In This Issue

From The Editor's Desk

(Petrus Langenhoven, plangenh@purdue.edu, (765) 496-7955)

Dear Valued VCH Readers,

Welcome to this week's edition of the Vegetable Crops Hotline!

August continues to deliver on its promise as the month of plenty! Here at the Meigs Horticulture facility in Lafayette, we're harvesting abundant crops of eggplant (Figure 1) and bok choy (Figure 2), with watermelon harvests just around the corner. Harvest of my high tunnel sweet pepper variety trial (Figure 3) at the Purdue Student Farm will commence next week. It's a perfect reminder of why late summer is such an exciting time for vegetable growers across Indiana.

This week's newsletter brings you a rich mix of timely updates and valuable resources, starting with an urgent alert about buckeye rot in tomatoes. The Purdue Plant and Pest Diagnostic Lab has received multiple tomato samples showing this disease over recent weeks, likely due to our wet and humid weather conditions. Caused by Phytophthora species, buckeye rot appears as gray-green to green-brown lesions that spread across fruit with distinctive concentric circles—something every tomato grower should watch for right now.

Figure 1. Eggplant var. Hansel produces many 3-4″ long clusters of fruit (Photo by Petrus Langenhoven).

Beyond this critical disease update, we'll explore how veteran farmers are shaping Indiana's food systems through farm-to-school initiatives and share insights from recent research on integrated soil-to-market decision-making that's driving production success. For those tracking pest management, we have important updates on corn earworm thresholds as fresh silk season winds down on dent corn.

Looking ahead, we're highlighting some excellent learning opportunities, including the Southwest Purdue Ag Center's Pumpkin Field Day in September and a mechanical weed control event in Kentucky that promises practical solutions for specialty crop producers. Plus, we'll introduce you to FoodLink—a free Purdue Extension resource that can help boost your produce sales by connecting customers with the information they need to confidently purchase unfamiliar fruits and vegetables.

As always, our goal is to keep you informed with the latest research, practical guidance, and opportunities to strengthen Indiana's vegetable production community.

Figure 2.Win-Win Choi ready for harvest (Photo by Petrus Langenhoven).

Figure 3. High tunnel sweet pepper variety trial at the Purdue Student Farm. Harvest will commence next week (Photo by Petrus Langenhoven).

Growers and Purdue Extension Educators

Your input and expertise make this newsletter a truly useful resource. If you have hot topics you'd like us to cover, success stories to share, or questions for our Extension specialists, please get in touch with us at plangenh@purdue.edu or contact the specialist directly. We also welcome high-quality photos of pest issues, unusual symptoms, or innovative production practices you've implemented on your farm.

Website Links in Newsletter Articles

We frequently include links to websites or online publications. If you are unable to access these resources, please don't hesitate to contact your local Purdue Extension office or us to request a hard copy of the information.

Midwest Vegetable Production Guide

The 2025 Midwest Vegetable Production guide is now available for growers to visit online at **mwveguide.org**, or you can download and print a guide from your computer at **mwveguide.org/guide**. The guide can also be purchased for $15 per copy. Contact your Extension Office or Stephen Meyers (slmeyeres@purdue.edu) directly to buy a copy.

Midwest Vegetable Trial Reports

Are you still considering purchasing vegetable seeds? The Midwest Vegetable Trial Reports feature many articles to help you make an informed decision. The resource also hosts research results related to production.

Best regards,

Petrus Langenhoven
Clinical Assistant Professor and Vegetable Extension Specialist
Department of Horticulture and Landscape Architecture
Purdue University

Insect Trapping Updates

(Laura Ingwell, lingwell@purdue.edu, (765) 494-6167)

Corn Earworm

Figure 1. Corn earworm on sweetcorn (Photo by John Obermeyer).

https://extension.entm.purdue.edu/veg/cornearworm/

We are nearing the end of fresh silk on the dent corn population throughout much of the state. This means that for those of you who have late plantings of sweetcorn that have yet to silk, your threshold will drop back down to 1 moth per night on average to trigger an insecticide application. Keep a close eye on dent corn;

if there is still green silk present, you can remain at the higher threshold (10 per night).

I have also had several calls voicing concerns that pyrethroid applications no longer work to control pests. This included a sweetcorn grower and tomato growers. While there are populations of corn earworm in the United States that are resistant to pyrethroids, I have not tested this in Indiana. It is possible that these products are losing efficacy against this pest as a result of resistance. However, it is also possible that the chemical is not holding up on the plant and therefore it's not a matter of resistance but coverage and exposure. Sunlight and heat can both impact the breakdown and efficacy of pyrethroids. Given the hot and sunny weather we have been experiencing, this could be the cause of failure. Consider changing the time at which you apply the product or use a different mode of action (IRAC code other than 3) to improve the efficacy of your insecticide applications.

