte Kiwanis Club plans to host its annual **Agriculture Recognition Luncheon** at noon on Thursday, Dec. 4, 2008. This "invitation-only" event recognizes the efforts of La Porte County agricultural producers who work tirelessly to provide a safe and abundant supply of food, feed and fiber to the rest of us living in the community.

The luncheon will feature Chad Martin, Purdue Renewable Energy Specialist, who will discuss the opportunities for renewable energy and its economic impact in today's volatile rural and agricultural climate. He will also address how agricultural producers can increase energy efficiency on-farm to control at least one of their production input costs. The title of Chad's talk will be "Harvesting Wind Power on Your Farm; But Don't Forget Energy Efficiency."

Please contact the La Porte County Extension office at 219-324-9407 for additional information about the luncheon.

## Michiana Crops Conference to Focus on Efficient Production

Purdue University and Michigan State University will host the **Michiana Crops Conference** on Friday, Dec. 5, 2008, from 8 a.m. to 4:15 p.m. EST at the **Blue Gate Restaurant** in **Shipshewana, Indiana**. Given recent record prices for both crop inputs and commodities, this year's conference will focus on efficient crop production including use of irrigation and double-crop options.

Of the nine presentations to be made, a few are: Shawn Conley, Wisconsin soybean and small grains Extension specialist, will review the latest soybean research and discuss double-crop options for wheat; Bob Nielsen, Purdue corn specialist, and Kiersten Wise, Purdue associate professor of botany and plant pathology, will answer the question, "are fungicides hurting your corn?"; and Jim Hilker, Michigan State agricultural economics professor, will explore a new marketing dilemma tagged "soybean arbitrage." The registration brochure has a complete list of topics and speakers as well as directions to the conference location.

Registration is \$35 prior to Dec. 1st, and \$40 after this date. The registration fee includes conference materials, lunch and refreshments. Continuing education credits for commercial pesticide applicators, Certified Crop Advisers and Michigan pesticide applicators will be available with the registration fee. Indiana private pesticide applicators pay an additional \$10 for Private Applicator Recertification Program (PARP) credit.

Registration is limited to 250 participants. To register, complete and send in the enclosed form or download a registration brochure from [www.agry.purdue.edu/dtc](http://www.agry.purdue.edu/dtc) or obtain one from the Purdue Extension-La Porte County office. You can also download a brochure at [www.extension.purdue.edu/laporte](http://www.extension.purdue.edu/laporte).

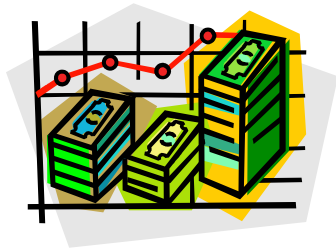


## Creating Tomorrow Today: A Forum on the Future of Northwest Indiana

Residents of La Porte, Lake and Porter Counties are invited to attend a **regional forum** on **Saturday, Dec. 6, 2008**, at the **Radisson Hotel at Star Plaza** located at US 30 at I-65 in Merrillville, IN

(Lake Co.). Sponsored by Northwest Indiana Regional Planning Commission (NIRPC), the forum will allow residents to voice their opinions to help create a vision for the future of Lake, Porter and La Porte Counties. The forum is the first step in a two-year planning project for the first long-term, comprehensive, regional plan for these counties. Topics to be discussed include transportation, economic and environmental growth, land use and social equity issues.

Check-in and light breakfast begin at 8:00 am; the program runs from 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. CST. Both the light breakfast and box lunch will be provided free of charge. While there is no charge to attend, participants are asked to see more information and register online at [www.nirpc.org/futureNWI.htm](http://www.nirpc.org/futureNWI.htm). You can also call Mary Thorne at NIRPC at 219-763-6060 Ext. 131.



### **Purdue Ag Outlook Meeting: *How Will Agriculture Get Through 2009?***

Sponsored by the Purdue University Cooperative Extension Service of La Porte and St. Joseph Counties, a free program to help explain factors that are driving farm prices this year both to the heights, and now to the depths will take place **Monday, Dec. 8, 2008**, at 7:00 p.m. EST (6:00 p.m. CST) at the **New Carlisle-Olive Township Public Library, New Carlisle, IN**. Dr. Corinne Alexander of Purdue's Department of Agricultural Economics will present the **Ag Outlook**.

The program will also examine the impact of the volatile prices on Indiana land values, cash rents, and lease arrangements. There will also be an evaluation of expected price levels for corn, soybeans, cattle, milk, and hog prices. Also featured will be strategies for grain pricing, expected input costs for next season, and the best crops to plant in 2009.

