

**LOUISIANA DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE  
AND FORESTRY**



**2020 STRATEGIC PLAN**

**SUBMITTED BY:  
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COMMISSIONER OF AGRICULTURE AND FORESTRY**



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## THE LOUISIANA DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE AND FORESTRY

The Louisiana Department of Agriculture and Forestry is charged with overseeing the affairs of two of the state's largest industries -- agriculture and forestry. To that end, the agency is responsible for administering the laws, rules and regulations of the state regarding the growing, harvesting, processing, storage and sale of crop and livestock commodities.

To affect these goals, the department is divided into six divisions: one serves the financial, personnel and administrative management functions of the agency; and the other five are largely regulatory, serving to enforce the laws and regulations that govern the growing, harvesting, processing and distribution of Louisiana crops and livestock.

More specifically, the laws, rules and regulations govern the use of pesticides; the quality of fertilizers and seeds; the protection of animal health and food safety; the storage of grains; the inspection of fruits, vegetables, meats, major row crops and eggs; programs to ensure the health and long-term viability of our soil and water resources, the regulation of florists and nurserymen; the policing of livestock and rural farm theft; the registration of livestock brands; the calibration of motor fuel pumps; the calibration of all instruments that weigh and measure items for commercial sale and the growing of forestry seedling stock.

These laws, rules and regulations also ensure that the food is safe to eat and that it is prepared in sanitary processing facilities and that our forests are replanted for sustainability and protected from diseases and fire.

The department also works with other state, regional, national and international sectors of business and government to fulfill its goal of providing general oversight services for many of the affairs of rural Louisiana.

The Louisiana Department of Agriculture and Forestry (LDAF) is made up of the following offices:

Office of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences (AES)

Office of Agro-Consumer Services (ACS)

Office of Animal Health and Food Safety (AHFS)

Office of Forestry (FOR)

Office of Management and Finance (OMF)

Office of Soil and Water Conservation (SWC)



## **OFFICE OF AGRICULTURAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCES**

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### Program Description:

The Office of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences administers the provisions of law relating to fertilizers, agricultural liming materials, boll weevil eradication, sweet potato diseases, crop pests and diseases, seeds, pesticides, horticulture, and apiaries. Statutes administered by the Office include R.S. 3:16,19, 20, 1024 and 1025, 1381-1430.13, 1431-1449, 1601-1617, 1651-1656, 1731-1736, 1741-1748, 1771-1775, 2301-2311, 2351-2354, 3201-3391.12, 3396.1-3396.6, 3801-3816; and R.S. 36:621 and 628. The Office receives its authority under R.S. 36:628(C). The Office is comprised of four divisions: Agricultural Chemistry Programs, Horticulture and Quarantine Programs, Pesticide and Environmental Programs, and Seed Programs.

The Horticulture & Quarantine Programs Division monitors for and provides for the prevention, control, and eradication of regulated and exotic crop pests or diseases endangering Louisiana's agricultural (food and fiber), forestry, horticultural, and apiary industries and the environment; ensures that products certified for export from Louisiana are free from regulated pests; and oversees the qualifications and practices of persons engaged in the green industry. This Division licenses and permits horticulture related businesses, and inspects, samples, surveys, monitors, and oversees control or eradication efforts for plant pests, including boll weevil. These activities are accomplished through the implementation and enforcement of the Horticulture Law, Boll Weevil Eradication Law, Crop Pests and Diseases Law, Sweet Potato Diseases Law and Apiary Law. Additionally, this Division partners with USDA and the LSU AgCenter for many of its quarantine or regulated pest activities, safeguarding agriculture and the environment for Louisiana stakeholders with the greatest efficiency and effectiveness possible.

The Pesticide and Environmental Programs Division inspects, enforces and regulates the registration, distribution, sale, offering for sale, and application of pesticides. The Division regulates, trains and certifies Private and Commercial Pesticide Applicators, Structural Pest Control Applicators, Restricted Use Pesticide (RUP) Salespersons, Agricultural Consultants, and Worker Protection Standards (WPS) Trainers, as well as regulates and licenses or permits respective businesses. The Division also monitors the state's water resources for pesticides and participates in affiliated federal programs such as Endangered Species, Worker Protection and Producer Establishments.

The Seed Programs Division ensures that all agriculture, vegetable, grass, flower and tree seed meets seed label guarantees and quality standards. In doing so, it prevents Louisiana from becoming a dumping ground for low quality planting seed and ensures that a mechanism is in place to provide a reliable source of high quality seed from superior new crop varieties for Louisiana producers. The Division is also charged with licensure and regulatory oversight of industrial hemp and hemp seed in Louisiana to certify it is being produced in compliance with state and federal laws. The responsibilities of the Seed Programs Division are: 1) Enforcement of the Seed Laws and Regulations; 2) Management of the Seed Certification Program; 3) Operation of the Official State Seed Testing Laboratory, and 4) Regulating the cultivation, processing, handling and transporting of industrial hemp in Louisiana.

The Agricultural Chemistry Programs Division is responsible for administering state laws and regulations that regulate the manufacturing and sale of fertilizers and agricultural liming materials for the purpose of ensuring that the products meet the standards outlined in state and federal law and to ensure that those products do not endanger the environment or public

health. The Agricultural Chemistry Laboratory is responsible for analyzing agricultural chemicals and other farm input components as part of regulatory enforcement of fertilizers and agricultural lime. It is also the testing laboratory for the Feed Program, the Meat Inspection Program, the Division of Pesticide and Environmental Programs, and the Medical Marijuana Program providing analyses in the enforcement of the Feed, Meat, Pesticide, and Medical Marijuana Laws. Agricultural Chemistry also provides analytical support for the LSU AgCenter and the general public.

A statewide force of agricultural environmental specialists carry out field inspections and investigations to ensure compliance with laws and are spread across the state in seven districts. These specialists are cross-trained in all Office programs to ensure proficiency in each area. Violators of regulations may be issued warnings or brought before a commission to answer alleged violations.

**Mission:**

The mission of the Office of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences is to ensure that fertilizers, agricultural liming materials and pesticides meet all requirements of law; to monitor, prevent, control and eradicate plant pests and diseases that threaten Louisiana's agriculture, environment and economy; to facilitate agricultural exports through certification of products; to oversee the qualifications and practices of persons engaged in the green industry; to protect human health and the environment by ensuring the proper labeling, distribution, storage, use, application and disposal of pesticides, and through enforcement of all pesticide laws; to ensure that seed sold for planting meets label guarantees and quality standards; and to ensure a safe, abundant supply of food and fiber.

