

LSU AgCenter Ouachita 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

Ouachita Parish fares slightly worse than the average parish in Louisiana for population health and well-being and worse than the average county in the nation according to County Health Rankings data. Ouachita Nutrition and Community Health (NCH) Programs include our signature general nutrition program known as "Flavors of Health". Nutrition education is conducted through series of classes, special events, and social marketing to promote wellness and healthy lifestyles. Partnerships have been formed through a Healthy Communities Coalition to promote policies, systems, and environmental (PSE) changes to make healthy choices easier.

4-H Youth Development

The Ouachita 4-H Club focus for 2025-2026 is Science for elementary schools and Career Development for middle and high schools. Ouachita 4-H maintains project clubs in esports, junior leadership, livestock, photography, robotics, seaperch, shooting sports, and zoology. A variety of camps, citizenship opportunities, contests and workshops are available to our youth throughout the 4-H Program on parish, regional, and state levels. These opportunities target the three 4-H mission mandates: Citizenship; Healthy Living; and Science, Engineering, and Technology.

Agriculture and Natural Resources

Horticulture programming includes performing home and farm visits, an annual gardening seminar, presentations to local and statewide garden clubs as well as other community groups, a monthly lawn and garden article in *BayouLife Magazine*, and a weekly lawn and garden television segment on KARD Fox 14. The North Louisiana Seed Preservation Program continues to expand its heirloom seed holdings with emphasis placed on nearly lost LSU vegetable varieties and heirloom vegetables specific to northern Louisiana. The second annual statewide seed swap is scheduled for 2026.

PROGRAMS

4-H and Youth Development

- 4-H Clubs
- Project Clubs: eSports, Junior Leaders, Livestock, Photography, Robotics, SeaPerch, Shooting Sports, Zoology

Agriculture and Natural Resources

- Agronomy
- Animal Science
- Forestry and Wildlife
- Horticulture

Nutrition and Community Health

- Flavors of Health
- Healthy Communities
- Food Safety

EXTENSION OFFICE

LSU AgCenter-Ouachita Parish

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Website:

www.LSUAgCenter.com/Ouachita

Social Media:

www.facebook.com/LSUAgCenterOuachita

www.facebook.com/Northeast-Louisiana-Master-Gardeners

www.facebook.com/Ouachita4H

Parish Chair:

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WHOM WE REACH:

77,304 youth
21,371 adults

HOW WE REACH THEM:

4-H Clubs, school enrichment, field days, publications, newsletters, news articles, television, class series, demonstrations, school/community gardens, social media, website, special events, workshops, coalition meetings, virtual programs, and PSE changes.

EXPANDING OUR EFFORTS:

Volunteers from 4-H, Master Gardeners, Nutrition and Community Health, Healthy Communities, and Horticulture contributed 15,136 hours of volunteer time for a total dollar value of \$434,403.

PARISH FACTS:

LSU AgCenter county agents provide research-based information on plant, aquaculture, wildlife and animal enterprises to Ouachita Parish residents. The total dollar amount from these commodities were: Animal enterprises, \$18,006,482; aquaculture and wildlife, \$6,064,155; plant enterprises, \$58,871,096 (Source: Louisiana Summary 2024).

Land area — 610.4 square miles; Population — 158,036; Population under 18 years old — 24.73%; Population 65 years old and over — 15.46%; Median household income — \$51,241; Persons below poverty — 24%

LOCAL ISSUES AND PLANS FOR THIS YEAR:

Increase productivity and profitability of Louisiana agriculture.

- Conduct trials with producers.
- Conduct Private Applicator Recertification training.
- Conduct farm and home educational visits.

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

- Using native plants in the landscape.
- Host Green Show/Crawl.
- Continuing with the seed program with increased work at Sweet Potato Research Station and composting project at Marion Street Garden.

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

- Leadership through school and project clubs.
- Science Engineering and Technology opportunities.
- Personal development and career exposure.

Strengthen families and communities.

- Healthy eating and physical activity for mental health.
- Nutrition education and healthy cooking skills to change eating habits.
- Increasing safe physical activity in the outdoors.



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