

Purdue Extension  
**Greene County Agriculture &  
 Natural Resource Newsletter**

## Important Upcoming Dates:

Thursday,  
March 17<sup>th</sup>

### Greene County Ag Day

Greene County Community  
Event Center

Monday,  
March 28<sup>th</sup>

### Bull Breeding Soundness Exams

Springville Feeder Auction

Tuesday,  
April 12<sup>th</sup>

### Small Farms Clinic

Parke County Extension  
Office

Fri.-Sat.,  
April 29<sup>th</sup>-30<sup>th</sup>

### Greene Co. Master Gardener Flower & Patio Show

Greene Co. Community Event  
Center

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## Bull Breeding Soundness Exams



Evaluation of bulls for breeding soundness is one of the most neglected management practices of Indiana's cattle producers. A bull is expected to settle 20 to 50 cows during the breeding season and too often his ability to do so is taken for granted.

With the extreme cold weather and strong winds that sent the wind chill way below zero we are expecting a higher percentage of the bulls to fail the exam this year. Some of the results I have been hearing are that up to 60% of the bulls are not sound due to cold weather problems, so this is the year to make sure you get your bull(s) tested.

The evaluation should be done prior to the breeding season. Breeding problems that are discovered at pregnancy checking occur far too late to prevent substantial loss of income. Breeders that sell bulls should have them evaluated prior to the sale. Bull suppliers depend largely on repeat customers and selling an infertile bull may cost the breeder a good customer as well as create a lot of bad advertisement.

The breeding soundness exam cannot guarantee fertility, but it is the best method available to predict which bulls will not settle cows. Approximately 10% of bulls will fail the Breeding Soundness Evaluation (BSE). The routine BSE will not detect bulls with low libido; therefore, observation of the bull in the breeding pasture is still important. Observe bulls to confirm that they are finding and mating cows that are in heat. Observe the same cows in three weeks to be sure that he is "settling cows."

The BSE includes an evaluation of structural soundness, evaluation of the reproductive anatomy and, most importantly, evaluation of semen quality. During the BSE, a semen sample is collected and evaluated immediately for percent motile sperm. Minimally, 30% of the sperm must be motile in order for the bull to pass the exam. The same sample is then stained and individual sperm are evaluated. Seventy percent of the cells must be normal microscopically for the bull to be acceptable.

The evaluation charge is \$50 per bull. Bulls must be at least one year old and weigh at least 900 pounds.

The Greene/Lawrence County BSE's will be held on Monday, March 28<sup>th</sup>, 2016 at Springville Feeder Auction. Call the Greene County Extension Office (812-659-2122) or the Lawrence County Extension Office (812-275-4623) should you have any questions. Appointments are required and must be scheduled by preregistering through the Lawrence County Extension Office (812-275-4623) by 4:30 PM on Friday, March 25<sup>th</sup>, 2015.

These BSE Clinics are conducted annually through the joint cooperation of the Purdue Cooperative Extension Service and the Lawrence County Cattle Association along with the Cooperation of the Springville Feeder Auction.

## March Yard & Garden Calendar

### HOME (Indoor plants and activities)

- Begin fertilizing houseplants as new growth appears. Keep spent leaves and flowers removed to improve appearance and encourage more blooms.
- Start garden seeds indoors for transplanting outdoors later in spring.
- Check stored bulbs and produce for decay; discard damaged items.
- Prune, repot and clean houseplants as needed.

### YARD (Lawns, woody ornamentals and fruits)

- Prune trees and shrubs, except those that bloom early in spring, while plants are still dormant. If winter injury is a concern, delay pruning until after dieback; desiccation injury can be assessed as plants come out of dormancy.
- Plant new trees and shrubs as soon as the soil dries enough to be worked. Plant bare-root plants before they leaf out. Soils may be exceptionally wet this spring as winter snows thaw.
- Fertilize woody plants before new growth begins, but after soil temperatures have reached 40 degrees F.
- Remove winter coverings from roses as soon as new growth begins. Prune out dead canes and fertilize as needed. Delay pruning into live canes until after winter injury can be assessed.
- Apply superior oil spray to control scale insects and mites when tips of leaves start to protrude from buds.