Buckeye Rot of Tomato

(John Bonkowski, jbonkows@purdue.edu)

Over the last few weeks, we have received multiple tomato samples at the Purdue Plant and Pest Diagnostic Lab with buckeye rot of the fruit. This is likely due to the recent wet and humid weather we have been experiencing. Buckeye rot is a disease caused by three different *Phytophthora* species: *P. capsici*, *P. drechsleri*, and *P. nicotianae*. We often find that *P. nicotianae* is more common than *P. capsici* or *P. drechsleri* in IN. Symptoms often develop as gray-green to green-brown lesions that spread across the fruit (Figure 1). Lesions may appear diffuse or water-soaked around the leading edge, but they will become brown and can develop concentric circles as it spreads (Figure 2). Over time, infected fruit can also be colonized by secondary soft rot organisms, which will eventually cause the fruit to rot and fall apart. Until that time, the fruit tends to stay somewhat firm.

Figure 1: Caption: Roma tomatoes with buckeye rot caused by Phytophthora (Photo by PPDL).

Figure 2: Caption: Buckeye rot symptoms with concentric circles (Photo by PPDL).

Phytophthora is an oomycete, or a water mold, and is a soilborne organism, so affected fruit tends to be either in contact with the soil itself or lower in the plant canopy where soil can splash up onto the fruit. Disease severity tends to be higher during warm, wet weather, especially in conditions where there is standing water, as the oomycete produces sporangia under humid or flooded conditions that can be spread by water splash (Figure 3).

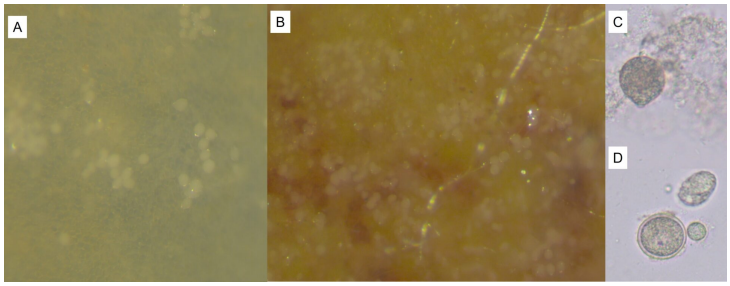


Figure 3: Caption: Symptomatic tomato tissue was placed in a dish and covered with water. Within 48 hours, Phytophthora sporangia began to grow profusely from the infected, symptomatic tissue. A) green tissue on the infected fruit, B) brown tissue on the infected fruit, both with significant amounts of sporangia. C) A sporangium floating in the water. It has a distinct pear-to-lemon shape. D) Oospores, the overwintering structure produced by Phytophthora, have a thick double wall and can develop in the infected plant tissue (bottom left structure) (Photo by PPDL).

Phytophthora may also infect the roots, crown, and stem of tomato plants, so there may be other disease symptoms present aside from rotting fruit; however, these symptoms are not as common as fruit rot on tomatoes. If you know you have a history of Phytophthora root rot in a particular part of the field, I would recommend scouting for affected fruit during wet periods in the summer.

It is important to note that all three *Phytophthora* species associated with buckeye rot have fairly wide host ranges. If multiple crops are grown in successive years or if you intend to rotate crops to reduce disease severity in a future cropping season, it is important to determine the type of *Phytophthora* that is present to ensure the next crop is not at risk.

As indicated, crop rotation can reduce the total amount of inoculum in the soil from one year to the next, but *Phytophthora* can produce overwintering structures (oospores) that can survive

for multiple years in the soil and/or dead plant tissue. It is important to use multiple management strategies to try and reduce pathogen inoculum and disease severity.

1. Avoid planting in soil that is compacted or that has poor drainage.
2. Plant in raised beds and/or stake tomato stems to elevate the tomato fruit away from the soil
3. Avoid working with plants while there is dew or water on the foliage and fruit, as this can help spread pathogens from plant to plant
4. Work with healthy plants first before working with symptomatic plants – pick and remove infected fruit from the field to reduce inoculum
5. Plant resistant or tolerant varieties, if they are available
6. Remove or destroy cull piles of fruits/vegetables from previous crops to avoid pathogen carryover from a previous season
7. Apply preventative fungicides to protect healthy fruits and slow the spread of the disease – Information can be found in the Midwest Vegetable Guide (https://mwveguide.org/), or you can contact Dr. César Escalante, the Purdue University Extension Vegetable Pathologist, for management recommendations.

If you believe you have buckeye rot or another disease problem, but would like verification, please feel free to submit a sample to the Purdue Plant and Pest Diagnostic Lab. Sample submission fees for Indiana residents are $11, while samples from out-of-state are $22. Please feel free to reach out with any questions you may have: ppdl-samples@purdue.edu and 765-494-7071.

Understanding Farm Decision-Making: Insights from the 2024-2025 Producer Survey

(Petrus Langenhoven, plangenh@purdue.edu, (765) 496-7955), (Maria Marshall, mimarsha@purdue.edu), (Nathan Shoaf, nlshoaf@purdue.edu) & *(Renee Wiatt, reneewiatt@purdue.edu)*

Small and medium-sized vegetable farms face unique challenges balancing profitability with sustainable production practices and food safety requirements. To better understand how these farmers navigate complex decision-making processes, the Soil to Market Team—comprising Maria Marshall, Renee Wiatt, Petrus Langenhoven, Betty Feng, and Nathan Shoaf—conducted a comprehensive survey of 500 small and medium-sized farmers across the United States during 2024-2025. This research, funded by the U.S. Department of Agriculture's National Institute of Food and Agriculture, focuses on holistic farmer decision-making processes.

