

# LSU AgCenter St. James 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 work to improve St. James Parish residents' overall health by addressing chronic diseases linked to poor nutrition and sedentary lifestyles. Their efforts also aim to improve health outcomes in areas where Louisiana has historically ranked low. Through community-based programming, individuals and families are supported in adopting long taught principles of healthy eating and regular physical activity.

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

St. James Parish 4-H provides community youth with opportunities to develop life skills through experiential learning activities, school enrichment, and extracurricular programming. During the 2024-25 school year approximately 4,000 youth gained knowledge in the areas of agriculture, leadership, workforce preparation, service learning, healthy living, citizenship, and science, engineering, and technology. St. James 4-H gives youth endless opportunities to work with caring adult volunteers to foster personal growth and become well rounded citizens through the 4-H Thriving Model. Highlights of the year include, Livestock Shows, 4-H University, Summer Camp, Shooting Sports, Party with the Pumpkins, Cooking and Sewing Clubs, Safety Day, LEGO STEM Camp, and other 4-H events.

### **Agriculture and Natural Resources**

Sugarcane remained the leading row crop in St. James Parish, grown on over 27,000 acres and contributing more than \$4 million to the local economy. Soybean acreage held steady in 2024 with 5,228 acres planted. Perique tobacco, a distinctive parish crop, was cultivated on approximately 75 acres. The LSU AgCenter delivered educational programming throughout the year, including sugarcane field days and producer meetings addressing pest control, planting practices, and emerging varieties. Additional programs featured Wildlife Field Day, Tomato Field Day, and a horticulture library series. Thirteen volunteers completed the River Region Master Gardener program. Outreach efforts also included burn certification, pesticide recertification, and worker protection standards training, strengthening agricultural knowledge parish wide.

## PROGRAMS

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

- 4-H.
- Civic Engagement
- Science Engineering and Technology
- Agriculture
- Healthy Living.

### **Agriculture and Natural Resources**

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

### **Nutrition and Community Health**

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

### **EXTENSION OFFICE**

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#### **Email:**

[stjames@agcenter.lsu.edu](mailto:stjames@agcenter.lsu.edu)

#### **Office Hours:**

Mon.-Fri.: 7:30 a.m.-4:00 p.m.



**Website:** [www.LSUAgCenter.com](http://www.LSUAgCenter.com)  
[www.LSUAgCenter.com/StJames](http://www.LSUAgCenter.com/StJames)

#### **Social Media:**

Facebook:  
St. James 4-H  
St. James Parish LSU AgCenter

#### **Parish Chair:**

[RCastro@agcenter.lsu.edu](mailto:RCastro@agcenter.lsu.edu)

#### **Additional Contact:**

Administrative Coordinator  
Sophie Aime  
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## WHOM WE REACH:

30,301 youth (includes 400 4-H members and 12 school 4-H Clubs) 15,901 adults (3,548 agriculture and natural resources and 21,353 family)

## HOW WE REACH THEM:

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

## EXPANDING OUR EFFORTS:

350 volunteers from 4-H, Master Gardeners, family, and community volunteers are essential to our programs.

## PARISH FACTS:

LSU AgCenter county agents provide research-based information on plant, aquaculture, wildlife, and animal enterprises to St. James Parish residents. The 2024 total dollar amount from these commodities were: —Plant - \$38,579,809 —Fisheries and wildlife - \$2,208,250 —Animal - \$539,322

**Data from the Louisiana Ag Summary Web site: [LSUAgCenter.com/agsummary](https://LSUAgCenter.com/agsummary)**

Population – 20,192, Land area - 258 square miles, Persons under 18 years old - 23%,

Persons 65 years old and over - 18%, Median household income - \$56,207

Persons below poverty - 12%

## LOCAL ISSUES AND PLANS FOR THIS YEAR:

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

- Conduct a sugarcane field day and grower meetings.
- Conduct a tomato field day.
- Conduct a library series focused on home horticulture.
- Write news columns, develop webpage content and hold seminars on agriculture practices.
- Conduct farm and home educational visits.

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

- Before and after hurricane tree care seminars.
- Acorns of Hope coastal tree plantings.
- Develop a comprehensive tree management plan and best management practices for trees on public property.
- Organize and present four storm surge modeling programs in the parish.
- Conduct Coastal Roots program with coastal schools and 4-H youth to grow native grasses and mangrove trees.

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

- Develop and implement service-learning projects throughout the parish.
- Junior Leaders will work with community organizations on promoting youth development activities.
- Provide educational programming focusing on STEM and Agricultural Awareness to all 3<sup>rd</sup> – 12<sup>th</sup> grade 4-H members in the parish.
- Parish Livestock Ambassadors will serve as advocates for the livestock industry while serving as mentors to livestock exhibitors and learning about agricultural careers through farm and university tours.
- Shooting Sports members will learn about firearm safety and implement safe practices through 4-H competition and real-world use.

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

- Family Nutrition Program clients will receive training on feeding their families nutritionally on a budget.
- Conduct workshops on disaster preparedness, grab and go Boxes, storm clean-up and house cleaning after a storm.
- Teach classes on reducing credit balances and examining spending habits.



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