

LSU AgCenter Ascension Parish Profile

Report to Stakeholders January 2026



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

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. This community-based work helps individuals and families adopt the nutrition and physical activity principles we have long been teaching.

4-H Youth Development

In Ascension Parish, 1,456 youth are enrolled in 40 school and community clubs to participate in the 4-H program. They participate in competitions, workshops, project clubs, overnight and day camping activities, leadership, service-learning projects, and civic engagement opportunities. Shooting Sports, Livestock, Home and Style, Wiggles and Wags and Jr. Leader are project clubs that are offered. Shooting sports is the largest project club and a highlight with Ascension members qualifying to compete at the National level. The Ascension Livestock Judging Team also participated in the National 4-H Judging Contest and represented the state well.

Agriculture and Natural Resources

The parish has a diverse agriculture-related base which includes sugarcane, soybeans, livestock, and nursery crops, with sugarcane being the most valuable commodity. Throughout the year clientele gain knowledge through meetings, field days, workshops, demonstrations, and farm and home visits. There is an active Master Gardeners volunteer group in Ascension Parish that help LSU AgCenter agents with outreach efforts to help meet the educational needs in consumer horticulture. Some recent activities of the Ascension Master Gardeners include the library lecture series, school gardens and beautification project sites at Ascension Veterans Memorial Park and Lamar Dixon Expo Center.

PROGRAMS

4-H and Youth Development

- 4-H.
- FFA.

Agriculture and Natural Resources

- Animal Production.
- Beef Cattle.
- Environment/Watersheds.
- Horticulture/Lawn and Garden.
- Pest Management.
- Urban Forestry.
- Sugarcane/Soybeans.

Nutrition and Community Health

- Healthy Communities
- Flavors of Health.
- Farm to Fork Food Safety.
- Seafood Safety and Quality.

EXTENSION OFFICE

Ascension Extension Office

9039 S. St. Landry Rd. Bldg. C
Gonzales, LA 70737
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Office Hours:

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

Website:

www.LSUAgCenter.com/Ascension

Social Media:

www.facebook.com/AscensionParish4H

Parish Chair:

Bobby Bingham

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Additional Contact:

Mary Lynn Laiche, Administrative Coordinator

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WHOM WE REACH:

- 3,659 youth; includes 17,752 Mass & Social Media
 - 1,456 enrolled in 40 school clubs and 5 project clubs, 2,113 school enrichment
- 7,552, adults
 - 7,212 agriculture and natural resources, 250 nutrition education, 90 4-H youth development

HOW WE REACH THEM:

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

EXPANDING OUR EFFORTS:

161 volunteers from 4-H, Master Gardeners, Master Horseman, family and community.

PARISH FACTS:

LSU AgCenter county agents provide research-based information on plant, aquaculture, wildlife and animal enterprises to Ascension Parish residents. The total dollar amount from these commodities were: Animal enterprises, \$23,424,875, aquaculture and wildlife, \$218,960; plant enterprises, \$50,773,141.

Land area — 289.97 square miles; Population — 130,458; Population under 18 years old — 26.6%; Population 65 years old and over — 12.9%; Median household income — \$86,256; Persons below poverty — 11.4%

LOCAL ISSUES AND PLANS FOR THIS YEAR:

Increase productivity and profitability of Louisiana agriculture.

- Hold a recertification for private pesticide applicators.
- Conduct educational sugarcane and soybean field days and meetings.
- Work with local cattlemen's associations to educate producers.
- Conduct farm and home educational visits.
- Write web page content and seminars on agricultural practices.

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

- Pesticide education to promote safe use of pesticides to protect the environment
- Sugarcane prescribed burn certification and recertification to help producers implement proper procedure to mitigate risk to the community
- Proper fertilization recommendations for producers to reduce runoff risk and environmental risks from improper applications

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

- Develop and implement service-learning projects throughout the parish.
- Present hands-on educational lessons on topics that would benefit youth in everyday life circumstances.
- Identify and recruit to increase the base of well-trained, screened, and supportive individuals to expand the capacity of the 4-H program.

Strengthen families and communities.

- Nutrition and Community Health clients receive training on feeding their families nutritionally on a budget.
- Conduct workshops on disaster preparedness, grab and go boxes, storm cleanup and house cleaning after a storm.
- Teach classes to pregnant women or parents of infants to strengthen parents' understanding of childrearing.



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