This article series will present key findings from the survey, offering insights that can help both growers and Extension educators better understand the interconnected nature of farm planning. These findings aim to support more profitable and sustainable vegetable farming operations by examining the relationship between strategic planning and farm performance.

From Soil to Market: How Integrated Decision-Making Drives Vegetable Production Success

Recent survey data reveal that vegetable growers are increasingly adopting integrated management approaches that recognize soil health as the foundation of successful crop production and economic viability. The findings demonstrate a shift toward comprehensive decision-making that connects soil management practices directly to market outcomes.

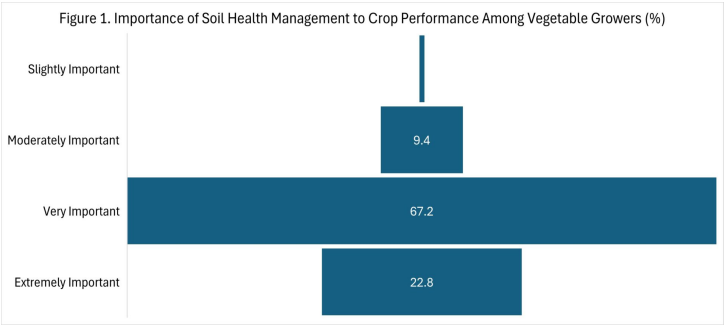
The Dominance of Integrated Production Systems

The survey shows that **89.6% of growers operate using both organic and conventional practices**, with only 8.4% using purely conventional methods and just 2% using exclusively organic approaches. This mixed systems model reflects the practical reality that modern vegetable production requires flexibility to meet diverse market demands while maintaining soil health and economic sustainability.

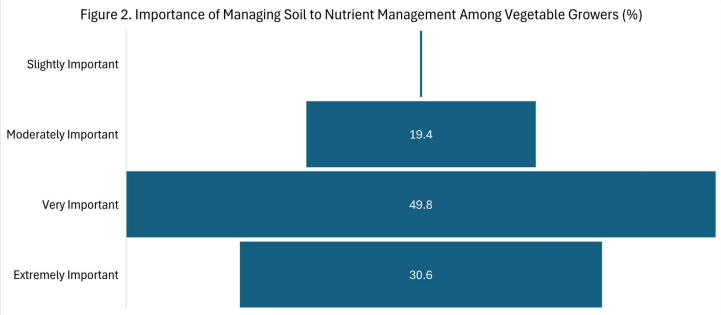
This integrated approach allows growers to optimize their management strategies based on specific crops, market requirements, and field conditions, rather than being constrained by a single production practice.

Soil Health as the Production Foundation

Growers clearly understand that soil health underpins successful vegetable production. An overwhelming **67.2% consider soil health "very important" to crop performance**, with an additional 9.4% rating it as moderately important (Figure 1). This recognition extends beyond immediate production concerns to long-term sustainability and profitability.

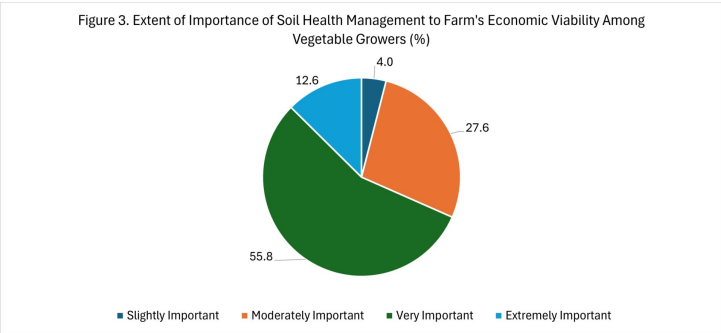


The connection between soil health and nutrient management is even more pronounced, with **80.4% of growers rating soil health as "very important" or "extremely important"** to their nutrient management programs (Figure 2). This suggests that growers view soil health not only as an environmental approach, but also as a practical tool for optimizing fertilizer efficiency and reducing input costs.



Economic Drivers of Soil Health Investment

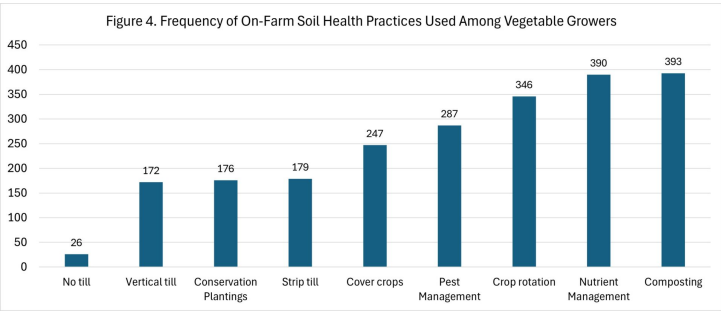
The economic case for soil health management is clear in the survey result, as **68.4% of growers consider soil health "very important" or "extremely important" to their farm's economic viability** (Figure 3). This economic perspective drives adoption of soil health practices that can reduce input costs, improve yields, and enhance crop quality—all factors that directly impact market competitiveness.



