

# LSU AgCenter Avoyelles Profile

Report to Stakeholders January 2025



## ABOUT THE LSU AGCENTER

The LSU AgCenter 3 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 Avoyelles Parish 4-H Youth Development Program is focused on growing the youth of our parish. With 20 school clubs, a homeschool club, a strong shooting sports program, junior leader club and large livestock program, as well as a parish wide Clover Buds club, we are reaching youth in all parts of our parish. This year, our programming focuses on healthy social and emotional development in our youth, addressing topics such as bullying, inclusion, manners, good decision making, leadership and positive peer relations.

### Nutrition and Community Health

Nutrition and Community Health agents and educators are improving the overall health of residents by helping to reduce chronic diseases which are related to poor nutrition and sedentary lifestyles and improving the health outcomes in which Louisiana has traditionally ranked so low. In Avoyelles Parish, the food and nutrition score is 38/100, indicating a significant need for improved access to healthy food options and better nutrition education. The general nutrition program aims to promote health and prevent chronic diseases through comprehensive education through classes such as Smart Portions and Dining with Diabetes, radio and news programs as well as youth culinary education classes partnering with 4-H.



## EXTENSION OFFICE

### Avoyelles Parish AgCenter

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### 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

### Nutrition and Community Health

- 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 plants, aquaculture, wildlife, and animal enterprises to Avoyelles Parish residents. The 2023 total dollar amount from these commodities were: Animal enterprises, \$29,576,484; Aquaculture and Wildlife, \$11,246,498; Plant Enterprises, \$113,623,036.

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 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)