**Goals:**

The goals of the Office of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences are to: 1) assure, through sampling and inspection, that fertilizer, lime, horticultural products, imported and exported agricultural products, pesticides, and seeds meet or exceed the quality standards set by federal and Louisiana laws, rules, and regulations; and 2) through licensing, certification, surveillance and training, assure a level of competency in services and products provided by those industries regulated in an effort to protect the public and the environment.

**OBJECTIVE 1**

The Horticulture & Quarantine Programs Division will continue to monitor for and provide for the prevention, control, and eradication of regulated and exotic crop pests or diseases endangering Louisiana's agricultural (food and fiber), forestry, horticultural, and apiary industries and the environment; ensure that products certified for export from Louisiana are free from regulated pests; and oversee the qualifications and practices of persons engaged in the green industry. This Division licenses and permits horticulture related businesses, and inspects, samples, surveys, monitors, and oversees eradication efforts for plant pests, including boll weevil. These activities are accomplished through the implementation and enforcement of the

Horticulture Law and Regulations (R.S. 3:3801-3816 and LAC 7:XXIX.101-123); Crop Pests and Disease Law and Plant Protection and Quarantine Regulations (R.S. 3:1651-1656 and LAC 7:XV.101-327); Sweet Potato Diseases Law (R.S. 3:1731-1736); Louisiana Apiary Law and Regulations (R.S. 3:2301-2311 and LAC 7:XXI.2501-2521); and the Boll Weevil Eradication Law (R.S. 3:1601-1617). Additionally, this Division partners with USDA and the LSU AgCenter for many of its quarantine or regulated pest activities, safeguarding agriculture and the environment for Louisiana stakeholders with the greatest efficiency and effectiveness possible.

- STRATEGY 1.1**      Protect the public and the environment of Louisiana by overseeing the qualifications and practices of persons engaged in the green industry through effective licensing, permitting, and enforcement activities.
- Administer and grade examinations in the following professions: Landscape Architect, Landscape Horticulturist, Landscape Irrigation Contractor, Arborist, Utility Arborist, Retail Florist, and Wholesale Florist.
  - Process applications and issue licenses in the above professions and permits/registrations in the occupations of Nursery Stock Dealer, Cut Flower Dealer, Sweet Potato Dealer and Beekeeper.
  - Confirm compliance with license and permit requirements, and investigate complaints of violations.
  - Conduct adjudicatory hearings of possible violators.

- STRATEGY 1.2**      Safeguard against the introduction and spread of plant pests into Louisiana's agricultural and forestry industries and the environment, to sustain and enhance protection of our food supply and our 'green industry' economies, and to enable and increase the exportation of Louisiana agricultural products, by conducting effective surveillance (inspections, sampling, surveying, monitoring) and eradication/management efforts for plant and honeybee pests and ensuring that materials are free from injurious pests and diseases.
- Inspect, sample, and certify nurseries for pest freedom to allow for shipment of products.
  - Inspect, survey, and monitor for sweet potato weevil to manage populations and prevent spread to weevil-free areas and to other states.
  - Inspect, sample, and certify agricultural commodities to ensure pest freedom for export to other states and countries.
  - Conduct effective post entry inspections of propagative stock or commodities entering Louisiana to ensure freedom of plant pests of quarantine concern.
  - Conduct effective surveys for plant pests currently not known to exist in Louisiana and eradicate or manage any that may be detected.
  - Review applications and provide regulatory oversight of permits for field testing of genetically engineered crops.

- Provide for the registration of beekeepers and their colonies.
- Perform effective inspections and certification of honeybees for interstate movement.
- Provide regulatory oversight for the importation of honeybees into the U.S. through Louisiana for research purposes.

**STRATEGY 1.3** Conduct an effective boll weevil eradication program in the state.

- Effectively survey and monitor all acres of cotton in the state for boll weevils.
- Effectively treat any acres of cotton in the state are found to be infested with boll weevil.
- Utilize available technologies and Best Management Practices to efficiently maintain Louisiana's boll weevil-free status.
- Continue survey and monitoring activities to prevent reintroduction of boll weevil into Louisiana.

#### PERFORMANCE INDICATORS:

##### Horticulture Commission:

Percent of Horticulture non-compliance notices resulting in a hearing  
 Horticulture notices of non-compliance issued  
 Adjudicatory cases heard  
 Number of Horticulture professional licensing exams administered  
 Number of Horticulture professional licenses issued  
 Number of Horticulture occupational permits issued

##### Plant Pest Quarantine Programs

Number of nursery shipping tags issued  
 Inspections for Imported Fire Ant certification  
 Nursery certificate permits issued  
 Surveys completed for non-indigenous pests  
 Phytosanitary export certificates issued  
 Plant pest quarantine related investigations  
 Post entry quarantine inspections  
 Plant pest quarantine related compliance inspections  
 Transgenic crop applications processed  
 Transgenic crop field trials inspected  
 Percent weevil damage to sweet potatoes entering processing facilities  
 Percent sweet potato acres weevil free  
 Properties where sweet potato weevils detected in weevil-free areas  
 Sweet potato regulatory inspections  
 Sweet potato dealer permits issued  
 Honeybee shipments certified for out of state movement  
 Queen and package honeybee producers certified  
 Beekeepers registered



**Boll Weevil Program:**

Percentage of Cotton Acres Weevil Free  
Cotton Boll Weevils Trapped

Customers: the general population of Louisiana.

Limiting Factors: reduction of authorized positions, federal budget cuts, appearance of a quarantine pest that results in resource expenditures beyond capacity.

**OBJECTIVE II**

The Office of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences, Pesticide and Environmental Programs Division will continue to protect the environment along with the health and general prosperity of Louisiana's citizens by providing for the safe and proper distribution, use, and management of pesticides; by facilitating the protection of natural resources and pollution prevention; and by providing for effective control of pests. This program will address complaints, priority concerns, and initiatives through participation in community based environmental protection in addition to developing programs for pollution prevention and promotion of risk reduction/mitigation. The Division is administered under R.S. 3:19, 20, 3201-3391.13(Chapter 20, Pesticide Law), and LAC Title 7 Parts XXIII (Pesticides) and XXV (Structural Pest Control). The Division participates in cooperative agreements with EPA, USDA and FDA pursuant to the Federal Insecticide Fungicide and Rodenticide Act (FIFRA) as amended; the Food, Agriculture, Conservation, and Trade Act of 1990, (7 U.S.C. 136i-1); Section 713 of Title VII (General Provisions) of Division A of the Public Law 108-7; and the Federal Food Drug and Cosmetic Act (21 U.S.C. 301 et seq.).

**STRATEGY 2.1**

Maintain procedures for registration of any pesticide sold, offered for sale or distributed in Louisiana.