Comprehensive Soil Health Practice Adoption

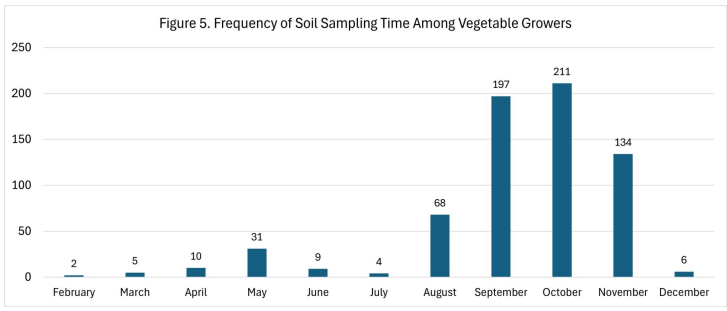
Growers are implementing a diverse range of soil health practices (Figure 4), with **composting leading adoption at 78.6% of responses**, followed closely by nutrient management (78.0%) and crop rotation (69.2%). Pest management (57.4%) and cover crops (49.4%) represent the next tier of popular practices, while tillage practices show varied adoption rates, with strip till (35.8%), vertical till (34.4%), and conservation plantings (35.2%) clustering together in the middle range. No-till practices, although beneficial, show the lowest adoption rate, with just 5.2% of responses. Growers could check all that apply.

This hierarchy reflects growers' prioritization of practices that offer multiple benefits. Composting, nutrient management, and crop rotation provide immediate improvements in soil health while supporting economic returns through enhanced soil fertility, pest suppression, and improved nutrient cycling—advantages that directly translate to increased market value.

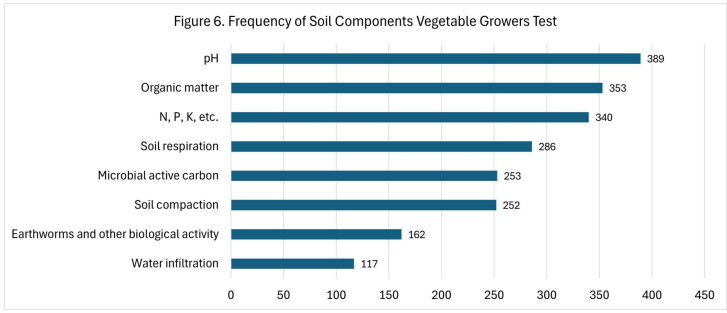


Data-Driven Decision Making

Soil testing demonstrates growers' dedication to evidence-based management. The majority (**95.8%) of growers test their soils**, with **87.4% sampling within the last five years**. Most growers (71.4%) sample annually, typically during the fall months (September-November), when soil conditions are most representative and planning for the following season begins (Figure 5).

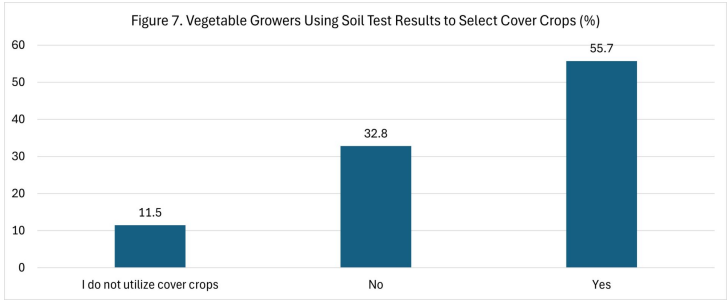


Growers test for a comprehensive range of soil parameters (Figure 6), with **pH (77.8%), organic matter (70.6%), and N-P-K levels (68.0%)** being the most common. Importantly, **69.5% of growers feel they can interpret test results "well"**, and **66.8% follow laboratory recommendations "a lot" or "a great deal"**. The responses were not mutually exclusive.



Connecting Soil Health to Crop Selection

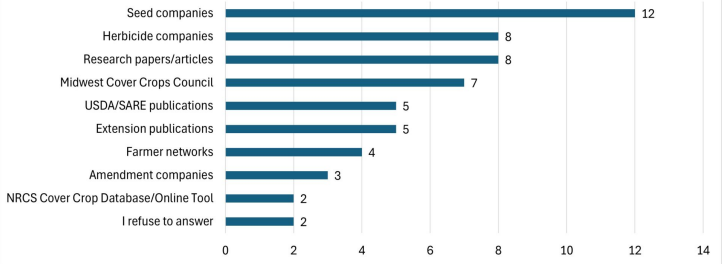
The integration of soil health into crop planning is evident in cover crop selection practices (Figure 7). **55.7% of growers use soil test results to select cover crops**, demonstrating how soil health data influences cropping decisions that affect both soil improvement and subsequent cash crop performance.



