

LSU AgCenter Franklin Parish Profile

Report to Stakeholders January 2025



ABOUT THE LSU AGCENTER

The LSU AgCenter is dedicated to providing innovative research, information and education to improve people's lives. Working in a statewide network of parish extension offices, research stations and academic departments, the LSU AgCenter helps Louisiana citizens make the best use of natural resources, protect the environment, enhance agricultural enterprises, and develop human and community resources.

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

Nutrition and Community Health – (NCH)

Individuals and families today deal with multiple issues in raising children, eating right, and spending food dollars wisely to live well. SNAP Ed Nutrition programs presented to clientele are designed to increase their nutrition knowledge which in turn helps them live a healthier lifestyle. Healthy Communities efforts through the LSU AgCenter help key stakeholders to identify barriers to healthy living in their communities and put plans in place to make policy, systems, and environmental changes through the work of coalitions. Youth participating in SNAP Ed Nutrition programs learn the importance of making healthier choices and the harmful effects of eating food high in calories, fat, and added sugars over an extended period. WIC clients learn how to stretch their food dollars by participating in food preparation demonstrations using foods that can be purchased with their WIC vouchers.

Agriculture and Natural Resources – (ANR)

The Franklin Parish gross farm value in 2023 was \$232,582,479. In 2024 soybeans replaced corn as the crop with the most planted acres. Franklin Parish covers 414,00 acres with 55 percent of the land area in agriculture production. Beef cattle is our major animal enterprise. Specialty enterprises include pecans, sweet potato, dairy, and catfish. Core block variety demonstrations with corn, cotton and soybean are conducted on producer's farms to provide unbiased information on variety performance to help producers make variety selections for planting. Private pesticide applicator and Worker Protection Standard (WPS) trainings are offered to producers and agricultural workers covering how to work with pesticides safely and protect the environment. Programs are given to the Lions Club, Rotary Club, and garden clubs. A field crops irrigation meeting was held due to input from the ANR Advisory Leadership Committee indicating the need. Through individual contact with agricultural producers and homeowners, crop, aquaculture, animal, and horticulture questions are answered, problems are identified, and management options are provided.

PROGRAMS

Nutrition and Community Health

- SNAP Ed Nutrition Education Programs for Youth & Adults
- Healthy Communities Coalition Building
- Connectivity Technical Assistance with Grants

Agriculture and Natural Resources

- Aquaculture
- Crop/Animal Production
- Horticulture/Lawn and Garden
- Pesticide Safety

4-H Youth Development

- Citizenship/Leadership
- Science, Engineering, Technology
- Healthy Living
- Life Skills

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4-H Youth Development – (4-H)

Franklin Parish 4-H Youth Development is dedicated to fostering diverse opportunities in science, leadership, and healthy living through our 4-H youth development programs during in-school and At-Large homeschool club meetings. By participating in local, parish, state, and national initiatives, youth acquire valuable knowledge and life skills. We emphasize community building through service projects and the cultivation of a strong work ethic. Additionally, we prioritize teaching financial literacy to age-appropriate groups of 4-H'ers, ensuring they are equipped with essential skills for their future success.

WHOM WE REACH:

SNAP-Ed Outreach extended to 788 youth and 497 adults at Franklin Parish Head Start and Council on Aging, community events, KidChef & TeenChef Camps and programming, Summer Kids Camp, and Healthy Communities Coalition members. 294 4-H club members represented ten school clubs, after-school Jr. Leader, and Shooting Sports clubs, 563 agricultural producers and home gardeners.

HOW WE REACH THEM:

4-H Clubs, school enrichment, field days, publications, newsletters, class series, websites, social media, and workshops.

EXPANDING OUR EFFORTS:

40 volunteers from 4-H, NCH, and ANR (Advisory Leadership Councils, 4-H school club leaders, after-school club leaders, ANR cooperators).

PARISH FACTS:

LSU AgCenter extension agents provide research-based information on plants, aquaculture, wildlife and animal enterprises to Franklin Parish residents. The 2023 total dollar amount from these commodities were: Animal enterprises, \$22,649,24; aquaculture and wildlife, \$12,960,665; and plant enterprises, \$196,972,572.

Land area (2020) 624.30 square miles; Population (2023) —19,285; Population under 18 years old — 25.3%; Population 65 years old and over — 19.7%; Median household income — \$44,103; Persons below poverty — 23.9%

LOCAL ISSUES AND PLANS FOR THIS YEAR:

Increase productivity and profitability of Louisiana agriculture.

- Conduct commodity production meetings, crop variety and related on-farm demonstrations, and work closely with commodity groups and farm organizations.
- Use regular mail, email distributions, Web page content, newsletters, and write articles for local newspapers to disseminate timely information and publications.
- Make farm and home educational visits.
- Provide crop soil fertility information.
- Provide information on improving irrigation water efficiency and water regulations.

Promote the wide use of natural resources and protection of the environment.

- Conduct training for private pesticide applicators and agricultural workers.

Build leaders and good citizens through 4-H Youth Development.

- Develop and implement service-learning projects throughout the parish.
- Encourage youth to participate in parish, regional and state events, workshops, and contests to have new experiences and meet new people.

Strengthen families and communities.

- Provide training to SNAP Ed families on feeding their families nutritionally on a budget.
- Provide education on food safety, and healthy lifestyle changes for better health.
- Build Healthy Communities Coalition as an important part of the mission of the NCH team in Franklin Parish. Coalitions work towards implementing Policy, Systems, and Environmental (PSE) changes throughout the parish to make it a healthier place to live, work, and play.
- Focus NCH Team efforts on every demographic in the parish, as they work with pre-k students and their parents, on up to Senior Adult groups at the Council on Aging.
- Rural communities need guidance in navigating grant opportunities for connectivity projects. The NCH team in Franklin Parish has worked with many of the small towns in the parish to help them with their initiatives in obtaining funding for large scale projects.



HOW IS EXTENSION FUNDED?

- Federal funding from the USDA/ NIFA.
- State general funds from the Louisiana Legislature.
- Local support from parish government, including police juries and school boards.
- Self-generated funds.



WHAT ROLE DO YOU PLAY?

Our stakeholders at the parish level are the local supporters and beneficiaries of the LSU AgCenter cooperative extension programs. Their support keeps these critical programs in their communities.



EACH PARISH OFFERS PROGRAMMING IN:

- 4-H and Youth Development.
- Agriculture and Natural Resources.
- Nutrition and Community Health



For the latest research-based information on just about anything, visit our website:

www.LSUAgCenter.com