

LSU AgCenter Avoyelles 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 working to enhance the well-being of residents by addressing chronic diseases linked to poor nutrition and sedentary lifestyles—areas where Louisiana has historically ranked low. In Avoyelles Parish, the food and nutrition score is just 38 out of 100, underscoring the urgent need for greater access to healthy food options and stronger nutrition education. Through the Flavors of Health initiative, programs such as Smart Portions, Dining with Diabetes, and Let's Eat for the Health of It, along with radio segments, news features, and youth culinary classes in partnership with 4-H, aim to promote healthier lifestyles and prevent chronic disease. All programs follow the Dietary Guidelines for Americans and USDA MyPlate recommendations.

4-H Youth Development

The Avoyelles Parish 4-H Youth Development Program is focused on growing the youth of our parish. With 20 school clubs, a homeschool club, a strong shooting sports program, junior leader club and large livestock program, as well as a parish wide Clover Buds club, we are reaching youth in all parts of our parish. This year, our programming focuses on healthy social and emotional development in our youth, addressing topics such as bullying, inclusion, manners, good decision making, leadership and positive peer relations.

Agriculture and Natural Resources

Avoyelles Parish is home to one of the most diverse agriculture production areas in the Southern Region, with at least 100 acres planted in 8 different commodities and animal and aquaculture enterprises. Farmers and residents rely on research-based information to ensure successful operations; therefore, the Avoyelles Parish LSU AgCenter hosts annual production meetings, offers site visits and workshops, where information is presented for increasing production while optimizing profitability. Crop demonstration trials are also implemented to give farmers firsthand experiences in variety performance, pest management techniques, and cultural practices to enhance their profitability.

PROGRAMS

4-H and Youth Development

- Club Meetings
- Junior Leadership Club
- Livestock Program
- Project Clubs
- Shooting Sports Program

Agriculture and Natural Resources

- Animal Production
- Crop Production Meetings
- Product Efficacy Trials
- Site Visits
- Soil Sample Interpretation
- Variety Demonstration Trials

Nutrition and Community Health

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

EXTENSION OFFICE

Avoyelles Parish AgCenter

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Office Hours:

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WHOM WE REACH:

4,580 youth (includes 1,250 4-H members in 15 schools 4-H and Project Clubs) 3100 adults (includes agriculture and natural resources and program volunteers).

HOW WE REACH THEM:

4-H clubs, school enrichment, demonstrations, field days, workshops, newspaper articles, websites, publications, social media, email updates, radio programs, group meeting and text messaging

EXPANDING OUR EFFORTS:

120 volunteers from 4-H, Master Gardeners, Family and Community, Master Cattleman, and Master Farmer.

PARISH FACTS:

LSU AgCenter county agents provide research-based information on plants, aquaculture, wildlife, and animal enterprises to Avoyelles Parish residents. The 2024 total dollar amount from these commodities were: Animal enterprises, \$26,987,409; Aquaculture and Wildlife, \$20,258,167; Plant Enterprises, \$126,018,652.

Land area — 832.43 square miles; Population — 39,176; Population under 18 years old — 24%; Population 65 years old and over — 17%; Median household income — \$39,439.00; Persons below poverty — 27.4%.

LOCAL ISSUES AND PLANS FOR THIS YEAR:

Increase productivity and profitability of Louisiana agriculture.

- Host production meetings educating growers on the current best management practices being researched by the LSU AgCenter to increase profitability of their crop.
- Conduct variety demonstration trials in crops such as corn, cotton, wheat, and soybeans which provides production data specific to growing conditions in Avoyelles Parish.
- Proactively respond to calls and offer site visits to agronomic, livestock and residential producers.
- Arrange site visits to assist in the analysis and diagnosis of problems that are decreasing yield and implement proper solutions.

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

- Maintain project club focused on specific skill sets such as: Gardening, and Cooking.
- Increase the volunteer base of well-trained, screened, and supportive individuals expand the capacity of the 4-H program.
- Prepare youth for the future by displaying positive life skills.
- Give youth the opportunity to gain leadership skills through club officer positions, Junior Leadership Club, parish specialty boards, contests, and workshops.
- Develop and implement service-learning projects throughout the parish.

Strengthen families and communities.

- Conduct nutrition programs that create healthy communities by improving overall nutrition and increasing physical activity levels, in youth and adults, which will produce long-lasting behavior changes.
- Provide nutrition education and food demonstrations with community partners.
- Provide hands-on food safety and cooking skills workshops for youth and adult audiences.



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 & Community Health.



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

www.LSUAgCenter.com