

LSU AgCenter Richland Parish Quarterly Report

Report to Stakeholders January – March 2026



About the LSU AgCenter

The LSU AgCenter provides innovative research, information, and education to improve people's lives. Working in a unique 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.

Agriculture and Natural Resources (ANR)- Nate Jennings

The EPA requires Private Applicator Cards to be renewed every three years. The LSU AgCenter works cooperatively with the Louisiana Department of Agriculture and Forestry (LDAF) to host in-person or virtual recertification meetings for these renewals. In Richland Parish, 40 Applicator Cards were renewed. The meeting also included information on new invasive pests affecting local row crops and the EPA's new mitigation requirements for newly labeled pesticides. Additional information is available through the LSU AgCenter.

The Northeast Louisiana Rice Growers Association revamped the organization and hosted its first Rice Forum in several years in February at the Rayville Civic Center, featuring speakers from the LSU AgCenter, USA Rice, and Meryl Kennedy.

The 2026 growing season is underway, with a late frost forcing many producers to replant corn. Rising input costs and limited seed availability have led many farmers to transition to soybeans. With cooperation from local producers, corn demonstration plots have been planted to evaluate varieties best suited for the area, with results contributing to the LSU AgCenter's Corn Hybrid Guide.



**Corn Demo
Planting**

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Programs

Agriculture and Natural Resources

- Aquaculture
- Animal Production
- Crop Production
- Horticulture/Lawn and Garden
- Pest Management

4-H and Youth Development

- Citizenship/Leadership
- Science, Engineering and Technology
- Healthy Living
- Life Skills

Nutrition and Community Health

- Nutrition and Health
- Flavors of Health Community
- Chronic Disease Prevention
- Faithful Families Thriving Communities
- Physical Activity
- Basic/Mastery/Advanced Level Nutrition and Health

4-H Youth and Family Development

Richland Parish Shooting Sports - Richland Parish Shooting Sports

Approximately 18 youth participants competed in the Regional Shooting Sports competition held in Ouachita Parish, representing their parish across shotgun, rifle, pistol and archery disciplines. These students demonstrated a strong commitment to skill development, safety, and sportsmanship, dedicating significant time and effort to practice and preparation in order to compete at both the regional and state levels. Their hard work paid off, as at least half of the participants placed in their respective events and earned the opportunity to advance to the State Shooting Sports competition. This program not only promotes marksmanship skills, but also reinforces responsibility, discipline, and goal setting among youth participants.



Shooting Sports

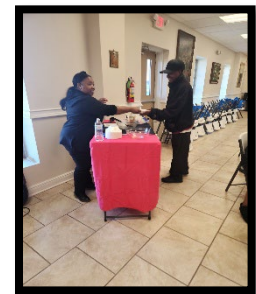
Northeast Region Louisiana Food Challenge Competition - Two Richland Parish 4-H teams competed in the 2026 Northeast/Northwest Louisiana Food Challenge Competition in Ruston, demonstrating teamwork, dedication, and strong culinary skills. Youth worked collaboratively under time constraints while applying food safety and problem-solving skills. Their efforts were recognized when the Division II team earned the Golden Spatula Award for outstanding teamwork during food preparation.



Food Challenge

Nutrition and Community Health (NCH) – Brittney Newsome

Eat Smart, Get Active, Live Well - A nutrition workshop was held at **Greater New Beginning Missionary Baptist Church**, engaging **37 participants** on healthy eating and physical activity. Participants learned practical ways to manage calorie intake by planning ahead, tracking food choices, limiting added sugars and solid fats, reducing portion sizes preparing more meals at home, and making healthier choices when eating out. The workshop also emphasized increasing physical activity through moderate and vigorous movement, avoiding inactivity, and gradually building activity levels. Overall, the session reinforced simple, achievable steps participants can take to improve daily health habits and support long-term well-being and concluded with a food demonstration tasting to help with in home meal preparation.



Healthy Eating / Physical Activity

Germ Science Experiment, Richland Parish Library, Rayville STEM FEST -

A germ science experiment was conducted for **268** fourth-grade students in Richland Parish to help build understanding of what germs are and how they spread. During the lesson, students learned that germs, including bacteria and viruses—are microscopic organisms that can cause illness and are easily transferred through touch. To demonstrate this concept, a “germ buddy” activity using Glitter Bug lotion was used. The lotion, visible under UV light, allowed students to see how germs remain on hands and surfaces if proper handwashing techniques are not followed, reinforcing the importance of thorough handwashing with soap and water. Students also participated in a hands-on pepper and soap experiment, where ground pepper represented germs floating on water. When soap was added, the pepper quickly moved away, visually showing how soap breaks up oils and repels germs, making it easier for water to wash them away. These interactive experiments helped students connect science concepts to everyday hygiene practices and better understand how handwashing helps prevent the spread of illness.



STEM FEST

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

LSUAgCenter.com

