

# LSU AgCenter Natchitoches Parish Profile

Report to Stakeholders December 2023



## 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

### Family and Consumer Sciences

Family and Consumer Sciences program efforts focus on improving the overall health and nutrition of residents in Natchitoches Parish. Nutrition programs such as SNAP-Ed play a crucial role in addressing obesity and chronic diseases associated with it. These programs are being implemented in various settings, including educational and healthcare institutions, Council on Aging sites, the local library, and the Women's Resource Center. The primary aim of these programs is to encourage positive changes in dietary habits by promoting the consumption of fruits and vegetables, reducing fat intake, selecting protein sources, and emphasizing physical activity. Moreover, FCS programming prioritizes food safety to ensure the well-being of individuals. The overarching goal of these nutrition programs is to make it more convenient for individuals to adopt healthier lifestyles.

### 4-H Youth Development

A series of safety lessons were presented at monthly club meetings which focused on internet safety, boating safety, food safety, etc.. Natchitoches Parish has 30 organized 4-H clubs, with 1,050 members and over 3,600 students being served in the enrichment style setting. Natchitoches Parish is also home to 50 teen leaders that are heavily embedded in service and civic engagement.

### Agriculture and Natural Resources

Agriculture plays a major role in the livelihood of Natchitoches Parish residents. The parish is diverse agriculturally, with the animal and plant industries alone making up a farm value of over \$169 million. Demonstration plots are maintained by row crop producers, and research projects can also be found in the parish.



## EXTENSION OFFICE

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### Office Hours:

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

**Website:** [www.LSUAgCenter.com/](http://www.LSUAgCenter.com/)  
Natchitoches

### Social Media:

Facebook: Natchitoches Parish 4-H  
Instagram: Natchitoches\_4h

### Parish Chair: Pam Pearce

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## PROGRAMS

### 4-H and Youth Development

- Club Program
- Shooting Sports
- Cloverbuds
- Community Service

### Agriculture and Natural Resources.

- Animal Production.
- Beef Cattle.
- Environment
- Horticulture/Lawn and Garden.
- Pest Management.
- Rural Forestry.

### Family and Consumer Sciences (FCS)

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

## WHOM WE REACH:

1,050 (includes 30 school 4-H Clubs, two afterschool clubs, Shooting Sports, Livestock Club, Fishing Club, Jr. Leadership Club and Cloverbuds) In addition over 3,600 school enrichment enrollments.

## HOW WE REACH THEM:

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

## EXPANDING OUR EFFORTS:

94 volunteers from 4-H, Agriculture and Natural Resources and Family & Consumer Sciences.

## PARISH FACTS:

Natchitoches Parish is located in northwest Louisiana and consists of 1299 square miles, making it the 4<sup>th</sup> largest parish in the state. As the oldest city in LA, and the entire Louisiana Purchase, the parish is steeped in history with tourism bolstering the local economy while the Christmas Festival draws large crowds every December. Agriculture plays a major role in the livelihoods of Natchitoches Parish residents. The parish is very diverse agriculturally, with the livestock and plant industries valuing over \$200 million.

## LOCAL ISSUES AND PLANS FOR THIS YEAR:

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

- Master Gardner Class
- Conduct annual pesticide applicator workshops.
- Write news columns, webpage content and seminars on agriculture practices. Conduct farm and home educational visits.

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

- Participate in the regional forestry forum.
- Support school enrichment programs.
- Collaborate with the Louisiana Forestry Association, the Society of American Foresters, and the Natural Resource Conservation Service to deliver educational material and opportunities to area landowners, forestry professionals, and the public.
- Conduct farm and homeowner educational visits.

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

- Develop and implement service-learning projects throughout the parish.
- Collect items to support the Free Little Pantry developed to support the underserved population.
- Leadership opportunities include parish officer training, Regional Leadership Summit, Challenge Camp, State Junior Leadership Conference, 4-H University, camp counselor trainings, State Citizenship Board members, State Fashion Board members, State Shooting Sports Ambassadors, State Executive Board members, and a National Conference Delegate.

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

- Conduct educational workshops on health and nutrition, food safety, MyPlate, meal preparation, and incorporating physical activity into family lifestyles.
- Strengthen social media presence.
- Impact built environments in the parish with Healthy Communities initiatives to make the healthy choice the easy choice.



## 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.



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