- \* Maintain current database of registered pesticides with copy of labels and Safety Data Sheets (SDS) available via computer access.
- \* Conduct random inspections on dealers, distributors and in the market place to locate unregistered pesticides, canceled or suspended pesticides, misbranded and/or pesticides that are not suitable for sale or use.
- \* Administer Emergency Exemptions (Section 18's) and State Special Local Need Registrations (Section 24c's).

**STRATEGY 2.2**

Provide for enforcement of and compliance with the Louisiana Pesticide Law and pursuant rules and regulations.

- \* Maintain inspector staff thoroughly trained in techniques of investigating possible violations.
- \* Investigate all reports of complaints dealing with pesticides in a timely fashion.
- \* Perform routine inspections on sources of pesticide use and take action to assure compliance when violations are noted.

**STRATEGY 2.3**

Provide for certification and training for all pesticide applicators that apply any pesticide for a fee or apply or supervise the application of any restricted use pesticide.

- \* Enter into a Memorandum of Understanding with the Louisiana State University Agricultural Center Cooperative Extension Service to provide for the education and training of pesticide applicators.
- \* Require that certification shall be issued only after the applicant has satisfactorily passed an examination.
- \* Perform routine inspections at certification/recertification meetings to assure that minimum standards of education are met.
- \* Maintain a database of all certified pesticide applicators.

**STRATEGY 2.4**

Provide for licensing of businesses engaged in the application of pesticides.

- \* Review applications for licenses to assure compliance with the requirements for licensing.
- \* Perform routine inspections of businesses applying pesticides to assure compliance.
- \* Maintain a database of all businesses licensed under the Louisiana Pesticide Law.

**STRATEGY 2.5**

Provide clean and safe water in Louisiana by minimizing, mitigating, and preventing pesticide contamination.

- \* Maintain a water (surface and ground) sampling program for monitoring the presence of pesticides in water.
- \* Provide for determinations and assessments of levels of pesticides detected and determine actions and responses to such detections.

**STRATEGY 2.6**

Provide for the determination and remedial actions in order to protect health and the environment from pesticide waste.

- \* Perform investigations of any circumstances relating to the presence of pesticide waste in the state that poses a threat of reasonable expectation of a threat to health or the environment.
- \* Perform evaluations of pesticide waste sites and make determinations of remedial actions.

**STRATEGY 2.7**

Provide Louisiana citizens with a clean and safe supply of raw agricultural products where pesticides used.

- \* Maintain sampling procedures on Louisiana's raw agricultural products for monitoring of pesticide residues in our food safety sampling program.
- \* Make determinations for remedial action if pesticide residues are detected above the standards established.

**STRATEGY 2.8**

Provide for the protection of Louisiana's agricultural workers from exposure to pesticides.

- \* Enter into a Memorandum of Understanding with the Louisiana State University Agricultural Center Cooperative Extension Service to provide for the education and training of

agricultural employers and workers on how to protect themselves from pesticide exposure.

- \* Maintain verification of workers and handlers that have received Worker Protection Standards training.

- \* Perform routine inspections of agricultural facilities to assure compliance with the Worker Protection Standards.

## **STRATEGY 2.9**

Provide for minimizing adverse effects of pesticide applications on Louisiana's endangered species.

- \* Continue to develop a pesticide management plan to mitigate potential pesticide risks to the species.

### **PERFORMANCE INDICATORS:**

Number of verified environmental incidences by improper pesticide application

Number of pesticide complaints.

Number of inspections

Number of residue samples analyzed

Pesticide products out of compliance

Number of pesticides registered.

Number of pesticide product formulations analyzed.

Number of marketplace inspections.

Number of dealer inspections.

Number of producer establishments inspections

Enforcement actions on products

Applicators out of compliance

Number of certified applicators

Number of uncertified applicators

Health-related complaints confirmed

Health-related incidents reported\inspected

Customers: farmers, growers, applicators and Louisiana citizens

Limiting Factors: further reduction of authorized positions, unfunded federal mandates, federal budget cuts

## **OBJECTIVE III**

The Office of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences, Agricultural Chemistry Programs Division will regulate the sale and use of fertilizers and agricultural liming materials; ensure that these products meet standards set forth by the Association of American Plant Food Control Officials and the state of Louisiana as provided for in LRS Title 3, Chapter 10-A, Sections 1411 - 1430.13 (Fertilizer and Agricultural Lime) and LAC Title 7 Parts XI, XVII, and XIX; and provide analytical services for the Feed Program, the Meat Inspection Program, the Division of Pesticide and Environmental Programs, the Medical Marijuana Program, and the LSU AgCenter.

<b>STRATEGY 3.1</b>	Inspect the manufacturing sites and retail outlets where these products are produced or housed to ensure good manufacturing practices, proper storage, and correct labeling.
<b>STRATEGY 3.2</b>	Take samples of the products and submit them to the laboratory for chemical analysis to ensure quality and safety and ensure that they meet label guarantees. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inspection staff pulls the samples and submits them to the lab for analysis.</li> </ul>
<b>STRATEGY 3.3</b>	Investigate consumer complaints related to alleged problems arising from the use of these products.
<b>STRATEGY 3.4</b>	Work closely with manufacturers to reduce deficiencies and ensure that products do not harm crops, animals, humans, or the environment.
<b>STRATEGY 3.5</b>	Maintain records of registration of products, inspections, analyses, and all other pertinent data.
<b>STRATEGY 3.6</b>	Provide analyses of pesticide formulation samples and samples for pesticide residue for the purpose of enforcement of the Louisiana Pesticide Law.
<b>STRATEGY 3.7</b>	Provide analyses for research scientists in the LSU Agricultural Experimental Station.

#### **PERFORMANCE INDICATORS:**

Percentage of fertilizer and agricultural lime sold that meets guarantees and standards.

Dollar amount of penalties paid to farmers.

Dollar amount of penalties paid to state.

Total tons of fertilizer and agricultural lime tested.

Number of regulatory fertilizer and agricultural lime samples.

Customers: farmers, Louisiana citizens

Limiting Factors: further reduction of authorized positions

#### **OBJECTIVE IV**

The Office of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences Seed Programs Division will continue to inspect, sample and test planting seed sold into or within Louisiana to ensure seed being offered for sale meets quality standards and truth-in-labeling requirements, and to prevent

Louisiana from becoming a dumping ground for low quality seeds; license, inspect, sample and test fields and seed entered into the seed certification program to ensure a mechanism remains in place to provide a reliable source of high quality seed from superior new crop varieties; maintain the State Seed Testing Laboratory to provide regulatory, service and certified seed testing services. To ensure that industrial hemp is produced in compliance with state and federal laws through regulatory licensing, inspection, sampling and testing of industrial hemp or hemp seed being grown, processed or transported in Louisiana. These divisions are administered under LA R.S. 3:1431-1450 (Seed Law) and 1461-1484 (Industrial Hemp Act) and pursuant regulations.

