

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 programs in Natchitoches Parish aim to improve residents' health through nutrition education. By partnering with schools, healthcare facilities, senior centers, libraries, and Women's Resource Center, these programs promote healthier eating, physical activity, and food safety. Nutrition programs and Healthy Community initiatives were implemented at Fairview-Alpha Elementary School, Natchitoches Libraries, Women's Resource Center, WIC Office, and Council on Aging from January 2025-January 2026. A monthly article is also published in The Natchitoches Parish Journal. The NCH goal is to make adopting a nutritious lifestyle easier and more accessible.

4-H Youth Development

A series of Louisiana Agriculture lessons were presented at monthly club meetings which focused on Louisiana commodities. These lessons focused on the importance of farming, commodities grown in different regions of Louisiana, and how agriculture is woven into our everyday lives. Natchitoches Parish is also home to 50 teen leaders that are heavily embedded in service and civic engagement. Other highlights include being named the Midsouth Food Challenge Champions, Victoria's Educational Garden, the donation of a 15-passenger van by the Natchitoches Parish 4-H Foundation, and the sustainability of our Free Little Pantry.

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 making up a farm value of over \$203 million. The largest economic production comes from forestry, beef cattle, corn, and soybeans. Other crops that are grown in Natchitoches parish include grain sorghum, rice, wheat, and hay production. Demonstration plots are maintained by row crop and forage producers, and research projects can also be found in the parish. In addition to large-scale producers, home gardens are common throughout the parish, with homeowners tending to fruits, vegetables, and ornamentals.

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.

Nutrition and Community Health

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

EXTENSION OFFICE

Natchitoches

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Office Hours:

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

Website: www.LSUAgCenter.com
www.LSUAgCenter.com/Natchitoches

Social Media:

Facebook: Natchitoches 4-H
Instagram: Natchitoches_4h
https://www.lsuagcenter.com/topics/food_health/nutrition/fnp

Parish Chair:

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Additional Contact:

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WHOM WE REACH:

1,139 youth (includes 4-H members and 30 school 4-H Clubs, two afterschool clubs, Shooting Sports, Livestock Club, Fishing Club, Jr Leadership Club and Cloverbuds)
Over 7,000 students being served in the enrichment style setting.
Natchitoches residents seeking better health.

HOW WE REACH THEM:

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

EXPANDING OUR EFFORTS:

113 volunteers from 4-H, Agriculture and Natural Resources and Nutrition & Community Health.

PARISH FACTS:

Natchitoches Parish is in northwest Louisiana and consists of 1299 square miles, making it the 4th 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 animal pesticide applicator workshops
- Write news columns, webpage content and seminars on agricultural practices.

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 underserved population.
- Leadership opportunities include parish office 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.
- Submit monthly articles for publication
- Partner with healthcare providers and community stakeholders to host a free community-wide health fair
- 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.
- Nutrition and Community Health



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

www.LSUAgCenter.com