



VEGETABLE CROPS HOTLINE

A newsletter for commercial vegetable growers prepared by the Purdue University Cooperative Extension Service.

In This Issue

- [Blossoming Prosperity: Empowering Indiana Cut Flower Growers for Sustainable Growth](#)
- [Fifteen Reasons to Attend the Indiana Hort Conference January 14-15, 2025](#)
- [January Deadlines for Two USDA Specialty Crop Programs](#)
- [Purdue Extension-Lake County Hosts Educational Meeting for Vegetable and Pumpkin Farmers](#)
- [Ready for the Snow, Resources for Tunnel Growers](#)
- [Southern Indiana Vegetable Growers & Illiana Watermelon Association Winter Meeting](#)
- [Virtual Beginning Farmer Program](#)

Blossoming Prosperity: Empowering Indiana Cut Flower Growers for Sustainable Growth

(Emily Kresca, eluc@pru.edu)



ANNIE'S PROJECT
for Cut Flower Growers

Purdue Extension is pleased to offer a 6-week workshop for new or experienced cut flower growers.

Focus on nurturing your business skills while networking with other cut flower growers in our upcoming Annie's Project Cut Flower Grower

workshop series, which will be held at various sites throughout Indiana and virtually from 6-9 PM on the following dates:

- Jan 20
- Jan 27
- Feb 3
- Feb 10
- Feb 17
- Feb 24

"Annie's Project for Cut Flower Growers" will introduce and implement risk management skills for new and experienced cut flower growers. The course will focus on developing skills in new business development, financial management, strategic marketing, competitive production practices, and liability geared toward sustainable growth.

Participants will hear from keynote speakers who will be streamed live at dozens of workshop sites throughout Indiana. Each site will also host local speakers and hands-on activities. Attendees will have the chance to ask questions of local extension experts while learning business skills and best practices to improve their cut flower businesses.

The workshop costs \$65 per person, and participants should plan to attend each session. A virtual option is available for those who cannot attend a workshop site, although in-person attendance is highly encouraged to better network with other attendees and interact with speakers. Registration is required by January 13.

Refreshments will be provided.

These sessions will be held at host sites in Boone, Montgomery, Warrick, Hancock, Clark, Lake/Porter, Johnson/Morgan, Steuben, and Allen counties.

For more information, register by January 13th, 2025, at <https://cvent.me/xbkgdZ>.

Download the flyer [HERE](#)

If you need accommodations to attend this program, please contact Emily Kresca at eluc@prudef.edu or 574-372-2340 by January 13.

This material is based upon work supported by USDA NIFA under Award Number 2023-70027-40444

about the cucurbit diseases he found in 2024.

2. Learn from Indiana's cover crop guru, Dr. Eileen Kladviko—she doesn't speak often at events focused on vegetable crops, so this is a unique opportunity to hear from someone who knows our soils and how cover crops improve their health.
3. Get the essential vegetable weed management updates from Dr. Stephen Meyers, who does the field trials, to know what works.
4. Learn how to provide food and habitat for the 'good bugs' that pollinate your crops or eat the 'bad bugs' from Dr. Laura Ingwell.
5. Get inspired to try a new pepper production system or venture into Scotch bonnet peppers after hearing from Dr. Petrus Langenhoven and Nathan Shoaf.
6. Join the discussion about future climate challenges for vegetable production: what's expected, and what are/can farmers do about it?
7. Step into the Markets session to learn what buyers **really** want from Camillia Ulloa and Dr. Ariana Torres. Analyze the costs and benefits of beneficial insects for spinach in high tunnels from Jean Pierre Zavala and hear what it takes to get ready for new markets from Dr. Tim Woods.
8. Discover market opportunities through online food hubs operating in Indiana at the panel discussion with Region Roots, Market Wagon, and Local Source, hosted by Sarah Hanson in the Markets session.
9. Gain tips for protecting high tunnel crops from nematodes, insects, and diseases with Drs. Wenjing Guan, Lei Zhang, Laura Ingwell, and César Escalante, in the High Tunnel session.
10. Evaluate how soil moisture sensors could help you manage irrigation in high tunnel

Fifteen Reasons to Attend the Indiana Hort Conference January 14-15, 2025

(Liz Maynard, emaynard@prudef.edu, (219) 548-3674)

1. Meet Purdue's new Extension vegetable pathologist, Dr. César Escalante, and hear

tomatoes with Drs. Wenjing Guan and Liz Maynard.