#### **STRATEGY 4.1**

Reduce selling of low quality agricultural seeds, vegetable seeds and lawn/turf seeds to farmers and consumers.

- \* Prevent Louisiana from becoming a dumping ground for poor quality seeds by randomly sampling agricultural seeds to ensure “truth-in-labeling”.
- \* Regulatory testing ensures varietal purity, freedom of noxious weeds and information valuable to farmers to determine planting rates.
- \* Maintain cooperative agreement with USDA Seed Branch in assisting in enforcement of the Federal Seed Act.

#### **STRATEGY 4.2**

Provide quality control service for businesses selling seeds.

- < Serve as a quality control laboratory for seedsmen to check and monitor the condition of their seeds in stock and as a means to obtain germination percentages to update the “test date” on lots of seed offered for sale (all agricultural and most vegetable seeds have a date of test on the label and the seed can legally be sold for only 9 months, exclusive of the month of test on tag).

#### **STRATEGY 4.3**

Provide non-biased investigations and documentation of seed quality, labeling and field stand complaints.

- < Maintain inspector staff thoroughly trained in the most current techniques and to apply those investigative techniques to seed complaints that could lead to civil litigation.

#### **STRATEGY 4.4**

Provide seed testing services for those companies or

individuals wanting standard or special seed tests on agricultural, vegetable, lawn or forest seeds.

- < Perform standard purity and germination tests so that seedsmen can label seed lots.
- < Perform special vigor tests to aid farmers to more accurately project actual field emergence of seeds planted.

#### **STRATEGY 4.5**

Educate seedsmen, farmers and consumers of the requirements of the Louisiana Seed Law and its pursuant rules and regulations.

- < Educating and offering compliance assistance to seed dealers, farmers and consumers is a prerequisite to enforcement and is a continuous process as new people enter the business.

#### **STRATEGY 4.6**

Provide accurate analyses of seed lots used in state highway contracts and in Soil Conservation Service (SCS)/Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Service (ASCS) Programs.

- < Provide analysis reports on seed lots used in highway construction projects. Department of Transportation and Development (DOTD) law requires that a contractor must produce analysis reports from the Louisiana State Seed Testing Laboratory in order to be reimbursed for seed lots used in a public job.
- < Provide analysis reports to farmers on seed lots they have planted in order for them to receive program payments for SCS or ASCS.

#### **STRATEGY 4.7**

Maintain genetic purity and physical quality of superior crop varieties.

- < Inspect seed fields to determine if requirements are met as set forth in the Louisiana Seed Certification Standards.
- < Make provisions for roguing out undesirable plant types and noxious weeds.
- < Collect samples and perform laboratory analysis to determine eligibility for certification.

#### **STRATEGY 4.8**

Provide a mechanism whereby Louisiana seed companies may export seed to European countries who are members of the Organization of Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD).

- < Enter into a Memorandum of Understanding with USDA to carry out OECD seed schemes.
- < Inspect seed fields to determine OECD eligibility.

#### **STRATEGY 4.9**

Perform phytosanitary inspections of seed fields to facilitate seed exports.

- < Inspect fields to determine the presence or absence of organisms of concern to importing countries.
- < Issue reports to accompany seeds in transit to other countries verifying presence or absence of specific organisms.

#### **STRATEGY 4.10**

Maintain records to ensure the identity of all certified seed is preserved.

- < Require that grower names, field numbers and proof relating to source of seed be submitted with application for certification.
- < Require seed companies and producers to use bulk-shipping reports when moving bulk seed that is eligible for certification across state lines.
- < Require certified seed processors to maintain strict records to ensure the integrity of certified seed lots is not jeopardized in processing.

#### **STRATEGY 4.11**

Ensure industrial hemp plants and hemp seed is produced in compliance with state and federal laws.

- < Verify growers are planting compliant, low THC varieties of seed, and other propagating stock through seed shipment documentation requirements and documentation verification.
- < Require submittal and approval of license applications.
- < Perform routine inspections for licensee and facility compliance.
- < Sample and test industrial hemp fields/greenhouses for the determination of THC levels.
- < Maintain all records required by state and federal laws.

#### **PERFORMANCE INDICATORS:**

Percent of seed samples tested within tolerance

Number of seed samples tested

Number of seed samples tested within tolerance  
Number of licensed seed dealers  
Percent of acres petitioned for certification that meet the requirements of Standards  
Number of participating farmers  
Number of acres potentially planted from the production of Louisiana certified seed  
Number of acres petitioned for certification  
Number of acres petitioned for certification that meet the requirements of Standards  
Percent of industrial hemp license applications approved  
Number of industrial hemp license applications received  
Number of industrial hemp licenses issued  
Percent of industrial hemp acres that meet production requirements  
Number of industrial hemp acres applied for production  
Number of industrial hemp acres approved for production  
Number of licensed industrial hemp growers

Customers: farmers, growers, retail seed dealers, seed distributors, certified seed growers, industrial hemp producers, processors, handlers and transporters, cattlemen and citizens of Louisiana.

Limiting factors: reduction of authorized positions





## **OFFICE OF AGRO CONSUMER SERVICES**

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## **OFFICE OF AGRO CONSUMER SERVICES**

The Office of Agro-Consumer Services is comprised of the Louisiana Agricultural Commodities Commission, the Weights and Measures Division, the Dairy Division, and the Commodities Promotion and Research Division.

The mission of the Office of Agro-Consumer Services is to ensure that equity prevails in the marketplace by regulating various aspects of commerce and trade and by promoting and heightening consumer awareness of Louisiana's agricultural commodities to increase sales, thereby enhancing the economic well-being of Louisiana farmers and the State as a whole. The Office ensures that Louisiana consumers get what they pay for, that producers have markets available and receive fair compensation for their commodities, and that businesses have a favorable environment in which to operate. To carry out this mission, the Office of Agro-Consumer Services Program: (1) regulates the measuring, transportation, and sale of dairy products; (2) licenses, inspects, and audits all grain dealers, warehouses, and cotton merchants in the state; (3) inspects and certifies all commercially used weights, measures, and weighing and measuring devices including motor fuel dispensers, taxi meters, and point of sale price scanners; (4) licenses scale companies and technicians; (5) provides price stability in the marketplace and assures an environment conducive to fair and equal competition as provided under Dairy Stabilization Board rules and regulations; (6) maintains the official state standards of mass, length and volume, which are traceable to the National Institute of Standards & Technology; and (7) promotes the development, production, and sale of Louisiana commodities through research and marketing activities.