For the minority of growers who don't use soil tests (21), they rely on a diverse network of information sources (Figure 8). Seed companies are the most frequently consulted resource (12 responses), followed by research papers and articles (8 responses), and herbicide companies (8 responses). The Midwest Cover Crops Council serves as another important resource (7

responses), while extension publications and USDA/SARE publications each garnered 5 responses. The growers could check all that apply.

Figure 8. Resources Used to Select Cover Crops Among Vegetable Growers Who Do Not Test Soils

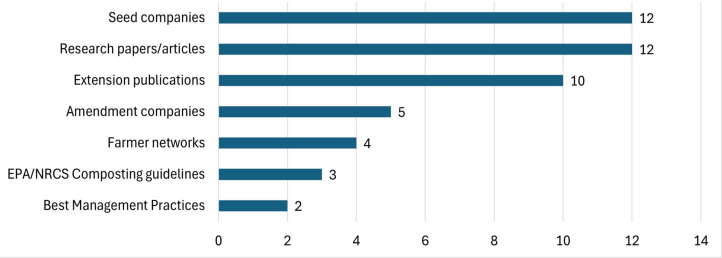


Soil-Informed Composting Decisions

The survey reveals that **89.6% of growers use soil test results to make composting decisions**, representing one of the highest rates of soil test integration across all management practices. This indicates that growers understand composting as a precision tool rather than a blanket soil improvement strategy.

For growers who don't use soil tests (21), they turn to various research-based resources for composting decisions (Figure 9). Research papers and articles are tied with seed companies as the most consulted sources, followed by extension publications and amendment companies. This pattern among growers who do not use soil tests shows that growers seek evidence-based guidance for their cover crop and composting decisions.

Figure 9. Resources Used to Make Composting Decisions Among Vegetable Growers Who Do Not Test Soils



Market Implications

This integrated approach to soil health management positions vegetable growers to meet increasingly sophisticated market demands. Consumers and buyers are showing greater interest in production practices that support environmental sustainability while maintaining high-quality produce. Growers who can demonstrate comprehensive soil health management are better positioned to access premium markets and meet certification requirements.

The survey data reveal that successful vegetable production increasingly depends on integrated decision-making that connects soil health practices to both immediate production needs and long-term market positioning. By viewing soil health as an investment in both environmental sustainability and economic viability, growers are building resilient operations that can adapt to changing market conditions while maintaining productivity.

Key Opportunities for Extension Educators and Advisory Services

The survey data reveals several strategic focus areas for Extension educators and grower advisory services:

Strengthening Soil Test Interpretation Skills: While 95.8% of growers test their soils, only 12.5% feel they can interpret results "extremely well." This represents a significant opportunity to enhance grower confidence and decision-making through targeted educational programs on soil test interpretation.

Expanding Cover Crop Integration: With 11.5% of growers not utilizing cover crops and 32.8% not using soil tests for cover crop selection, there's clear potential to increase adoption and improve selection strategies. Educational programs that demonstrate the economic benefits of cover crops and provide practical selection tools could drive greater adoption.

Enhancing Composting Precision: Although 89.6% use soil tests for composting decisions, the high reliance on research papers and extension publications by non-testers (12 and 10 responses, respectively) indicates a strong appetite for evidence-based composting guidance. Extension programs could focus on translating research into practical composting recommendations. This includes helping farmers align compost applications with specific crop nutrient needs to avoid over- or under-application and improve nutrient use efficiency.

Supporting Integrated Management: The dominance of hybrid organic-conventional systems (89.6%) suggests growers need guidance on optimizing integrated approaches rather than choosing between production philosophies. Educational programs that address regulatory compliance, market access, and practice optimization for mixed systems would be highly valuable.

Strengthening Research-Practice Connections: The frequent citation of research papers and articles across multiple management areas indicates growers actively seek scientific backing for their decisions. Extension services can serve as critical bridges between research findings and practical implementation.

The Path Forward for Vegetable Growers

For current and future vegetable growers, the survey data delivers a clear message: success in today's market requires viewing soil health as both an environmental stewardship practice and a strategic business investment. The most successful operations are those that embrace integrated decision-making, combining the best practices from different production systems while maintaining rigorous soil testing and data-driven management. Growers who invest in understanding their soil test results, adopt comprehensive soil health practices, and connect these practices to market opportunities will be best positioned to thrive in an increasingly competitive and sustainability-focused marketplace. The foundation for profitable, sustainable vegetable production truly begins with the soil.

This soil-to-market perspective ensures that management decisions support both immediate profitability and long-term sustainability, positioning vegetable operations for success in an

increasingly competitive and environmentally conscious marketplace.

By linking production decisions with consumer demand for sustainably grown produce, growers can build stronger branding, access premium markets, and meet evolving buyer expectations. Extension programs can play a vital role in guiding farmers through this transition by providing technical assistance, facilitating peer-to-peer learning, and helping identify emerging funding opportunities.

Reference

Wiatt, R., Marshall, M.I., Feng, Y., Langenhoven, P., and Shoaf, N. (2024-2025). Soil to Market Producer Survey on Integrated Decision-Making Survey [data file and codebook]. IRB-2024-1552. Funded by USDA-NIFA-AFRI: Taking the Next Step as a Small and Medium Sized Farm: Understanding the Integration of Production, Food Safety, and Profitability.

