

LSU AgCenter Lafayette 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

LSU AgCenter offered 4-H to youth across the parish, encompassing those youth in public, parochial, charter schools, and home schools. Youth today are more independent than ever, especially considering the intensity at which technology is being integrated into students' lives. Youth were taught healthy choices, leadership skills, teamwork, and other important aspects of a successful and fulfilling life. Club members were involved in a seven-part lesson series that discussed life skills. Our School Garden Initiative engaged youth in creative learning by improving academic performance, enhancing life skills, and teaching youth to make healthier choices.

Agriculture and Natural Resources

Major agriculture and horticulture programs are Master Gardener, Master Cattleman, Master Horseman and Master Farmer. The staff offered various agricultural field days and demonstrations. Private pesticide applicator re-certification class is offered through our office. The Master Gardeners contribute over 14,515 volunteer hours and travel over 73,204 miles annually performing horticulture related outreach and giving presentations through the Master Gardener Speaker's Bureau. The total estimated value for major agriculture commodities in Lafayette is equal to 68.9 million dollars.

Nutrition and Community Health (NCH)

Improving the health of families and individuals is the focus of NCH in Lafayette Parish. Nutrition classes and disaster preparedness lessons are taught in schools, summer camps, senior centers, and with nonprofit organizations. The Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program (EFENP) teaches limited income families how to eat healthy on a budget.

EXTENSION OFFICE

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Research and Extension Programs

Agriculture
Economic/Community Development
Environment/Natural Sciences
Disaster Preparedness/
Nutrition/Health
4-H Youth Development

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WHOM WE REACH:

51,124 total youth – 707 agriculture and natural resources; 49,832 4-H youth development (1,389 enrolled in 50 traditional school clubs and 2 project clubs and 14,491 school enrichment); and 585 students participated in nutrition education courses.

4,240 total adults – 1,242 agriculture and natural resources; 442 adults participated in nutrition education courses; and 2,556 4-H youth development

HOW WE REACH THEM:

5,261 Total Activities – 394 Mass Media Activities; 2,645 Group/Ind. Activities; 2,156 Activities from Group Events & Presentations and 66 Service-Learning Activities

PARISH FACTS:

LSU AgCenter county agents provide research-based information on plant, animal, fisheries & wildlife enterprises to Lafayette Parish residents from the 2023 Louisiana Ag Summary. The total dollar amount from these commodities were: Plant enterprises, \$42.6 million Animal enterprises, \$25 million; fisheries & wildlife enterprises, \$1.2 million.

DATA FROM THE U.S. CENSUS:

Land area - 268.72 square miles; Population estimates (2023) – 249,750; Population under 18 years old – 24.1%; Population 65 years old and over – 15.4%; Median household income - \$66,617; Persons below poverty – 17.0%

LOCAL ISSUES AND PLANS FOR THIS YEAR:

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

- Increase a sense of belonging by establishing common ground, celebrating diversity and creating opportunities for inner-city and rural youth to interact and serve others together.
- Build awareness of issues facing youth as it relates to life skill development. Through a series of lessons, students will be introduced to topics of first aid, internet safety, phone etiquette, dealing with disappointment and cultural awareness.
- Increase youth members engagement in service-learning and community service projects that address hunger, poverty, and food insecurity awareness, action and/or change in your local communities.
- Expand programming on substance abuse prevention programming and communication.
- Continue to enhance and expand the school garden program to promote healthy food choices, nutrition education and physical exercise.
- Promote agriculture awareness and careers in agriculture.

2. Increase agriculture knowledge and awareness of Louisiana Agriculture.

- Continue major educational programs based on local needs.
- Provide gardening resources in schools, homes, and across the community.
- Continue to network, share ideas and educate public/elected officials on Agriculture related issues.
- Expand agriculture's voice through social media/mass media.
- Keep public updated on pest outbreaks and disaster awareness.

3. Educate and Encourage Reductions in Food Deserts Area of Lafayette parish

- EFNEP clients will receive training on feeding their families nutritionally while on a budget.
- Provide basic education on health literacy and health-conscious choices for nutrition to both adults and youth.
- Provide education to the public on chronic disease states and their relation to nutrition and dietary intake.

Matt Lee, LSU Vice President for Agriculture, Louisiana State University Agricultural Center, Louisiana Agricultural Experiment Station, Louisiana Cooperative Extension Service, LSU College of Agriculture. The LSU AgCenter and LSU provide equal opportunities in programs and employment.



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