11. Understand NRCS cost-share programs available for high tunnel production with Cara Bergschneider.
12. High tunnel crops need pollination too; how can you help that happen? Learn from Robert Grosdidier.
13. Take home ideas for improving the soil in your high tunnels, compiled from the experiences of Dr. Matt Kleinhenz.
14. Figure out what benefits companion plants could bring to your high tunnel with Allison Zablah.
15. Learn about strategies for managing the environment for strawberries and greens in high tunnels over the winter from Drs. Wenjing Guan and Liz Maynard.

Plus, sign up for PARP (Private Applicator Recertification) Credit!

And we can't ignore the value of meeting and talking with other attendees, suppliers, speakers, and conference staff.

This list doesn't include what you will find in the Fruit, Controlled Environment, Food Safety, and Raw Products-Processing Tomato Sessions. Check them out too

Register now at
<https://indianahortconference.org/>
Hope to see you there!!

January Deadlines for Two USDA Specialty Crop Programs

(Liz Maynard, emaynard@purdue.edu, (219) 548-3674)

Two USDA programs that provide payments to vegetable, fruit, and other specialty crop farmers

have January deadlines. The FSA [Marketing Assistance for Specialty Crops](#) (MASC) application deadline is January 8, 2025. Payments are based on your specialty crop sales for 2023 or 2024, or for new producers, expected sales in 2025. See the fact sheet [here](#). Read the official press release [here](#).

The [Food Safety Certification for Specialty Crops](#) (FSCSC) deadline is January 31, 2025, for certification issued June 26 - December 31, 2024. See the fact sheet [here](#). Read the official press release [here](#).

Contact your [local FSA office](#) for more information about these programs.

Purdue Extension-Lake County Hosts Educational Meeting for Vegetable and Pumpkin Farmers

(Liz Maynard, emaynard@purdue.edu, (219) 548-3674)

Vegetable Educational Meeting for Vegetable and Pumpkin Farmers
February 18th from 8:30 am-11:30 am
Purdue Extension, Lake County Office, 2291 North Main St., Crown Point, IN.

Agenda

- Did you know hot water treatment can help protect your seeds from diseases?
- Come meet the new vegetable pathologist, Dr. Cesar Escalante!
- [Midwest Vegetable Production Guides](#) available for sale- \$15, cash or check
- Indiana PARP and CCH credits will be available. Bring \$10 for PARP.

Registration deadline by February 14.

Register using this URL

<https://tinyurl.com/Vegetable-Meeting>

Download a copy of the schedule [HERE](#)

Contact Rebecca Koetz for special accommodations 2 weeks before the program.

Questions about the program can be directed to busser@r2urdue.edu or (219) 755-3240

Ready for the Snow, Resources for Tunnel Growers

(Wenjing Guan, guan40@purdue.edu, (812) 886-0198)

As I sit by the window watching the snow fall, I can't help but think about what's on the minds of many high tunnel farmers right now: Can my tunnels withstand the snow? It's a concern I haven't faced in recent years, but this winter feels uncertain.

As you can imagine, ensuring the safety of your tunnels under heavy snow begins during construction. Unfortunately, if that wasn't addressed then, it's too late now to make structural changes. However, there are still practical tips and tricks that can help you protect your tunnels during heavy snowfall.

This morning, I came across several excellent resources that I'm excited to share with you—just in case you haven't come across them yet.

[Prevent Greenhouse Collapse](#) This article from The University of Vermont Extension highlights essential strategies every grower faces snow challenge should know.

I particularly like 'Grower Experiences' under Heavy Snow on this webpage [A Guide to Preparing High Tunnels for Extreme Weather](#), it is also from University of Vermont Extension. Many

great practical tips.

[Managing Snow and Ice with Greenhouse and High Tunnels](#) from NC State Extension. It has some additional information.

Lastly, I recommend this video, I find the information shared by the farmer is valuable [How our tunnels are holding up in the snow](#)

Southern Indiana Vegetable Growers & Illiana Watermelon Association Winter Meeting

(Wenjing Guan, guan40@purdue.edu, (812) 886-0198)

Southern Indiana Vegetable Growers Annual Meeting will be held in conjunction with Illiana Watermelon Association Convention (IWA). The meeting will take place on January 17th in French Lick, Indiana. The meeting agenda is posted below. Additional details about the event can be found on the [IWA website](#). Registration and booth questions should be directed to either John Young at jmyoungco@yahoo.com or Rob Beets at Robert.beets@synnenta.com.

