

# LSU AgCenter Ascension 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

### 4-H Youth Development

The Ascension 4-H program focuses on youth development, volunteer management, and enriching the lives of youth through age-appropriate competitions, workshops, community service activities, overnight camps, and project clubs (such as shooting sports, livestock, junior leader, etc.).

In 2024 community stakeholders identified that youth are lacking knowledge surrounding general agriculture production. Thus, this year's educational focus has been learning more about Louisiana's agricultural commodities. A series of lessons related to agricultural commodities and the careers associated with them are being conducted during 4-H club meetings. Lessons include a fun, hands-on activity to reinforce the importance of the agriculture industry in Louisiana.

A highlight of this past year has been the outstanding performance of the Ascension 4-H Shooting Sports program, our largest 4-H project club. Shooting Sports offers youth the opportunity to learn about teamwork, sportsmanship, dedication, and firearm safety, among other life skills. Through state competitions Ascension 4-H had three contestants and two coaches who qualified for the National Shooting Sports Competition in Grand Island, NE. Louisiana 4-H placed first for the 4<sup>th</sup> time in the past 5 years! Additionally, the Ascension 4-H BB Team, consisting of 8 members and a coach, represented Louisiana at the Daisy National Competition in Arkansas.

Not only does the Ascension 4-H program educate youth and open their eyes to opportunities, but it also provides chances for community service. Teen members of the Junior Leader program are focusing on caring for animals and supporting local animal shelters by providing much needed supplies.



## CONTACT OUR OFFICE

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### Office Hours:

8:00 a.m.- 4:30 p.m.  
Monday-Friday

### Website:

[LSUAgCenter.com/Ascension](http://LSUAgCenter.com/Ascension)

### Office Staff:

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## EXTENSION PROGRAMS

### 4-H and Youth Development

### Agriculture and Natural Resources

### Animal Production

### Horticulture/Lawn and Garden

### Pest Management

### Sugarcane/Soybeans

### Nutrition and Health & MORE

## PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS CONTINUED

### ***Agriculture and Natural Resources***

In 2023, the value of Agriculture and Natural Resources for Ascension Parish topped 73 million dollars. The parish has a diverse agriculture-related base which includes sugarcane, soybeans, livestock, and nursery crops, with sugarcane being the most valuable commodity. Throughout the year clientele gain knowledge through meetings, field days, workshops, demonstrations, and farm and home visits.

### ***Louisiana Master Gardener Program***

There are currently 62 active, trained Master Gardeners in Ascension Parish that serve as volunteers assisting LSU AgCenter agents with outreach efforts to help meet educational needs in consumer horticulture. Programs include environmental improvement activities, community and school gardens, and public horticultural events. Some recent activities of the Ascension Master Gardeners include a regional horticulture seminar, the library lecture series, and beautification project sites at Ascension Veterans Memorial Park and the Lamar Dixon Expo Center. In 2024, Ascension Master Gardeners logged over 1,901 volunteer hours and 495 continuing education hours resulting in 7,316 public contacts.

## WHOM DO WE REACH

- 3360 youth; 17,752 Mass & Social Media
  - 1,032 enrolled in 34 school clubs and 5 project clubs, 2,113 school enrichment
- 7,552 adults
  - 7,212 agriculture and natural resources, 250 nutrition education, 90 4-H youth development

## HOW WE REACH THEM

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

## PARISH FACTS

LSU AgCenter county agents provide research-based information on plant, fishery, wildlife, and animal enterprises to Ascension Parish residents. The total dollar amount from these commodities were: Animal enterprises, \$22,221,449, Plant enterprises, \$51,695,715, Fisheries and Wildlife, \$63,812

### **Data from U.S. Census**

Population under 18 years old- 26.6%	Land area (square miles)- 289.97
Median household income- \$86,256	Population- 130,458
Persons 65 yrs. old & over- 12.9%	Persons below poverty- 11.4%

## LOCAL ISSUES AND PLANS FOR THIS YEAR

### ***Increase productivity and profitability of Louisiana agriculture.***

- Hold a recertification meeting for private pesticide applicators.
- Conduct educational sugarcane and soybean field days and meetings.
- Work with local cattlemen's associations to educate producers.
- Conduct farm and home educational visits.

### ***Promote and grow the Louisiana Master Gardener Program.***

- Support teachers and youth through school garden program.
- Continue popular Master Gardener library lecture series each spring and fall.
- Provide research-based horticultural information to the public through seminars and outreach events.

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

- Develop and implement service-learning projects throughout the parish
- Present hands-on educational lessons on topics that would benefit youth in everyday life circumstances.
- Identify and recruit to increase the base of well-trained, screened, and supportive individuals to expand the capacity of the 4-H program.



## 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](http://www.LSUAgCenter.com)