Please call the Purdue Extension-La Porte County office at 219-324-9407 by Friday, Dec. 5 to reserve your spot. If you require auxiliary aids and services due to disabilities, please contact us prior to the event.

### **Indiana Certified Crop Adviser Conference**

The **2008 Indiana Certified Crop Adviser (CCA) Conference** will be Tuesday and Wednesday, **Dec. 16-17** at the **Indianapolis Marriott East**.

Designed to provide technical and professional development opportunities for crop advisers, the conference will offer two full days of sessions in nutrient management, soil and water management, crop management and pest management. Participants will listen to nationally recognized speakers and can follow one track topic or choose multiple tracks.

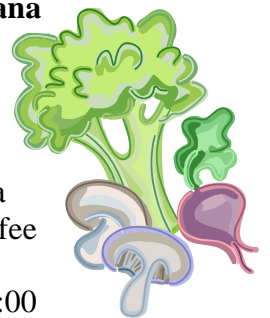
This year, four sessions on Tuesday afternoon will be devoted to raising specialty corn including sweet corn, popcorn, seed corn and corn with other special traits. The Indiana CCA program's annual business meeting will be held during the lunch hour on Tuesday. Professional development sessions will be featured on Wednesday morning. For more information about topics and speakers, to download a registration flyer or to register for the CCA conference visit [www.indianacca.org](http://www.indianacca.org).

### **USDA Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) Proposed Rule Changes: *Handling of Animals-Contingency Plans***

APHIS is proposing to amend the Animal Welfare Act regulations in response to lessons learned in dealing with the Katrina hurricane aftermath. Proposed rule changes would add requirements for contingency planning and training of personnel by research facilities and by dealers, exhibitors, intermediate handlers, and carriers to better prepare for potential disasters. People affected by these rule changes and interested citizens are invited to review the proposed changes and make comments on them. Comments must be received by **December 22, 2008**. To access the APHIS proposed rule in the Federal Register, go to the following website: <http://edocket.access.gpo.gov/2008/E8-25289.htm>.

### **Illiana Vegetable Growers' School**

The 2009 edition of the **Illiana Vegetable Growers' School** will be held on Tuesday, **January 6**, at **Teibel's Restaurant in Schererville, IN**. This year participants are asked to complete a **registration** form and pay the \$25 fee **by Dec. 28**. Registrations will be accepted at the door beginning at 8:00 a.m. CST, but a meal cannot be guaranteed without



preregistration. The program begins at 8:30 a.m. CST and runs until 4:00 p.m. CST.

A great variety of topics and speakers are on the program schedule. During the morning participants will hear about biorational and organic insecticides; vegetable crop response to herbicide drift; emergency pesticide (Section 18) labels; managing bacterial diseases in tomatoes and pumpkins; and powdery mildew resistant pumpkin variety performance.

After lunch topics include a focus on tomato production (organic and conventional production of heirloom tomatoes, grafting, and variety performance); *Eat Your Way to Better Health* Extension Program; the power of *Indiana MarketMaker*, a new web directory to help farmers reach markets; a discussion about helping farms coexist with development; nitrogen fertilization of pumpkins planted in a rye cover crop; and 2008 sweet corn variety results.

Sponsored by the Cooperative Extension Services of Purdue University and University of Illinois, the school will also feature vegetable vendor displays which can be viewed prior to the start of the program, during break and before lunch. Certified Crop Advisers can earn continuing education credits in pest management and crop management. Indiana Commercial Pesticide Applicators can earn CCH's. Indiana Private Pesticide Applicators may receive PARP credit towards recertification by attending the morning session and paying a \$10 fee.

Teibel's Restaurant is located at the intersection of US Highways 30 and 41 in Lake County, Indiana. For more information about the Illiana Vegetable School visit the *Purdue Fruit and Vegetable Connection* at [www.hort.purdue.edu/fruitveg](http://www.hort.purdue.edu/fruitveg); follow the link to *Events* to download a meeting flyer or call Nikky Witkowski at (219) 755-3249 for registration information. For information about the program call Liz Maynard at (219) 785-5673.

## 2009 IBCA & Purdue Region Beef Meeting

**Area X** (which includes La Porte County) Indiana Beef Cattle Association and Purdue **Regional Beef meeting** will be held on **Monday, Jan. 12, 2009**, in the Shrine Building at the Kosciusko County Fairgrounds; 6:30 p.m. EST (5:30 p.m. CST). RSVP to Kelly Easterday by Jan. 6 by calling 574-372-2340. IBCA area director elections will be held.