The goal of the Office of Agro-Consumer Services is to provide services that ensure consumer protection for all Louisiana citizens, to promote economic growth in the state by maintaining a fair and competitive business environment, to improve the ability of Louisiana producers to capitalize upon promotion and research opportunities, to strengthen Louisiana's farmers markets and roadside vegetable stands, and to educate potential consumers of the positive benefits of buying fresh local agricultural products.

## **LOUISIANA AGRICULTURAL COMMODITIES COMMISSION**

The Louisiana Agricultural Commodities Commission (Commission) was created by the Louisiana Legislature in 1982 by combining the Grain Division and the Warehouse Commission. The Agricultural Commodities Commission was created due to losses suffered by Louisiana producers and landowners. These losses were the results of grain dealers involved in Chapter 11 bankruptcy proceedings. These bankruptcies resulted in losses to producers and landowners of approximately \$6,000,000. In 1997 the Louisiana Legislature passed the law requiring cotton

merchants to be regulated by the Louisiana Agricultural Commodities Commission due to those losses suffered by cotton producers in the state similar to the situations of the grain dealers.

The Louisiana Agricultural Commodities Commission is responsible for the licensing of all agricultural warehouses, grain dealers and cotton merchants doing business in Louisiana. There are approximately 65 warehouses, 100 grain dealers, and 14 cotton merchants licensed in 2015 - 16 licensing year. The Commission requires a financial statement, proof of provisional stock insurance, a bond and other supporting documents be presented to the Commission before being approved for a license. All financial statements are carefully reviewed to make sure every applicant is financially stable so the Louisiana producer will be guaranteed payment.

### **WAREHOUSE PROGRAM**

The Commission employees perform physical inventories (approximately 500 examinations annually) of all licensed warehouses in this state. The examiners measured each grain bin and take an inventory to make ensure that the amount of stored grain is equal to the amount the producers have in storage.

In addition, the Agricultural Commodities Commission is responsible for verifying warehouse receipts that are used by producers and lending institutions. Producers and processing plants use the state warehouse receipts as a means of financing their operations. The examiners issue and check these receipts to ensure the warehouse receipts reflect the grain that is actually stored in the warehouse. The total value of warehouse receipted grain in the fiscal year 2014-15 exceeded \$2,260,000,000.

### **GRAIN INSPECTION PROGRAM – OFFICIAL GRAIN INSPECTION SERVICES**

The Grain Inspection Program involves performing federally mandated grain inspection procedures on grain samples when requests are made. These requests are made on a variety of grain carriers (i.e. barges, rail cars, trucks) and producer submitted samples.

### **GRAIN SAMPLER/GRADER CERTIFICATION**

Grain graders are certified each year by a series of written examinations and samples that are reviewed by department graders. There is a testing and certification fee assessed on each applicant.

In 2015, the Agricultural Commodities Commission certified 86 grain graders and samplers. The certification process exceeded \$2,150.00 in generated revenue.

## **MOISTURE METER CERTIFICATION**

The Agricultural Commodities Commission certifies all moisture meters utilized in assessing discounts to producers each year. This is accomplished by cross checking grain dealer moisture meters with department owned moisture meters. There is a fee charged for each inspection. In 2015, 153 moisture meters were certified and tested resulting in \$9,720.00 in generated revenue.

## **COTTON MERCHANT PROGRAM**

The Cotton Merchant Program was revised and commingled with the Louisiana Agricultural Commodities Commission on August 15, 1997. This program was initiated because of numerous losses to cotton producers who sold cotton to the merchants that were not financially sound. The law now requires a financial statement containing a Balance Sheet, Statement of Retained Earnings, Statement of Income and Statement of Cash Flow be submitted so that each merchant's financial position can be assessed accurately in order to achieve minimal losses to producers. This program provides the Louisiana cotton producers the security of selling their commodity with the assurance of receiving payment.

## **CONCLUSION**

The Agricultural Commodities Commission currently operates with a total of 13 positions. These positions were previously divided between the two separate divisions. The current format of the Agricultural Commodities Commission allows better utilization of manpower by the Warehouse Program and the Grain Inspection Program.

The budget of the Agricultural Commodities Commission is totally self-generated. The budget is maintained by a series of fees assessed to users of the various services offered by the Agricultural Commodities Commission. Examples of the fees are:

- Check-off on each bushel of grain sold.
- Inspection fee on each request for official grain inspection service.
- Fee for moisture meter inspection.
- Fee for certifying each grain grader/sampler.

As a result of the services that the Agricultural Commodities Commission has provided in past years, there has been minimal loss to Louisiana producers as a result of grain dealer bankruptcy. Producers are now assured of receiving fair and accurate grades on commodities sold to grain dealer in this state.

## **OBJECTIVE 1 – AGRICULTURAL COMMODITIES COMMISSION**

To provide an effective program of regulation of the Louisiana grain and cotton industry in order for the producers to sell and/or store their agricultural products to financially secure warehouses and grain dealers. The commission also maintains an official grain inspection program and a moisture meter program to provide cost effective services to producers and grain companies. The commission also has a cotton merchant program to assure producers that companies buying cotton are financially able to pay producers.

- STRATEGY 1.1** Maintain federal designation as an official grain inspection agency.
- Successfully complete tri-annual USDA re-designation as an official agency.
  - Upgrade aged sampling and grading equipment.
- STRATEGY 1.2** Continue to provide cost-effective services to producers and grain companies.
- Save grain producers and grain company's unnecessary fees.
- STRATEGY 1.3** Provide training seminars for grain graders and department inspectors.
- Ensure that inspectors have the necessary skills and equipment.
- STRATEGY 1.4** Computerize all grain inspection labs.
- Reduce cost of issuing certificates to industry by having the capability to issue on-line.
- STRATEGY 1.5** Upgrade the warehouse inspection program.
- Work with USDA to reinstate Cooperative Agreement in the Warehouse Division.

## **DAIRY DIVISION**

The Dairy Stabilization Board, Milk Testing Program and Milk Buyers Bonding Program operate within the framework of the Dairy division. The duties and responsibilities of each program support and complement each other to the extent that they regulate and/or promote stability and orderly marketing of fluid milk within the state of Louisiana

Given the importance of the dairy industry in Louisiana and the relative short shelf life of fluid dairy products, orderly marketing is imperative to both the consuming public and the milk producers. The Dairy Stabilization Board addresses problems created in the marketplace, the milk testing program addresses the raw production and handling of milk from the farm to the processing plant. The milk buyer bonding program is designed to guarantee the payment for milk the farmer sells to the processing plant or cooperative.

