

VEGETABLE CROPS HOTLINE

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

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2026 Northwest Indiana Vegetable Farmer Workshop

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

The 2026 Northwest Indiana Vegetable Farmer Workshop will be held on February 2, 2026, 1:00 – 4:00 PM Central Time at the Porter County Public Library, 103 Jefferson Street, Valparaiso, IN. Save the date and register now!

Register:

https://purdue.ca1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_9vILKOLOj3T7nDw.

PARP and CCH credits expected. Payments for PARP credits should be made in advance by mailing a check for \$10 payable to "Purdue University" to Purdue Extension Lake County Office, Attn: PARP, 2293 N. Main St., Crown Point, IN 46307.

The program schedule is below. Times are in Central Time.

Time	Title	Presenter
1:00 pm	Cultural Practices for Top Quality Vegetables	Wenjing Guan, Petrus Langenhoven, and Liz Maynard, Horticulture Extension Specialists, Purdue University
2:00	Eyes on the Field: Disease Scouting in Diverse Vegetable Crops	César Escalante, Extension Plant Pathologist, Purdue University
2:30	BREAK	
2:40	Sprayer Calibration Basics for Managing Vegetable Diseases and Insects	César Escalante, Extension Plant Pathologist, and Laura Ingwell, Extension Entomologist, Purdue University
3:10	Unexpected Insect Damage: How to Scout, Identify and Manage	Laura Ingwell, Extension Entomologist, Purdue University
3:40	Endangered Species Act: Navigating the New Pesticide Labels	Becca Koetz, Extension Educator, Purdue Extension Lake County
4:00	Adjourn	

Questions? Contact Liz Maynard at 219-548-3674 or emaynard@purdue.edu.



**NORTHWEST INDIANA
VEGETABLE FARMER
WORKSHOP**

February 2, 2026
1-4pm CST

Porter County Public Library - Valparaiso Branch
(103 Jefferson Street
Valparaiso, IN 46383)

Workshop Courses:

- Cultural Practices for Top Quality Vegetables
- Eyes on the Field: Disease Scouting in Diverse Vegetable Crops
- Sprayer Calibration Basics for Managing Vegetable Diseases and Insects
- Unexpected Insect Damage: How to Scout, Identify and Manage

*Indiana Private Applicator Recertification (PARP) and Commercial Applicator Credits (CCH) expected. Those in need of PARP credits should mail \$10 cash/check to Purdue Extension Lake County Office, 2293 N Main Street, Crown Point, IN 46307

This workshop is designed for market farmers and wholesale growers, but anyone wanting to learn about vegetable farming is welcome!




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If you are in need of accommodations to attend this program, please contact Emily Evers at 574-235-9605 or everse@purdue.edu by January 26th. If you need an interpreter or translator, please contact Emily Evers at 574-235-9605 or everse@purdue.edu by January 26th.

2026 Southern Indiana Melon and Vegetable Growers Meeting

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

The Southern Indiana Melon and Vegetable Growers Meeting is scheduled on Jan. 16, 2026, at French Lick Resort (French Lick Resort & Casino, 8670 IN-56, French Lick, IN 47432).

The meeting agenda can be accessed [here](#). The meeting registration fee is \$30, including lunch. Registration fee will be collected on-site by the Indiana Vegetable Growers Association (IVGA). PARP credits are available for an additional \$10.

For questions about the meeting and exhibit booths, please contact IVGA president John Young at jmyoungco@yahoo.com or Illiana Watermelon Association president Rob Beets at

Farmers Market Forum Feb 4 in Indianapolis

(Peter Hirst, hirst@purdue.edu)

Hello! The Indiana Cooperative Development Center is pleased to announce the return of Indiana's annual [Farmers Market Forum](#). The FMF is an important forum for farmers' market managers, volunteers, and vendors to connect and develop skills to support their local markets. Alongside ICDC, Purdue Extension is hosting this year's forum at the Indiana Farm Bureau in Indianapolis on February 4th.

This year's forum will be an all-day event, featuring a mix of focused workshops and collaborative discussions to improve coordination and community among Indiana markets.

Registration is a sliding scale between \$25-50 and includes coffee, snacks, and lunch. Visit

<http://infmcp.org/elementor-17041> for more information and to register before January 28.

Please help us to spread the word about this great event.

You can find a detailed social media post at

<https://www.facebook.com/indianacdc>

Feel free to reach out with any questions.

Thank you and take care!

Sarah Hanson

Food Systems Coordinator
Purdue Extension

https://extension.purdue.edu/anr/_teams/dffs/food_systems

615 W. State Street, West Lafayette, IN 47907

Still Time to Register for the Cleaning and Sanitation Workshop – December 9, 2025

(Doriane-hans Sossou, dsossou@purdue.edu)

Keeping produce safe and meeting the expectations of buyers and regulators starts with strong cleaning and sanitation practices. Farms that implement proper procedures not only protect public health but also improve efficiency and build trust with customers. To help growers and farm workers strengthen these skills, we invite you to join us on **December 9th from 1:00 PM to 5:00 PM at the Purdue Extension Food Safety Training Hub in Vincennes** for a **free**, hands-on Cleaning and Sanitation Workshop. Attendees will learn from Purdue Extension experts about:

- Cleaning and Sanitizing Basics: Wash/Pack Area Practices, Sanitizer Dilution, and Using a Dosatron.
- Regulatory Requirements: understanding cleaning and sanitation rules for produce safety.

- SSOPs and Recordkeeping: writing Sanitation Standard Operating Procedures and maintaining records for third-party audit preparation.
- Water Sample Collection: hands-on activity to properly collect and handle a water sample
- ATP Meter Activity: using an ATP meter to test cleaning and sanitation efficacy in real time.