## Purdue Weed Science Update

The Purdue Weed Science team has produced its annual summary of the key points and issues seen around the state in 2008 and offers a collection of upcoming points of interest to do with weed management. This 14-page update provides information about some of the new herbicides and changes to familiar herbicides in 2008 for corn and soybean, forages and wheat and small grains. There is an update on problem weeds including herbicide-resistant horseweed (marehail) in Indiana, resistant foxtail, lanceleaf ragweed, ironweed and pricklypear. You will also find information about ways of dealing with RR/BT volunteer corn. And there is an introduction to new weed science tools and publications to help you better manage your weed control programs.

Contact our office for a copy of the weed science update or download a pdf file at [www.btny.purdue.edu/weedscience/](http://www.btny.purdue.edu/weedscience/); scroll down to *Weed Science News and Notes* for a link to *2008/2009 Weed Science Update*.

## Fort Wayne Farm Show

The 20th Anniversary  
**Fort Wayne Farm Show**  
will be held at the Allen

County War Memorial Coliseum on **Jan. 13 – 15, 2009**. Exhibitors will present the latest farm technology in the industry as well as offer the area's largest variety of farm machinery and equipment in one location. Educational seminars will be presented daily by Northeastern Indiana Soil and Water Conservation Districts and Purdue University Cooperative Extension Service staff.



## 2009 Indiana Hort Congress & Trade Show

The **2009 Indiana Horticultural Congress and Trade Show** is slated for Monday-Wednesday, **Jan. 19-21, 2009**, at the Adams Mark Hotel, 2544 Executive Drive, Indianapolis, IN. This annual event is an educational meeting designed to meet the needs of fruit, vegetable, wine, organics and specialty crop growers and marketers in Indiana and surrounding states. All interested individuals are invited to attend. Detailed information and registration materials will be available after Thanksgiving at the Purdue Extension-La Porte County office or online at [www.inhortcongress.org/](http://www.inhortcongress.org/).

## 2009 Midwest Organic Production & Marketing Conference

The **2009 Midwest Organic Production and Marketing Conference and Trade Show** will be held in conjunction with Indiana Hort Congress on Wednesday and Thursday, **Jan. 21-22, 2009**, also at the Adams Mark Hotel, 2544 Executive Drive, Indianapolis, IN.

This fourth annual conference will cover topics including organic certification, economics, developing markets, livestock, agronomic and horticulture crops, food safety and processing, and organic pest control and weed management.

For a complete listing of conference sessions and online registration, visit

<http://orgconf.sustainability.uiuc.edu>.



## Heart of America Grazing Conference

The five-state **Heart of America Grazing Conference** will be held on Wednesday and **Thursday, Jan. 21-22, 2009**, at the Holiday Inn in **Columbus, IN**. Sponsored by the Indiana Forage Council, Natural Resources Conservation Service, and the Extension Service arms of several Midwest Land Grant Universities, this conference brings together the latest practical information on the advantages of improved grazing systems and forage utilization for all grazing livestock producers.

A special feature this year will be the keynote speaker for Wednesday's banquet and a Thursday break-out session leader, Joel Salatin, owner of Polyface, Inc., a family owned, multi-generational, pasture-based, beyond organic, local-market farm and informational outreach in Virginia's Shenandoah Valley.

Individuals may register by Dec. 19 for a reduced price of \$65 for both days or \$40 for one day. This fee covers all program materials and meals. For more information, including lodging for the conference, contact Brad Shelton, of Purdue Extension – Washington Co., (812) 883-4601 or [sheltonb@purdue.edu](mailto:sheltonb@purdue.edu). A registration brochure is available at [www.indianaforage.org](http://www.indianaforage.org).

## 2009 Crop Management Workshops

The **2009 Crop Management Workshops** will be held at five locations across Indiana during the last week of January. The northwest Indiana site will be at the **Porter County Expo Center, Valparaiso, on Monday, January 26**. This full day workshop will cover weed, insect and disease management as well as crop fertility and diagnostic issues. There will also be a discussion of the impacts of this year's flooding on next year's production as well as an update from the Office of Indiana State Chemist.

Designed for commercial agribusiness and crop consultants, participants can earn certification credits toward Indiana commercial pesticide license and CEUs for Certified Crop Advisers. All participants will also receive a copy of the **2009 Corn and Soybean Field Guide**. Registration fee for this workshop is \$75. Early registration is recommended and is available online with a credit card at [www.conf.purdue.edu/crop](http://www.conf.purdue.edu/crop).

## Managing Margin Risk Series

For agriculture, 2008 will be remembered as a year with many production challenges and volatile markets. This highly risky environment calls for a broader set of risk management tools for farmers. Purdue Extension will be offering an IP video course called **Managing Margin Risk** in early 2009. The objective of this program is to provide producers with the tools needed to determine crop production breakeven prices, marketing plans, crop insurance decisions and leasing options with the end goal of being able to "lock in" profitable margins.