Funding Acknowledgement

This work is supported by the Agriculture Food Research Initiative-Small and Medium Sized Farms Program, project award no. 2021-68006-33893, from the U.S. Department of Agriculture's National Institute of Food and Agriculture.

Any opinions, findings, conclusions, or recommendations expressed in this publication are those of the author(s) and should not be construed to represent any official USDA or U.S. Government determination or policy.

New Ag Climate Dashboard Makes Climate Resources More Accessible for Midwest Farmers

(Devyn Raver, draver@purdue.edu)

Press release originally published HERE

The Ag Climate Dashboard offers tools to help monitor extreme weather events in addition to crop growth, pest threats and climate anomalies. (Agricultural Communications)

WEST LAFAYETTE, Ind. — The **Midwestern Regional Climate Center** (MRCC), with support from the **United Soybean Board**, has launched the **Ag Climate Dashboard** — a centralized digital hub offering streamlined access to integrated climate and agricultural data and decision-support tools for producers, advisors and researchers in the Midwest.

Designed to support on-farm decision-making, the Ag Climate Dashboard offers up-to-date weather data, National Weather Service forecasts, Climate Prediction Center outlooks, historical records and interactive tools for monitoring crop growth, pest threats, climate anomalies and extreme weather events.

The dashboard also connects users to regional ag climate products and a variety of state-specific resources. State-specific pages, such as Indiana's, link to tools and resources like the Purdue Mesonet and the Indiana State Climate Office.

"We want to provide as much clear, well-organized information to producers and advisors as possible so they can make confident management decisions, whether that's on their own farms or helping clients," said Austin Pearson, climatologist at the MRCC and Indiana State Climate Office.

By placing these tools in a single, easy-to-navigate platform, the dashboard allows users to make better-informed decisions and support profitability and yield.

The idea for the dashboard stemmed directly from farmers. "In 2023, we hosted workshops with farmers and one of the biggest takeaways was that while many ag climate tools exist, they aren't found in one location," Pearson said.

The dashboard hosts tools both developed by Purdue University and trusted external sources. For example, MRCC's **Corn Growing Degree Day tool** helps track crop progress and predict maturity, while the **Pest Forecasting Map from the Iowa Environmental Mesonet** alerts farmers to threats like alfalfa weevil. Within the dashboard, users also have access to the **Climate Prediction Center** outlooks for temperature and precipitation, interactive maps, crop and disease forecasting, fieldwork planning tools, and localized climate summaries — all designed to support timely, informed decision-making throughout the year.

"The forecasting tools help farmers understand what pests — whether weeds, insects or diseases — could be an issue and when management is crucial," Pearson said. "I encourage users to get into the dashboard and explore, as new tools are frequently added."

Users can also consult climatologies through the platform to gain insights into historical weather patterns that may influence marketing and management strategies.

Beth Hall, director of the MRCC and Indiana State Climate Office, emphasized the broader vision of the project. "We're discovering that individual states provide tools that are limited geographically. While searching for information, we found that there are missing tools — those that cover the full soybean production region. This inspires us to keep growing the dashboard to create a dynamic system that's helpful for both a small geographic area and the whole region."

Future enhancements will be guided by feedback from farmers

and advisors. One requested addition is an irrigation planning tool, as several farmers are seeking region-specific guidance on how much water to apply to minimize waste. While isolated tools like this exist, they often lack the geographic specificity needed for practical field use.

Looking ahead, the MRCC plans to incorporate more interactive, user-friendly features, such as location-based maps that respond to ZIP code input, providing a customized experience for each user.

“This is just round one of the dashboard,” Hall said. “We really wanted to provide people a taste and hopefully get them excited about the future. I envision more and more of our tools offering a greater user experience.”

Additional information about the Ag Climate Dashboard can be found on the Midwestern Regional Climate Center’s **website**.

Additional Information

July 16: Get Paid for Your Opinions About Ag Climate Data, June 26, 2025 – Included in Issue: 756

National Needs Assessment Offers Guidance to Tailor On-farm Food Safety Education for Military Veteran Farmers

(Autumn Stoll, stoll6@purdue.edu) & *(Yaohua (Betty) Feng, yfengchi@purdue.edu)*

Food safety education is most effective when it is customized to meet the unique needs of its intended audience. A one-size fits all approach is not appropriate, especially when working with distinct populations such as military veteran farmers, whose shared experiences and backgrounds shape how they learn and engage in agriculture. To better understand their needs, we conducted a national mixed-methods study combining surveys and interviews to assess their preferences, challenges, and educational priorities around on-farm food safety.

Who are Military Veteran Farmers?

Our findings revealed that most military veteran farmers operate small-scale farms, typically with fewer than five employees, less than five acres of land in production, and annual produce sales under $25,000. While food safety is considered important by these farmers, many expressed difficulties in consistently implementing food safety practices.