## **DAIRY STABILIZATION BOARD**

The purpose of the Dairy Stabilization Board is to provide a regulatory program that is designed to stabilize the Louisiana dairy industry in order to assure an adequate supply of

healthful and wholesome dairy products to Louisiana consumers at fair and reasonable prices.

The Dairy Stabilization Board is composed of eight members appointed by the governor: two milk producers, one wholesale grocer, one processor, one retailer, and three consumers. The consumer member shall not be engaged in producing, processing or selling dairy products nor have a personal economic interest in any person who is so engaged.

The dairy industry is peculiarly susceptible to injury resulting from price wars and a variety of disruptive trade practices that flourish in the absence of effective regulation. Price wars and disruptive trade practices tend to cause financial ruin for Louisiana's dairy farmers and for locally owned processors and distributors regardless of how efficient and well managed they might be.

The Dairy Stabilization Board has established regulations to prevent unfair methods of competition, unfair or deceptive acts or practices and disruptive trade practices in the sale of milk and dairy products.

To enforce these regulations, the Dairy Stabilization Board licenses all processors, distributors, and retailers of dairy products.

The Dairy Stabilization Board also investigates complaints regarding violations of its regulations and audits the financial records of processors, distributors and retailers to determine the costs of manufacturing, selling, and delivering of dairy products.

Funds for the administration and enforcement of this program are entirely from self-generated funds acquired by an assessment on all dairy products sold in Louisiana.

## **MILK TESTING**

The current law governing volume measurement and butterfat testing of milk and cream is authorized by Act 306 of the 1974 session of the Louisiana Legislature.

The purpose of the law is to regulate the Louisiana dairy industry as related to:

- Arranging for the measuring, sampling and testing of producer milk when necessary
- Licensing of technical personnel
- Establishment of uniform technical procedures throughout the state.

The responsibility of enforcement of the law is assigned to the Louisiana Department of Agriculture and Forestry, Milk Testing Program. Every two years, the program issues approximately 100 technical licenses to milk handlers.

The Milk Testing Program has developed and maintains a very close working relationship with other dairy groups such as the Louisiana Department of Health and Hospitals, Louisiana State University Dairy Science Department, Louisiana Cooperative Extension Service, Louisiana Dairy Products Association and others.

## **MILK BUYERS BONDING PROGRAM**

The Milk Buyers Bonding Program is a part of the Dairy Division and is mandated under Title 7, Chapter 53, Section 5303.

This program authorizes the Department of Agriculture and Forestry to require surety bonds which guarantee that the approximately 117 dairy farmers will receive payment for milk purchased by the Louisiana dairy processors and/or cooperatives.

## **OBJECTIVE 2 -DAIRY DIVISION**

To provide an effective program of regulation for the Louisiana dairy industry in order to eliminate speculation and waste; to assure a continued supply of high quality dairy products at fair and reasonable prices; to assure dairy farmers, processors and distributors a fair and stable market for their products; and to enable the Dairy Stabilization Board and the milk testing division to operate within the framework of the Dairy Division to support and complement each other to the extent that they regulate and/or promote stability and orderly marketing of dairy products in Louisiana.

**STRATEGY 2.1**      Maintain a licensing program.

**STRATEGY 2.2**      Provide a training program for industry personnel.

**STRATEGY 2.3**      Assure a stable market environment for dairy products.

**STRATEGY 2.4**      Cross utilization with Agriculture Commodities Commission and Weights and Measures Division employees as needed.

**STRATEGY 2.5**      Maintain a bonding program.

## **COMMODITY PROMOTION AND RESEARCH**

### **Senior Farmers' Market Nutrition Program**

The Senior Farmers' Market Nutrition Program (SFMNP) is a program established by Congress and administered by the USDA's Food & Nutrition Service. Under the program, FNS makes grants to States, US Territories, and federally recognized Indian tribal governments. The grants must be used to provide low-income seniors with coupons or equivalent benefits they may exchange for eligible foods at farmers' markets, roadside stands and Community Supported Agriculture programs. Eligible foods are fresh, unprepared, locally grown fruits, vegetables, herbs and honey.

The SFMNP was announced in 2001 as a pilot program, and it became a permanent program in 2003. In 2001, the Louisiana Department of Agriculture & Forestry received a grant of \$500,000 of which \$344,208 was used. In 2004, due to program cuts, the department received \$279,584 and \$281,824 was used. In 2004, there were 23 farmers' markets, 61 roadside stands and 205 farmers participating in the program. In 2015, the department received \$381,160 and \$313,824 was used. In 2015, there were 62 farmers' markets, 109 roadside stands, and 293 farmers participating in the program.

The program has continued to be funded annually and in 2018, the department received a grant of \$379,160 and \$278,816 was used. In 2018, there were 61 farmers' markets, 104 roadside stands, 247 farmers and 16,980 low-income seniors participating in the program. This program helps seniors have access to fresh, locally grown vegetables and, as a result of the program, Louisiana farmers benefit from the increased sales. The Governor's Office of Elderly Affairs, parish Councils on Aging, and Catholic Charities Archdiocese of New Orleans support this program.

### **WIC FARMERS' MARKET NUTRITION PROGRAM**

In 2005, the department began a WIC Farmers' Market Nutrition Program in East Baton Rouge Parish on a pilot basis. The WIC FMNP is similar to the Senior FMNP, except that the client base is for those who qualify for WIC benefits. The program will be jointly administered by the Department of Agriculture and Forestry and the Department of Health, Community and Preventive Health, WIC Program. The funds available for the pilot program totaled \$6,667. With low redemption rates in this parish, the pilot program was moved to Orleans Parish in 2008 in hopes of a better redemption rate. In 2015, the WIC FMNP was made available to seven



parishes: Caddo, East Baton Rouge, Jefferson, Natchitoches, Orleans, Ouachita and Plaquemines Parishes. In 2015, the department received a grant of \$9,202 and \$8,831 was used.

In 2018, the WIC FMNP was made available to eleven parishes: Beauregard, Caddo, Calcasieu, East Baton Rouge, Jefferson, Natchitoches, Orleans, Ouachita, Plaquemines, Rapides and St. Tammany Parishes. In 2018, the department received a grant of \$10,250 and \$7,878 was used.

## **LOUISIANA DAIRY INDUSTRY PROMOTION BOARD**

Established under R.S. 3:4154, the Board is responsible for the development and implementation of advertising, promotional and education programs designed to increase the consumption of milk and other dairy products. A department employee staffs the board serving as director of the Dairy Industry Promotion Board. The dairy board sponsors numerous special events and promotions throughout the state each year to enhance consumer demand and consumption of more milk and dairy products. In addition to the director conducting administrative duties, program responsibilities are also conducted by the director such as; promotes the nutritional value of dairy products; schedules the Mobile Dairy Truck, "Lucy Anna" appearances at Louisiana schools, festivals, community events, and fairs; presents nutrition education to kids; coordinates the Dairy Farmers of Louisiana booth at the annual Ag Expo (Monroe) and is responsible for numerous other special events, advertising projects and exhibits promoting milk and dairy consumption.