**Managing Margin Risk** will be a **five-week program** starting Tuesday, **January 27 and running through the month of February**. Classes will be held on Tuesdays from 6 – 8 p.m. CST and will be offered at various locations around the state. Pinney Purdue Ag Center near Wanatah will be one of those viewing sites; both Marshall and Pulaski County Extension offices will also be viewing sites. Registration will be \$40 for the entire series; the fee will cover handout materials, refreshments and any follow-up needed.

Topics to be covered in this new era of margin risk will be: what is margin risk, input costs trends, farm enterprise breakeven analysis and impact of leasing arrangements on a farm's bottom line; crop insurance alternatives, Farm Bill opportunities (ACRE, SURE); importance of basis, local pricing alternatives, market volatility and dynamics; how do

crop insurance and marketing work together; and putting it all together in a plan to manage market risk.

To register for this program series, please call Purdue Extension-La Porte office at 219-324-9407 for a registration brochure.

## **2009 Midwest Women in Ag Conference**

The **Midwest Women in Agriculture Conference** will return to where it all began eight years ago at the **Swan Lake Resort near Plymouth, IN, on February 4-5, 2009**. Offering different tracks on marketing, farm management, value-added agriculture and health and safety, wellness and natural resources, next year's conference should be a great opportunity to learn and network with over 20 different educational topics. A new track will focus on a new generation of agriculture producers – from ethanol to wine. Keynote speakers will be Michelle Payn-Knoper on “fighting back for agriculture,” Beth Bechdol about “the importance of trade for the ag industry,” and Nan Crockett Valentine with a humorous approach to “overcoming life's challenges.”

Registration is \$75 before Jan. 16; \$125 after that date; one-day registrations are also available. Please contact the La Porte County Extension office at 219-324-9407 for complete registration and conference information. You may also visit the website of the conference sponsors, Purdue Extension Women in Agriculture Team, at: [www.agriculture.purdue.edu/wia](http://www.agriculture.purdue.edu/wia).

## **What about 2009 Farmland Leases?**

2008 will be remembered for its flooding both early and late in the year as well as the “roller coaster” swings of both commodity prices and input costs. There were certainly some great opportunities for farmers this year, but also a lot of risk associated with growing crops or raising livestock.

Now that farmers are wrapping up this year's grain harvest, they will be looking forward to 2009. However, with all the news about record prices, what will farmland owners demand of their tenants in terms of cash rents or other rental agreements for next year?

There are number of issues that need to be considered by both landlord and tenant when discussing terms of a new rental agreement. But key to any agreement is good communication between the producer/tenant and the owner/landlord. This communication should extend throughout the entire term of the lease agreement.

While it may well be time to renegotiate the terms of a lease to reflect current risk/return and market conditions, neither party to the lease should enter into the discussions without good information. Craig Dobbins, Purdue farm management specialist, has developed a set of considerations in setting a cash rent. Dobbins lists 16 factors that may influence what the final figure might be, based on discussions about the unique qualities of a given tract of farmland. A copy of this list is enclosed. You can also access a copy of the list at [www.extension.purdue.edu/laporte](http://www.extension.purdue.edu/laporte).

Purdue's Ag Econ Department has developed an entire website that is devoted to farmland leasing issues. To access tools from crop budgets to lease comparison spreadsheets found on the Farmland Leasing Resources web site, go to [www.agecon.purdue.edu/extension/pubs/farmland\\_values\\_resources.asp](http://www.agecon.purdue.edu/extension/pubs/farmland_values_resources.asp). Or stop by the Purdue Extension – La Porte County office to visit about these issues.

## **Assistance for Farm Workers**

Employers and workers in agriculture in Indiana can take advantage of the services of Transition Resources Corporation. Some growers have good seasonal workers that they'd like to keep throughout the year, but the workers just don't have enough skills.

Transition Resources Corporation can help employees get the skills they need so a grower can keep them around. There is a wide range of choices available, for example CDL, welding certificates, small engine repair certificates, maintenance certificates, and many more.

Employers can also get FREE pesticide safety, first aid, and CPR training for their workers, taught by a Purdue certified instructor. Recently the program began offering services to individuals with disabilities working on farms through Indiana's AgrAbility Project in collaboration with Purdue's Breaking New Ground Outreach Program. And Transition Resources Corporation can help workers and their families make ends meet in hard times so they are ready to work. Everything is completely free!

If they can be of assistance to you, call Transition Resources Corporation in South Bend at (574) 237-9407 or toll free at (800) 662-8270. Or you can visit the website [www.transitionresources.org](http://www.transitionresources.org). Once at the site you can click on *In Your State* and select Indiana to see what program information is available there.