### GARDEN (Flowers, vegetables and small fruits)

- Plant cool-season vegetables and flowers as soon as the ground has dried enough to work. Do NOT work the soil while it is wet; wait until it crumbles in your hand. If the soil forms a solid ball when squeezed, it's still too wet.
- Gradually harden off transplants by setting them outdoors during the daytime for about a week before planting.
- Follow last fall's soil test recommendations for fertilizer and pH adjustment. It's not too late to test soil if you missed last year.
- Remove old asparagus and rhubarb tops, and sidedress the plants with nitrogen or manure. Plant or transplant asparagus, rhubarb and small fruit plants.
- Remove winter mulch from strawberry beds as soon as new growth begins, but keep the mulch nearby to protect against frost and freezes.
- Prune grapevines after winter injury can be assessed.

Source: B. Rosie Lerner; *Purdue Consumer Horticulture Specialist*

## Blue & Gold Gardens Celebrate Indiana's Bicentennial

To celebrate Indiana's bicentennial this year, the Garden Club of Indiana and the Indiana Bicentennial Commission are hoping gardeners will join the Blue & Gold garden tribute to Indiana's state flag. It's an easy way for all Indiana residents to commemorate the bicentennial. If you don't have a traditional garden bed, there are many fine choices for container gardens.

There's a vast array of garden flowers that can fit in the blue-and-gold theme. Some "blue" flowers are more purple than blue and, likewise, some "gold" flowers are more yellow. Most annual flowers will bloom throughout the growing season.

The following flowers can be grown throughout the state. All are full-sun plants unless otherwise noted.

### Annuals with Blue Flowers

(Note: Some may be purplish blue.)

Ageratum  
 Alyssum  
 Anagallis  
 Angelonia  
 Aster  
 Bacopa  
 Borage  
 Brachyscome (swan river daisy)  
 Browalia (semi-shade)  
 Calibrachoa  
 Callistephus (China aster)  
 Cornflower  
 Felicia (blue daisy)  
 Heliotrope  
 Limonium (annual statice)  
 Lisianthus  
 Lobelia (semi-shade)  
 Mimulus (shade)  
 Forget-Me-Not  
 Morning Glory  
 Nemesis  
 Nicotiana  
 Nierembergia (semi-shade)  
 Nigella  
 Pansy  
 Petunia  
 Phlox  
 Salvia  
 Scaevola (fan flower)  
 Sweet Pea  
 Torenia  
 Verbena



### Yellow/Gold-Flowered Annuals

African Daisy  
 Begonia, Tuberous (semi-shade, shade)  
 Bidens  
 Calendula  
 Calibrachoa  
 California Poppy  
 Coreopsis  
 Cape Marigold  
 Celosia  
 Coleus (some w/ yellow foliage)  
 Cosmos  
 Dahlia  
 Four O'Clock  
 Gaillardia  
 Gazania  
 Gerbera  
 Iresine (some w/ yellow foliage)  
 Lantana  
 Marguerite Daisy  
 Marigold  
 Melampodium  
 Mimulus (shade)  
 Nasturtium (semi-shade)  
 Nemesis  
 Nicotiana  
 Pansy  
 Petunia  
 Portulaca  
 Rudbeckia  
 Sanvitalia  
 Snapdragon  
 Strawflower  
 Sunflower  
 Thunbergia  
 Tithonia  
 Torenia  
 Zinnia



For more information on Indiana's bicentennial activities, see <http://www.indianagardenclub.org/> and <http://www.in.gov/ibc/>. For more information on growing annuals, see Purdue Extension <https://hort.purdue.edu/ext/HO-99W.pdf> and <https://hort.purdue.edu/ext/HO-080.pdf>.

Source: B. Rosie Lerner; *Purdue Consumer Horticulture Specialist*

## 2016 Greene County Ag Day

The 2016 Greene County Ag Day is set for Thursday, March 17<sup>th</sup> at the Greene County Community Event Center from 5:00 PM to 8:00 PM.

The Greene County Ag Day will feature a ribeye/pork chop dinner, agribusiness booths, scholarship presentations, educational seminars and prize giveaways.