Understanding Training Needs

Barrier to Accessing Training

Although food safety was widely valued, many veteran farmers found implementation difficult. Approximately half of participants had not received any formal food safety training. Barriers to accessing food safety education included time limitations, a lack of training materials, and unreliable internet access, especially in rural areas.

Desired Training Format

Many military veteran farmers cited their frustration with conventional training methods, especially those that relied heavily on lecture-style or PowerPoint-based instruction. These formats often reminded them of military briefings, calling them “death by PowerPoint”, which they found unengaging and ineffective. Additionally, expressing interest in receiving on-farm food safety information in convenient emails, in addition to in-person workshops. University Extension was identified as the most trusted and “go-to” source for on-farm food safety information.

On-farm Food Safety Topics

Military veteran farmers expressed interest in learning more about soil amendments, agricultural water safety, and value-added product handling. Additionally, we identified critical gaps in current practices. For example, from the survey, 11% of respondents reported using fresh, non-composted manure; 43% did not conduct microbial testing on their agricultural water; and 16% did not clean and sanitize harvest tools before and after use.

Recommendations for Extension and Technical Support.

To effectively support this community, we recommend that future food safety education efforts:

- **Target Outreach to Military Veteran Farmers:** Leverage existing military veteran farmer networks and organizations to disseminate information and promote training opportunities.
- **Use Interactive, Hands-on Design:** Move beyond passive lecture formats by incorporating hands-on activities, demonstrations, and real-life farm scenarios.
- **Offer Flexible Learning Models:** In-person and hybrid delivery formats, including online courses and immersive technologies such as virtual reality, to address accessibility and engagement.
- **Focus on Practical, Relevant Content:** Address the specific needs of small-scale and beginning farmers, with emphasis on soil amendments, agricultural water management, sanitation practices and value-adding practices.
- **Reduce Logistical Barriers:** Plan training events with time and travel limitations in mind, ensuring that programs are both accessible and convenient.

Indiana Food Systems News

(Sarah Hanson, sspeedy@purdue.edu)

Veteran-grown food to Indiana schools

Are you a Veteran farmer in Indiana? Help Us Bring Hoosier-grown, Veteran-grown food to Indiana schools!
At Ease Orchard has received a planning grant to advance the **Patrick Leahy Farm to School Program** by focusing on one key question: **How can more Indiana Veteran farmers take part?**
We'd love your input—no matter your farm size or product type. Tell us:

- How familiar are you with Farm to School?
- Would you like to supply schools, host student farm visits, speak in classrooms, or support school gardens?
- What resources or assistance would you need to get involved?
- What barriers are keeping you on the sidelines?

Your insights will shape future grant funding and open new markets—and learning experiences—for Indiana's students. Click the survey link below and let your voice be heard!

Link: https://forms.gle/c9Y5ZPMczvi5VcfcA

Password: VetsINFarming

Indiana Apple Crunch

The 2025 **Indiana Apple Crunch** returns this October. Is your school ready? The Indiana Grown for Schools Network and the Indiana Dept of Education are wonderful partners that help us bring this program to fruition during National Farm to School month. If you are looking for a place to purchase local apples, please reach out to sspeedy@purdue.edu

Coming soon will be the registration website, so you'll have stickers, curriculum, etc.

Financing A Farm Operation Learning Event

Please join us for this Indiana SBDC Agribusiness Initiative Workshop!

We will be discussing the following topics

Types of Loans: Land, Building, Equipment, Operating

Categories of Lenders: Government Guaranteed Loans (USDA, SBA)

Funding Resources: USDA, FSA, NRCS, SBA, Farm Credit, Farm Oriented Banks, Family

IMPORTANT TIP: Have your Business Plan completed and Financial Projections ready and prepared prior to visiting your lender.

Tuesday, August 19, 2025, at 11 a.m.

Register HERE https://isbdc.ecenterdirect.com/events/17183

Download the event flyer HERE

Boost Your Produce Sales with FoodLink: A Free Resource for Farmers

(Sarah Hanson, sspeedy@purdue.edu)

How many times have you watched as a potential buyer walks away from a fruit or vegetable they are unfamiliar with? On the flip side, have you noticed how a quick explanation about proper storage at home and recipe ideas—can turn hesitation into a sale? Imagine something that easily tells the customer about selecting, storing, cooking, etc. This is FoodLink—a **free** Purdue Extension resource to help you market your great products!

Mechanical Weed Control Field Day at the University of Kentucky – September 23

(Alexis Sheffield, alexis.sheffield@uky.edu)

