

# LSU AgCenter DeSoto 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

### ***Agriculture and Natural Resources***

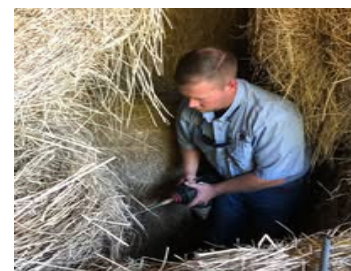
According to the USDA National Agricultural Statistics Service, DeSoto Parish had approximately 32,000 head of beef cows and calves as of January 1, 2023. The 2023 LSU Agriculture Summary reported a gross farm value of \$19,043,241 for beef production in DeSoto Parish. To sustain the cattle industry in DeSoto Parish we conducted a series of meetings in which beef producers gained awareness of feeding cattle through the winter, cool season forage variety recommendations, marketing beef cattle, weed control in pastures and hay fields. We average 40 producers that attend our beef meetings. With the utilization of a beef cattle email distribution list, in which I have 242 members, monthly newsletters are sent to cattlemen in my area.

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

4-H is a community of more than 6.5 million young people across America learning leadership, citizenship, and life skills. 4-H'ers participate in fun, hands-on learning activities which encourage a sense of belonging among the youth. The 4-H Club is the largest youth organization in the United States! Louisiana has more than 85,000 4-H members in more than 1,700 clubs. Louisiana 4-H reaches a diverse group of youth, grades K-12. Through non-formal, research-based, experiential learning activities, 4-H participants gain knowledge and life skills to become productive, capable, and compassionate members of their communities. The 4-H program combines the cooperative efforts of youth, volunteer leaders, land-grant universities, federal, state, local governments, and the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

### ***Nutrition and Community Health***

Flavors of Health (FoH) is the Family and Consumer Science Program offered in DeSoto Parish. FoH is a nutrition education and health program with a community focus. Our program serves Louisiana's adults, promoting healthful diets and positive lifestyles to prevent or manage chronic disease and to improve quality of life. We also conduct programs for our youth, emphasizing cooking skills and preparation of healthful meals and snacks. We focus on healthy eating and physical activity. We provide virtual and on-site classes, presentations, workshops, and educational materials to encourage healthier food and fitness behaviors. This includes cooking skills, grocery shopping strategies, small goal setting, exercise and physical activity guidance, healthy habit development, weight management and diet-disease links.



## PROGRAMS

### ***Agriculture and Natural Resources***

Livestock Production  
Forage Production  
Horticulture/Lawn and Garden  
Pest Management  
Forestry  
Environment/Watersheds  
Commercial Fruit Production

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

School 4-H Clubs  
Project Clubs  
Overnight Camps  
Leadership Trainings

### ***Nutrition and Community Health***

Healthy Communities  
Flavors of Health  
Harvest of the Month

## EXTENSION OFFICE

### ***Our address***

10117 Hwy 171  
Grand Cane, LA 71032  
Phone: 318-872-0533  
Fax: 318-872-2367

### ***Office Hours:***

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

### ***Website:***

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

### ***Social Media:***

<https://www.facebook.com/desotoparishextension>

<https://www.facebook.com/DeSoto4H>

## STAFF

### ***Parish Chair/Agriculture:***

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### ***Administrative Coordinator:***

Melissa Saenz  
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### ***4-H Youth Development:***

Ami Altom  
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### ***Nutrition and Community Health:***

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## WHOM WE REACH:

908 youth (includes 452 4-H members, 35 adult volunteers, 12 school 4-H Clubs, and 6 after-school clubs) 24,901 adults (3,548 agriculture and natural resources and 21,353 family consumer sciences)

## HOW WE REACH THEM:

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

## EXPANDING OUR EFFORTS:

Over 100 volunteers from 4-H, ANR and Nutrition and Community Health.

## PARISH FACTS:

LSU AgCenter county agents provide research-based information on plant, aquaculture, wildlife and animal enterprises to DeSoto Parish residents. The total dollar amount from these commodities were: Animal enterprises, \$35,190,639; aquaculture and wildlife, \$5,476,831; plant enterprises, \$37,665,380. Land area — 895 square miles; Population — 26,812; Population under 18 years old — 24%; Population 65 years old and over — 18.5%; Median household income — \$46,077; Persons below poverty — 21.8%

## LOCAL ISSUES AND PLANS FOR THIS YEAR:

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

- Conduct quarterly beef cattle producer meetings.
- Conduct annual pesticide recertification meetings.
- Assist clients with lawn and garden questions.
- Conduct farm and home educational visits.
- Collaborate with DeSoto Soil & Water District and DeSoto Farm Bureau to provide educational programming to DeSoto Parish producers.
- Write news columns on current science based agricultural practices.

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

- Develop young leaders through Character Development lessons in school club meetings.
- Conduct life skill lessons in partnerships with local businesses and stakeholders for the Jr. Leadership Club.
- Partner with DeSoto Occupation/Vocational Education (D.O.V.E.) Program to teach life skills through a school enrichment program leading into early adulthood utilizing community garden lessons.
- Encourage youth to participate in parish, regional, and state events, workshops, and contests.
- Growing involvement in community and civic activities.

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

- Promote healthy diets and positive lifestyles to prevent or manage chronic diseases and to improve the quality of life.
- Educate youth on cooking skills and preparation of healthy meal plans.
- Conduct programs such as Spice of the Month, Playstreets, and Story Walks throughout the communities of DeSoto Parish.
- Conduct nutrition programs that help create healthy communities by improving overall nutrition and increasing physical activity levels, in youth and adults, which will help produce long lasting behavior changes.
- Collaborate with libraries throughout the parish.



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