Attendees will have the chance to hear from Katrina Hall, Indiana Farm Bureau Government Finance & Tax Specialist, on Property Taxes. If anyone is interested in attending the Property Tax Seminar, they should remember to bring their Property Tax Record Card as Katrina will be answering any questions on this topic. The second seminar will be over Estate Planning with Purdue University Professor of Agricultural Economics, Michael Langemeier.

All ages are welcome! Cost of entry is \$5.00 at the door. Please come and enjoy the festivities!

## Small Farms Clinic



Have you thought about starting your own small farm or agricultural business in 2016? Do you already have a small farm or agriculture business in existence? If you answered yes to either of these questions, then the Area Small Farms Clinic might be something you should take part in.

On Tuesday, April 12, 2016, there will be an Area Small Farms Clinic in Rockville at the Parke County Extension Office. You will have the opportunity to attend two different sessions focusing on fundamental topics. You will select one session for each hour of the program. For the first session, you have the option of attending a seminar with Cara Bergschneider, Monroe NRCS District Conservation, over *Season Extension & Maintaining Soil Fertility in High Tunnel* or you can learn from Tracy Branam, a longtime vendor at the Bloomington Community Farmers Market, with his seminar over *Native Indiana Fruits: What Can Be Grown That Encompasses The Entire Growing Season?*

During the second session, attendees can hear from One Planet Solar of Terre Haute on *Alternative Energy Sources* or participate in a *Beginning Aquaculture* seminar with Bob Rode, Aquaculture Research Lab Manager with Forestry & Natural Resources.

The Area Small Farms Clinic will be from 6:00-8:00 PM at the Parke County Extension Office (P.O. Box 146, Rockville, IN 47872). Registration for this event is required by Friday, April 8 to ensure adequate materials are available for all attendees. Registration costs are \$5 per family, which is due at the door. For more information on this event, please contact Purdue Extension Greene County via phone at 812-659-2122 or by email at [davis186@purdue.edu](mailto:davis186@purdue.edu). Purdue University is an equal opportunity/equal access/affirmative action institution. If you require auxiliary aids and services due to a disability, please call 812-659-2122 by Friday, April 8, 2016.

## Purdue Extension Releases Annual Report Online

Purdue Extension has posted its 2015 annual report online, highlighting the ways in which its many programs educated and empowered millions of people throughout Indiana and helped promote economic vitality statewide.

"We often find that people who are aware of Purdue Extension tend to know about only one facet of our organization," said Jason Henderson, director of Purdue Extension and associate dean in the Purdue College of Agriculture. "This report provides a full picture of the breadth and depth of all that we do, with vibrant presentation, fast facts, powerful data and firsthand success stories from those we serve."

The report is available on the Purdue Extension website at <https://extension.purdue.edu/annualreport/>.

It can be viewed within any Web browser with zooming capabilities and can also be downloaded to computers or mobile devices. (Clicking the download button in the toolbar will create a PDF, which can then be saved to a computer or mobile device.)

The report is broken into eight topics:

- \* Inspiring Indiana Youths' Interest in Science.
- \* Educating Indiana's Agricultural Producers and Professionals.
- \* Improving Health and Wellness Across Indiana.
- \* Growing Great Things with Indiana's Natural Resources.
- \* Enhancing Success in Indiana's Communities.
- \* Engaging Underserved Youth Through 4-H.
- \* Strengthening Indiana's Families.
- \* Building Indiana's Food Systems.

Additional content looks ahead to Purdue Extension initiatives in urban agriculture, business retention and expansion, growing Indiana 4-H and expansion of community health coalitions.

Since 1914, Purdue Extension has helped Indiana build vibrant communities, strong families and profitable businesses on its Main streets and at its farm gates. Extension staff, including specialists on the West Lafayette campus of Purdue and educators in all 92 counties, connect Indiana communities to internationally renowned Purdue research and a nationwide network of experts on agriculture, community, environment, family, food and youth.

"With the help of volunteers and local leaders, Purdue Extension reaches millions of people - urban and rural, young and young at heart," Henderson said. "With this report, we hope that when someone mentions Purdue Extension, people will understand the many ways in which we are Indiana's educational partner for life."

Source: Nicholas A Rogers, Extension Communication Specialist



For additional information, please visit our website at:  
[www.extension.purdue.edu/greene](http://www.extension.purdue.edu/greene)



You can also find the Greene County Purdue Extension Office on  
Social Media!



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