

# LSU AgCenter Hill Farm Research Station Profile

Report to Stakeholders-March 2022



## ABOUT THE LSU AGCENTER

The LSU AgCenter is dedicated to providing innovative research, information and education to improve people's lives. Working in a unique 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

## RESEARCH HIGHLIGHTS

### Beef Cattle

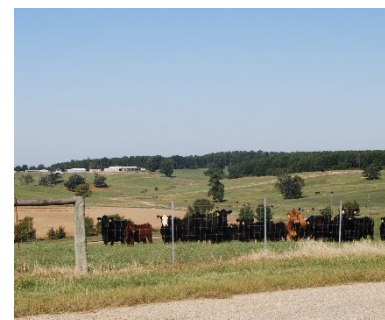
Beef cattle are an integral part of the agricultural industry in Louisiana. Focus is on education of producers on best management strategies and techniques through hands-on clinics, workshops, and demonstrations showcasing methods to lower production costs for producers and to maximize cattle productivity and profitability. Clinics such as the Louisiana Producer Artificial Insemination Clinic and the Cattle Pregnancy Determination Clinic educate producers on reproductive management methods for beef cattle. Other programs, such as the Geaux Beef Heifer Development Program, assist producers in growth management of their herds.

### Forestry

Forest products are the number one agricultural commodity in the state of Louisiana. The forestry research and extension program of the station encompasses all aspects of forest management, from pre-planting to harvest. Major focus areas include: (1) identifying tree genetic lines that are fast-growing with good form and hardiness for Louisiana's climate, (2) suppressing invasive and native plants that hinder forest establishment and growth, (3) forest management practices that enhance forest product and wildlife habitat value, and (4) grazing animals within pasture and tree mixtures.

### Forage and Pasture

Bermudagrass, bahiagrass, and annual ryegrass provide the base of most pasture-based livestock production in the region with both management decisions and weather patterns, particularly rainfall, determining forage productivity. Research at the Hill Farm over the years has provided information on management opportunities for these grasses. Additional on-going research with alternative species, especially legumes, addresses potential to extend forage production periods, improve forage quality, reduce dependence on nitrogen fertilizer, and provide pasture species diversity to increase benefits of pastures to values beyond livestock production. *continued*



## Hill Farm Research Station

11959 Hwy 9  
Homer, LA 71040

### Location:

The station is located 2 miles south of Homer at the intersection of highways 9 and 79.

### Phone:

318-927-2578 Fax: 318-927-9505

### Email:

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

### Website:

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

### Office Hours:

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

### Station Coordinator/Professor

William E. Owens  
[wowens@agcenter.lsu.edu](mailto:wowens@agcenter.lsu.edu)

### Size:

1,488 acres

### Research focus:

**Beef cattle**-Extension based demonstrations of BMPs and producer classes on new techniques.

**Forestry**-Management practices, tree genetics, suppressing invasive competition, and enhancement of wildlife habitat.

**Forages**-Forage plant species and management evaluations to enhance pasture production.

**Poultry**-Bird disposal, composting and equipment evaluation

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## **Poultry**

Hill Farm provides poultry growers with demonstration houses that can compare and evaluate the latest innovations in equipment and management techniques for raising poultry broilers under commercial conditions. Current projects include bird disposal evaluations, composting, heater evaluations and Poultry Best Management Practices comparisons.

## **SIGNIFICANCE OF RESEARCH**

**Beef Cattle**-Showcasing BMP's, emerging technologies, and new methods related to beef cattle production to benefit all producers in Louisiana.

**Forestry**-Planting the best-adapted tree species and family with high potential for good growth rate and form dramatically increases forest product yields. Wildlife habitat is improved using forest management practices that reduce tree canopies and suppress invasive plants to allow native forages ample light, water, and nutrients to thrive.

**Forages**-Increasing cost of production for nitrogen-dependent grass pastures and hay fields limits profitability for many grass-based livestock enterprises with legume options providing opportunity for reduced input approaches to livestock production. Pasture diversity also provides potential for additional non-traditional benefits from pastures.

**Poultry**-Evaluation of Best Management Practices and new equipment and techniques provide producers with information to make management decisions that improve profitability.

## **2021 INDUSTRY FACTS**

**Beef**-In 2018 there were an estimated 576,525 head of beef cattle in Louisiana.

**Forestry**-The top plant commodity in Louisiana; valued at \$13 billion in annual economic contribution for forest products. Wildlife and fisheries supported by our forests add \$2 billion to Louisiana's economy as well.

**Poultry**-The number one animal commodity in the state. Valued at over 2 billion dollars.

**Data from the Louisiana Ag Summary website:** [LSUAgCenter.com/agsummary](https://lsuagcenter.com/agsummary)

## **FUTURE PLANS**

**Beef cattle**-Beef cattle will continue to provide educational programming that benefits the industry as directed by our stakeholders. Annual beef field days as well as ongoing classes in artificial insemination and pregnancy determination are scheduled.

**Forestry**-Forest plantation research on new genetic crosses of loblolly pine families from across the Southeast, shortleaf pine and hardwood mixture planting configurations, grazing as a tool for restoring longleaf pine and shortleaf pine forests, Eastern baccharis and Chinese tallow control within bottomland hardwood forests, new herbicide chemistries and mixtures to improve loblolly pine forest establishment and growth rates.

**Forages and pastures**-Approaches to effectively use non-traditional forage species in combination with the widely used grasses will continue to be evaluated to enhance economic opportunities for livestock production in Louisiana.

**Poultry**-Continued studies on bird disposal and evaluation of broiler house equipment innovations are planned.

## **LOUISIANA AGRICULTURAL EXPERIMENT STATION**

Louisiana's unique combination of crops — ranging from corn, cotton, rice and sugarcane to extensive forestry, poultry, cattle and fisheries industries — presents challenges for providing research-based information to ensure sustainable agricultural production systems.

To address the needs of these industries, the Louisiana Agricultural Experiment Station operates 14 departments shared by the LSU AgCenter and the LSU College of Agriculture, as well as 15 research locations across the state. To fund the basic and applied research, scientists compete for federal and state grants and checkoff dollars provided by some farmers' groups, along with state and federal dollars. Many of the facilities also sustain their research operations through the sale of agricultural commodities produced on the stations.

The LSU AgCenter has the most successful record of commercialization of intellectual property in the LSU System. Since 2000, 18 new companies have been started based on licensed technology from LSU AgCenter. The income is distributed among the LSU System, the inventors and more research.



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

[LSUAgCenter.com](https://LSUAgCenter.com)