Don't miss this chance to gain practical, farm-ready skills that strengthen food safety programs and prepare for audits.

Registration is free!

Registration Link:

https://purdue.ca1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_81blwfocQNWOSYS

Date: 12/09/2025

Time: 1-5 pm

Location

Purdue Extension Food Safety Training Hub in Vincennes
4207 North Purdue Road, Vincennes, IN, 47591

SPECIALTY CROPS

BLOCK GRANT PROGRAM (SCBG)

OVERVIEW

The goal of this program is to develop and deliver produce food safety programming for small fruit and vegetable growers in Indiana. In addition to current educational offerings that assist specialty crop growers in achieving compliance with the Food Safety Modernization Act Produce Safety Rule.



► CLEANING AND SANITATION WORKSHOP

This hands-on workshop will focus on essential topics including:

- Proper cleaning and sanitizing techniques.
- Third-party audit requirements and effective recordkeeping systems.
- Growers will learn how to implement practical sanitation procedures that reduce contamination risks.
- Preparing for audit inspections and how to organize records to meet regulatory standards.

REGISTER: https://purdue.ca1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_81blwfocQNWOSYS

► FREE - PORTABLE HANDWASH STATION

- Time to build: 25 minutes
- Cost of equipment: \$130 (tax not included)
- Trash can and paper towels are not included.
- Clean water capacity: 8 gallons.
- Wastewater capacity: 5 gallons; bucket provided separately.
- Soap capacity: 1.3 gallons
- Operates on foot pump system

FREE handwash station link:

purdue.ca1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_eCJPyp9AzbWmE2G



SPECIALTY CROPS

BLOCK GRANT PROGRAM (SCBG)



► THIRD-PARTY AUDIT PROGRAM

This program is designed to assist produce growers on their path to food safety certification.

- Provides personal guidance, resources and technical support to help growers meet the requirements of audits like the USDA GAP or Harmonized GAP.
- Understanding audit criteria for preparing business documentation and conducting mock audits.
- Provides assistance for your audit certification.



For more information about *Purdue Extension* food safety programs, please visit our website at: safeproducein.com



Extension - Safe Produce Indiana

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The Passing of David and Bonnie McAfee

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

It is with great sadness that we pass along the news of David and Bonnie McAfee's passing in 2025.

David and Bonnie founded County Line Orchard and were heavily involved in horticulture in Indiana. At one time, David was President of the Indiana Horticulture Society.

Please note: A celebration of life will be held on Saturday, November 22nd, from 12:00 to 3:00 p.m. in the barn at County Line Orchard in Hobart, Indiana. All are welcome.

David's obituary:

<https://www.reesfuneralhomes.com/obituary/david-mcafee>

Bonnie's obituary:

<https://www.reesfuneralhomes.com/obituary/bonnie-mcafee>

Vegetable Chat: Asparagus

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

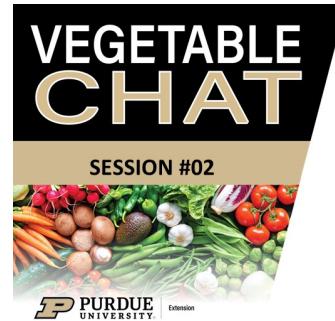
Vegetable Chat is a webinar series focusing on vegetable crop production. The series is designed primarily for commercial vegetable growers, though producers of all scales may find the information valuable. Each session will feature an expert presentation followed by a Q&A discussion.

The second session will focus on asparagus. We will hear from Ben Werling, an Extension vegetable educator from Michigan State University. The live webinar is scheduled for January 29 2026, at 2:30 pm Eastern Time.

If you are interested in joining the live webinar, please register at https://purdue-edu.zoom.us/meeting/register/VJP9c1nHTsCn80O_GLbjgA

After registering, you will receive a confirmation email with details on how to join the session.

You can access previous Vegetable Chat recordings using this link <https://ag.purdue.edu/department/hla/extension/vegetable-chat.html>



Asparagus: Growing, protecting & reaping your investment

Benjamin Werling
Extension Vegetable Educator
Michigan State University

Vegetable Chat: Broccoli

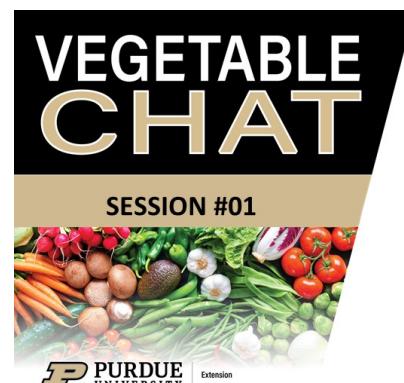
(Wenjing Guan, guan40@purdue.edu, (812) 886-0198)

Our team is launching a new webinar series, “**Vegetable Chat**,” focused on vegetable crop production. The series is designed primarily for commercial vegetable growers, though producers of all scales may find the information valuable. Each session will feature an expert presentation followed by a Q&A discussion.

The first session will feature [Dr. Thomas Björkman](#), who will discuss Broccoli, covering topics such as market, production, and postharvest. The live webinar is scheduled for November 17, 2025, at 2:30 pm Eastern Time.

If you are interested in joining the live webinar, please register at <https://purdue-edu.zoom.us/meeting/register/qx77wKgLRdqJK3kvi6xvEA>

After registering, you will receive a confirmation email with details on how to join the session.



Broccoli:
Market, Production
and Postharvest

Dr. Thomas Björkman
Professor Emeritus, School of Integrative Plant Science, Horticulture Section, Cornell AgriTech

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