Louisiana dairy farmers provide funding to carry out the responsibilities of the board. Ten (10.0) cents per hundredweight is levied against all milk produced in Louisiana and is collected at the first point of sale from the producers' milk marketing cooperative or from processors who buy directly from producers who are not members of a milk marketing cooperative. The Office of Management and Finance performs all accounting functions related to income and disbursements. The department retains three (3) percent of collections for administration of this program and forwards the balance to the board to carry out its responsibilities as defined by statute.

The Louisiana Dairy Industry Promotion Board is also one of sixty-two (61) state or regional dairy product promotion, research or nutrition education programs qualified by USDA to receive funds from a fifteen (15) cent per hundredweight assessment on milk sales, pursuant to Section 1150.153 of the Federal Dairy Promotion and Research Order. The National Dairy Promotion and Research Program is funded by a mandatory assessment of fifteen (15) cents per hundredweight on all milk marketed commercially in the 48 contiguous states; however, if a state or regional program becomes qualified by USDA, the program's ten (10) cents is credited toward the fifteen (15) cent assessment. The Louisiana Dairy Industry Promotion Board is a qualified program and receives annual certification as a qualified program. To qualify each year, the board must demonstrate that it has not engaged in any activity other than promotion,

research, and nutrition education designed to increase consumption of milk and other dairy products.

### **LOUISIANA RICE PROMOTION BOARD**

Established in R.S. 3:551.61-551.67, the mission of the board is to promote the growth and development of the rice industry in Louisiana by the promotion of rice. The department collects assessments on all rice produced in Louisiana at the rate of 3.0 cents per hundredweight of dry rough rice. The assessment is deducted by each rice miller or handler from the amount paid the producer at the first point of sale, whether within or without the state. The assessments are remitted to the department on a monthly basis by the miller or handler. The department retains 2% of the assessment collected for administrative costs and transfers the balance to the board.

Staff provides financial reports to the board detailing all assessments collected and funds transferred to the board to cover their administrative costs and to fund promotion projects and activities. Division staff attends board meetings and serves as liaison between the board and the department.

### **LOUISIANA RICE RESEARCH BOARD**

Established in R.S. 3:551.71-551.77, the mission of the board is to promote the growth and development of the rice industry in Louisiana by expanded research of rice. The department collects assessments on all rice produced in Louisiana at the rate of 5.0 cents per hundredweight of dry rough rice. The assessment is deducted by each rice miller or handler from the amount paid the producer at the first point of sale, whether within or without the state. The assessments are remitted to the department on a monthly basis by the miller or handler. The department retains 2% of the assessment collected for administrative costs and transfers the balance to the board.

Staff provides financial reports to the board detailing all assessments collected and funds transferred to the board to cover their administrative costs and to fund research projects. Division staff attends board meetings and serves as liaison between the board and the department.

### **LOUISIANA SOYBEAN AND GRAIN RESEARCH AND PROMOTION BOARD**

Established in R.S. 3:551.11-551.36, the mission of the board is to promote the growth and development of the soybean, wheat, corn and grain sorghum industries in Louisiana through research and advertisement. The department collects assessments on all soybeans produced in Louisiana at the rate of 1/2% of the net value of sales and on all wheat, corn and grain sorghum produced in Louisiana at the rate of 2 cent per bushel. The assessment is deducted by the buyer at the first point of sale and is deducted from the amount paid the producer, whether within or

without the state. The assessments are remitted to the department on a monthly basis by the buyer. Farmers are not entitled to receive soybean assessment refunds; however, grain farmers may obtain a refund of the assessments by submitting a written request within 30 days from the date of sale. Copies of sales slips signed by the buyer must accompany the request. The department retains 3% of the assessments collected for administrative costs and transfers the balance to the board.

## **WEIGHTS AND MEASURES DIVISION**

Our [Division of Weights and Measures](#) regulates many aspects of commerce and trade throughout Louisiana.

The division ensures that *equity prevails* in the marketplace for both buyers and sellers by inspecting over 100,000 commercial weighing, measuring, metering and scanning devices. In addition, any commodity sold by weight, measure or count is subject to inspection to ensure consumers are getting what they pay for. Items inspected include food and dairy products, household products, gardening products, firewood and hundreds of other products purchased daily by consumers and businesses.

Even though Weights and Measures Laws in Louisiana have been in effect since 1948, the Louisiana Legislature did not establish the [Commission on Weights and Measures](#) until May of 1992. The purpose of this commission is to ensure that equity prevails in the marketplace by exercising unbiased judgement for both the consumer and seller in commercial transactions where weighing and measuring devices are used.

**To do this, the Weights and Measures Division implements the following actions and methods throughout Louisiana with 58 team members:**

- 1) Maintains the standards of the commonly used weights and measures in the state.
- 2) Compares these standards to the ones used in the community for commercial transactions.
- 3) Maintains supervision of over 100,000 weighing and measuring devices used in commercial transactions through annual registration and testing of these devices.
- 4) Performs inspections of packaged goods (net weight) to ensure they have been correctly labeled and are being sold legally.
- 5) Investigates complaints from the public when suspicions of unfair commercial transactions are lodged.
- 6) Monitors and tests motor fuels and other fluids that are sold throughout the state and investigates consumer complaints concerning fuel quality issues.

Our Division also provides services to several federal programs by testing the scales at Veteran Administration hospitals, military bases, and the Federal Packers and Stockyards to ensure their accuracy. The Division also performs Country of Origin Labeling (COOL) Audits for the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA).

Specific Services Provided By The Weights and Measures Division:

- 1) Scale Inspections,
- 2) Package Inspections,
- 3) Price Scanner Inspections,
- 4) Taximeter Inspections,
- 5) Milk Tank Inspections,
- 6) Retail Motor Fuel Dispenser Inspection,
- 7) Testing of Motor Fuels and other fuel fluids,
- 8) Investigation of Consumer Complaints concerning any of the above,
- 9) Testing of Mass Flow Meters,
- 10) Licensing of Weighmasters and Service Technicians,
- 11) Testing and Calibration of Weights,
- 12) Calibration of Fuel Provers and Test Measures,
- 13) Outreach for businesses as well as consumers relative to Weights and Measures Laws.