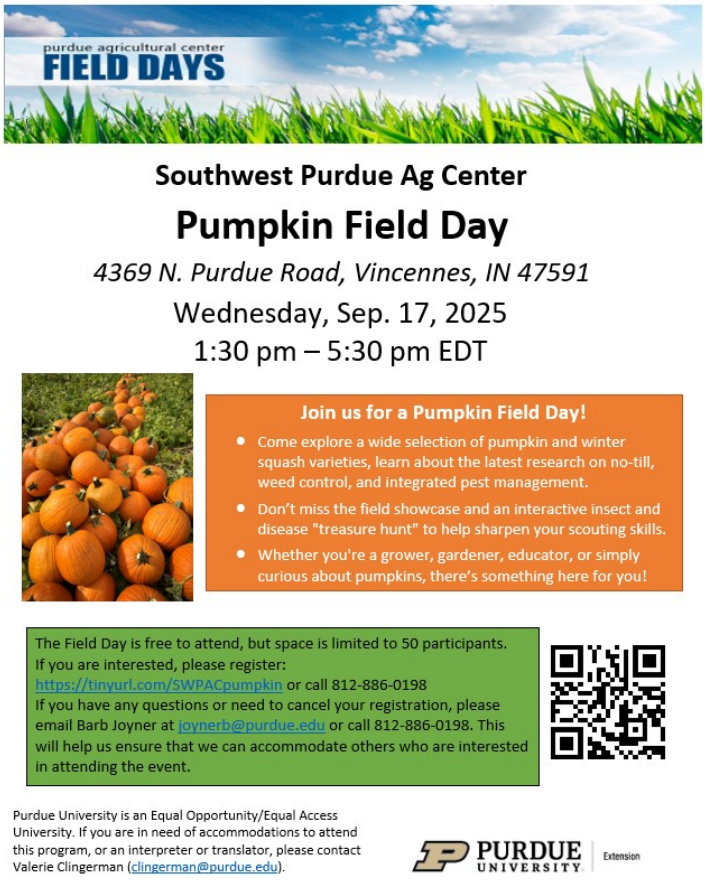
I'm excited to share that the University of Kentucky Center for Crop Diversification (UK CCD) and the Organic Association of Kentucky (OAK) are partnering with Glacial Drift Enterprises to host a *Mechanical Weed Control Field Day* on **September 23** at the University of Kentucky Horticulture Research Farm in Lexington.

Like many of your states, Kentucky is home to a growing number of small- to mid-sized specialty crop producers who are seeking effective, scale-appropriate tools to improve efficiency and productivity. Last year, OAK and CCD took two vanloads of Kentucky farmers to the Midwest Mechanical Weed Control Field Day, and several have since made significant investments in new weed control equipment inspired by what they saw there.

This upcoming field day aims to provide similar inspiration and technical insight, not just for Kentucky growers and advisors, but also for those from neighboring states facing comparable challenges. The event will include educational sessions, field demonstrations, and a trade show featuring innovative physical weed control tools now available for smaller-scale specialty crop farms.

We hope you'll consider attending.

Please feel free to contact Alexis Sheffield at 859-257-5635 or email her at alexis.sheffield@uky.edu if you have any questions.



Southwest Purdue Ag Center Hosts Pumpkin Field Day

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

Mark your calendars for an exciting educational opportunity! The Southwest Purdue Ag Center invites you to join their Pumpkin Field Day on **September 17, 2025, from 1:30-5:30 pm EDT** at 4369 N. Purdue Road, Vincennes, IN 47591.

This hands-on event provides participants with the opportunity to explore a diverse range of pumpkin and winter squash varieties while gaining valuable insights into cutting-edge agricultural practices. Attendees will learn about the latest research developments in no-till farming techniques, effective weed control strategies, and integrated pest management approaches that can enhance crop production and sustainability.

The field day welcomes growers, gardeners, educators, and anyone with an interest in pumpkin cultivation. Admission is free, but registration is required as space is limited to 50 participants.

To secure your spot, register online at https://tinyurl.com/SWPACpumpkin or call 812-886-0198. For questions or cancellations, contact Barb Joyner at joynerb@purdue.edu or 812-886-0198. Early registration is encouraged to ensure availability and help organizers accommodate all interested participants.

Shape the Conversation: Submit Your Topics for Indiana's 2026 Horticulture and Small Farm Conferences

(Laura Ingwell, lingwell@purdue.edu, (765) 494-6167)

Submit your content ideas for the 2026 Indiana Horticulture and Small Farm Conference.

Do you want to hear from someone in particular or about a specific topic at this year's newly combined conference? If so, please scan the QR code or follow the link below to submit your suggestions. The survey will be open until July 15, 2025.

https://purdue.ca1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_23Mes7vXu2xqtcG

PURDUE UNIVERSITY Extension

SAVE THE DATE

Indiana Horticulture & Small Farm Conference

March 3 - 5 , 2026

Join us as we merge two popular Purdue Extension events into one dynamic conference
Designed for specialty crop growers and small farmers region wide, featuring premier educational sessions

Event Location: Hendricks County Fairgrounds

1900 E Main St. Danville, IN 46122

IHC

*** Education * Trade Show * Poster Session * Social & Networking Event**

Purdue University is an Equal Opportunity/Equal Access University

SFC

Submit your content ideas for the 2026 Indiana Horticulture and Small Farm Conference

Do you want to hear from someone in particular or about a specific topic at this year's newly combined conference? If so, please scan the QR code or follow the link below to submit your suggestions. The survey will be open until July 15, 2025.

https://purdue.ca1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_23Mes7vXu2xqtcG

Save the Date: March 3-5, 2026, Hendricks Co. Fairgrounds

PURDUE UNIVERSITY

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