French Lick Resort & Conference Center
8670 W. State Rd. 56
French Lick, IN 47432

Private Applicator Recertification Program credits will be available for an additional fee and will be collected at the end of the **PARP session**. You must attend all the PARP sessions indicated on the agenda to receive credit. Bring your PARP card or number with you.

| | Title | Presenter |
|----------------|--|---|
| 9:00-9:45 am | Current Status of Cucurbit Diseases in Indiana (PARP) | César Escalante (Purdue University) |
| 9:45-10:15 am | Navigating Watermelon Fertilization and Irrigation Management amidst Erratic Rainfalls | Wenjing Guan (Purdue University) |
| 10:15-10:45 am | Watermelon Variety Evaluations at the Southwest Purdue Agricultural Center | Wenjing Guan (Purdue University) |
| 10:45-11:00 am | Break | |
| 11:00-11:30 m | Managing Spider Mites in Watermelon Production (PARP) | Ian Kaplan and Zeus Mateos Fierro (Purdue University) |
| 11:30-12:00 am | Rindworm Damage Research Update (PARP) | Ian Kaplan and Zeus Mateos Fierro (Purdue University) |
| 12:00-1:00 pm | Lunch | |
| 1:00-1:30 pm | Incorporating Cover Crops in Watermelons and Other Vine Crops, Research and Practice in Delaware (Virtual) | Gordon Johnson (University of Delaware) |
| 1:30-2:00 pm | Cole Crop Production in Delaware (Virtual) | Gordon Johnson (University of Delaware) |
| 2:00-2:30 pm | Weed Science Update (PARP) | Steve Meyers (Purdue University) |
| 2:30-3:30 pm | Food Safety Update | Scott Monroe (Purdue University) |
| 3:30-4:00 pm | PARP | Richard Beckort (Purdue University) |

For questions about meeting registration or exhibit booths, please contact John Young at jmyoungco@yahoo.com and Rob Beets at Robert.Beets@syngenta.com

Agenda

Virtual Beginning Farmer Program

(Amy Thompson, afthompson@purdue.edu)

Farmer Recourse Planning for the Small-Scale Market Farmer

Virtual via Zoom

Get Your Farm Off To A Great Start!

The goal of this 8-session program is to help new and beginning farmers find success through the creation of a practical action plan.

The program helps farmers set goals, identify assets and challenges, and become aware of outside assistance and resources that can lead them toward a successful farming operation. Each participant will be encouraged to explore outside resources and supplemental materials presented in the class, as well as other resources shared by classmates.

Participants will be provided with a digital copy of the Beginning Farmer workbook.

When
 Thursday Evenings: 7:00 – 8:30 PM EST
 January 9 – February 27, 2025

Where
 Virtual via Zoom – link will be provided after the registration fee has been received.

Registration
 Registration is \$85

Learn more and register at
<https://cvent.me/2BYd1E>

Download the event flyer [HERE](#)

If you need a reasonable accommodation to participate, please contact Amy Thompson at afthompson@purdue.edu



BEGINNING FARMER
FARM RESOURCE PLANNING
 FOR THE SMALL-SCALE AND MARKET FARMER
 VIRTUAL VIA ZOOM

The goal of this 8-session program is to help new and beginning farmers find success through the creation of a practical action plan. The program helps farmers set goals, identify assets and challenges, and become aware of outside assistance and resources that can lead them towards a successful farming operation. Each participant will be encouraged to explore outside resources and supplemental materials presented in the class as well as other resources shared by classmates.

Participants will be provided with a digital copy of the Beginning Farmer workbook.

**THURSDAY EVENINGS: 7:00 - 8:30 PM EST
 JANUARY 9 - FEBRUARY 27, 2025**

**REGISTRATION IS \$85
 LEARN MORE AND REGISTER AT:
[HTTP://CVENT.ME/2BYD1E](http://cvent.me/2BYd1E)**

SCAN TO REGISTER: 

PURDUE UNIVERSITY
 Extension - Diversified Farming and Food Systems

IF YOU NEED A REASONABLE ACCOMMODATION TO PARTICIPATE, PLEASE CONTACT AMY THOMPSON AT [AFTHOMPSON@PURDUE.EDU](mailto:afthompson@purdue.edu).

PURDUE UNIVERSITY IS AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY/EQUAL ACCESS/AFFIRMATIVE ACTION INSTITUTION.

It is the policy of the Purdue University that all persons have equal opportunity and access to its educational programs, services, activities, and facilities without regard to race, religion, color, sex, age, national origin or ancestry, marital status, parental status, sexual orientation, disability or status as a veteran. Purdue is an Affirmative Action Institution. This material may be available in alternative formats. 1-888-EXT-INFO Disclaimer: Reference to products in this publication is not intended to be an endorsement to the exclusion of others which may have similar uses. Any person using products listed in this publication assumes full responsibility for their use in accordance with current directions of the manufacturer.

Vegetable Crops Hotline © Purdue University - vegcropshotline.org

Editor: Petrus Langenhoven | Department of Horticulture and Landscape Architecture, 625
Agriculture Mall Dr., West Lafayette, IN 47907 | (765) 496-7955