

# LSU AgCenter Avoyelles Profile

Report to Stakeholders March 2024



## 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

### **Agriculture and Natural Resources**

Avoyelles Parish is home to one of the most diverse agriculture production areas in the Southern Region, with over 100 acres planted in 8 different commodities and includes animal and aquaculture enterprises. Farmers and residents rely on research-based information to ensure successful operations; therefore, the Avoyelles Parish LSU AgCenter hosts annual production meetings, offers site visits and workshops, where information is presented for increasing production while optimizing profitability. Crop demonstration trials are also implemented to give farmers firsthand experiences in variety performance, pest management techniques, and cultural practices to enhance their profitability.

### **4-H Youth Development**

The incidence of youth obesity is rising at an alarming rate, not only in Terrebonne Parish, but across the country. In a six-week series of classes, 1,325 4-H youth learned to make healthy food choices and learned about the role exercise plays in improving health. Participants also toured the LSU AgCenter Body Walk exhibit. As a result of participating in this program, 30% of youth reported including at least one new fruit or vegetable in their diet and, according to exercise logs, one-fourth increased the amount of exercise they do weekly by 30 minutes.

### **Family and Consumer Sciences**

Nutrition is important at every point in life. Efforts in nutrition programming continue to address obesity and the other chronic diseases associated with it. The overall goal is for healthy lifestyle changes for a healthier population. Break Up with Salt is a hypertension prevention and management program that concentrates on dietary and physical activity approaches to hypertension prevention and management. It is a 4-week program that teaches healthy eating using MyPlate food groups, proper portion sizes, and understanding of diet and high blood pressure correlation.



## EXTENSION OFFICE

### **Avoyelles Parish AgCenter**

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### **Email:**

[Avoyelles@agcenter.lsu.edu](mailto:Avoyelles@agcenter.lsu.edu)

### **Office Hours:**

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

### **Website:**

[www.LSUAgCenter.com/Avoyelles](http://www.LSUAgCenter.com/Avoyelles)

### **Social Media:**

@AvoyellesParish4-H

@LSUAgCenterAvoyelles

### **Parish Chair:**

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## PROGRAMS

### **4-H and Youth Development**

- Club Meetings
- Junior Leadership Club
- Livestock Program
- Project Clubs
- Shooting Sports Program

### **Agriculture and Natural Resources**

- Animal Production
- Crop Production Meetings
- Product Efficacy Trials
- Site Visits
- Soil Sample Interpretation
- Variety Demonstration Trials

### **Family and Consumer Sciences (FCS)**

- Family Resource Management
- FNP-Family Nutrition Program
- Parents Preparing for Success
- Nutrition and Health

## WHOM WE REACH:

4,580 youth (includes 1,250 4-H members in 20 schools 4-H and Project Clubs) 3100 adults (includes agriculture and natural resources and program volunteers)

## HOW WE REACH THEM:

4-H clubs, school enrichment, demonstrations, field days, workshops, newspaper articles, websites, publications, social media, email updates, radio programs, group meeting and text messaging

## EXPANDING OUR EFFORTS:

120 volunteers from 4-H, Master Gardeners, Family and Community, Master Cattleman, and Master Farmer.

## PARISH FACTS:

LSU AgCenter county agents provide research-based information on plant, aquaculture, wildlife, and animal enterprises to Avoyelles Parish residents. The 2020 total dollar amount from these commodities were: Animal enterprises, \$21,098,436; Aquaculture and Wildlife, \$8,139,711; Plant Enterprises, \$102,453,689.

Land area — 832.43 square miles; Population — 40,462; Population under 18 years old — 23.6%; Population 65 years old and over — 16.9%; Median household income — \$36,763; Persons below poverty — 24.6%.

## LOCAL ISSUES AND PLANS FOR THIS YEAR:

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

- Host production meetings educating growers on the current best management practices being researched by the LSU AgCenter to increase profitability of their crop.
- Conduct variety demonstration trials in crops such as corn, cotton, wheat, and soybeans which provides production data specific to growing conditions in Avoyelles Parish.
- Proactively respond to calls and offer site visits to agronomic, livestock and residential producers.
- Arrange site visits to assist in the analysis and diagnosis of problems that are decreasing yield and implement proper solutions.

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

- Maintain project club focused on specific skill sets such as: Sewing, Gardening, and Cooking.
- Increase the volunteer base of well-trained, screened, and supportive individuals in order to expand the capacity of the 4-H program.
- Prepare youth for the future by displaying positive life skills.
- Give youth the opportunity to gain leadership skills through club officer positions, Junior Leadership Club, parish specialty boards, contests, and workshops.
- Develop and implement service-learning projects throughout the parish.

### ***Strengthen families and communities.***

- Conduct nutrition programs that create healthy communities by improving overall nutrition and increasing physical activity levels, in youth and adults, which will produce long-lasting behavior changes.
- Provide nutrition education and food demonstrations at farmers markets and community food sites.
- Provide hands-on food safety and cooking skills workshops for youth and adult audiences.



## 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.
- Family and Consumer Sciences.



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

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