**Metrology Laboratory**

The Metrology Laboratory serves as Louisiana's primary standards laboratory and as a scientific authority for measurement certification. Specifically it maintains the official standards of mass, length, and volume which are all traceable back to the [National Institute of Standards and Technology](#) (NIST), part of the US Department of Commerce. NIST standards are traceable back to the origin standards in France. These lab standards are then used to calibrate and certify weights, and weighing and measuring devices used by governmental, commercial, industrial, and research entities throughout the state. The traceability of such standards is a requirement in most commercial and all Federal contracts when measurements are to be made.

Without our Metrology lab, business and government entities (as well as LDAF) would have to send their standards out of state to be certified. This would be a costly and time-consuming endeavor. Currently the Metrology Lab is staffed by one Senior Metrologist and a metrologist in training. At present we are training one employee in the Agriculture Specialist, Metrology working title as Civil Service did not approve our request to bring back the Metrologist position series. Our plan is to fill an additional job appointment in the same Agriculture Specialist, Metrology working title so we can have two incumbents in the NIST training to become certified

Metrologist, this will enable us to keep our lab open and continue to serve Louisiana scale and other related businesses.

The ultimate goal of this staffing strategy is to have one Metrology Lab manager certified by NIST as well as up to two trained professionals who can take over the Metrology Lab manager position relative to a succession plan. This is critical because our lab cannot be certified nor function without a NIST certified Metrologist on staff.

### **Fuel Testing Lab**

Our fuel testing lab in Baton Rouge is manned by one chemist and tests routine random fuel samples brought in by our inspectors from across the state as well as those samples collected because of consumer complaints. Testing is done to ensure that the motor fuels meet ASTM standards and are free of contaminants. Currently our lab is equipped to handle all of the motor fuels in our area as we have recently purchased a gas chromatograph to test the higher ethanol content or if synthetic biofuels start to make an appearance in our state. In addition, we have purchased a viscometer that enables us to now test motor oil and other fluids for correct viscosity. We have also partnered with an outside lab that tests for wear metals in motor oil samples.

We recently upgraded our two octane engines in the fuel lab to get them up to date with the newest technology as well as re-building the engines from the crankshaft up. These engines are 40 and 50 years old respectively and now we have state of the art technology along with two engines that should be functional for another 20-30 years. We are also in the process of cross-training metrology staff to be able to provide support in the fuel lab and be able to conduct basic fuel testing as well as run the octane engines. This will allow us to sample all 4,000 gas stations in Louisiana every three years verses every seven years.

### **Weights and Measures Inspectors**

We have 37 Weights and Measures field inspectors, this includes four heavy-duty scale inspectors who drive specialized trucks carrying 30,000 pounds of certified test weights to check the large (Category Two and Category Three) scales throughout the state. Our regular inspectors perform the following functions:

- 1) Scale Inspections- from precious metal scales at jewelry stores to package production line scales with capacities up to 1,000 pounds,
- 2) Package Inspections- checking for proper labeling, method of sale, and weighing errors on packaged items,



- 3) Price Scanner Inspections-scanning 50 to 100 items for price accuracy in each retail store with scanners,
- 4) Taximeter Inspections- ensuring every taxi meter is correct by riding on a measured one mile course and timing it with a certified stop-watch,
- 5) Milk Tank Inspections,
- 6) Retail Motor Fuel Dispenser Inspection- pumping at least 5 gallons from every gas pump to test the quantity dispensed,
- 7) Testing of Motor Fuel quality,
- 8) Investigation of Consumer Complaints concerning any of the above,
- 9) Testing of Mass Flow Meters, and
- 10) Performing COOL (Country of Origin Labeling) Audits for the USDA

Supervising our inspectors are seven working District Supervisors who, in turn are supervised by three working Regional Enforcement Supervisors. These are our middle managers who also conduct inspections, as well as provide management and leadership for our districts and regions.

There are three Agriculture Specialist Program Managers who have in depth knowledge of

- 1) **Motor Fuels Program,**
- 2) **Price Scanners, and**
- 3) **Scales and Packages.**

In addition, we have one Chemist in our Fuel Lab, one Agriculture Assistant Division Director - who is our Metrologist, two Agriculture Specialists (Metrology working title) in the Metrology lab, one Administrative Assistant, one Administrative Coordinator, one Assistant Director and one Director of Weights and Measures. This gives a grand total of 58 persons in the Division of Weights and Measures.

Our Division is funded through self-generated income sourced through annual registration fees, metrology fees, late fees and fines through our Weights and Measures Fund (R.S. 3:4622) as well as funds generated by the Petroleum Fund (R.S. 3:4685). We receive no state general funds for the Weights and Measures Division.

### **Weights and Measures Fee Schedule:**

1)	Scale Registration	
	A. Capacity of 1000 lbs. or less	\$35.00
	B. 1001 to 10,000 lbs.	\$80.00
	C. Over 10,000lbs	\$185.00
2)	Package Inspections	No Fee
3)	Scanner Registration per location	
	A. 1-10 scanners	\$50.00
	B. 11-25	\$100.00
	C. Over 25	\$150.00
4)	Taximeter Registration per cab	\$50.00
5)	Service Agency Registration	\$100
6)	Service Technician Registration	\$50.00
7)	Weighmaster Annual License	\$75.00
8)	Milk Tank Inspection and Calibration	No Fee
9)	Metrology Fees	
	A. Tolerance Testing	
	1) Up to 10lbs(5Kg)	\$7.00
	2) 11-100lbs (5-60 Kg)	\$10.00
	3) 101-1000Lbs(61-500 Kg)	\$25.00
	4) Over 1000lbs(500 Kg)	\$50.00
	B. Tolerance Adjustment per weight	\$10.00
	C. Mass Calibration with reports stating corrections and uncertainties	
	1) Up to 5Lbs(3Kg)	\$25.00
	2) Over 5 to 50Lbs( 4-30Kg)	\$50.00
	D. Any tape certification, volumetric testing and calibration or unlisted special test will be charged at the rate of	\$30/hour

### **Objective 3 - Weights and Measures Division**

To ensure that equity prevails in the marketplace for both the buyer and seller by inspecting all weighing, measuring, metering, and scanning devices used commercially in the state. In addition to ensuring that consumers get what they pay for, we will inspect packaged commodities sold by weight, measure, or count and make sure that they are sold by the correct method of sale.

### **STRATEGY 3.1      Continue current programs relating to all regulated areas**

We strive to improve efficiency and effectiveness of our various programs to maximize the benefits to both consumers and industry. We have recently implemented a new evaluation methodology that takes into consideration the number of inspections completed by each field inspector as well as rates them on 24 professional competencies. These data are determined by the immediate supervisor conducting quarterly planning sessions with each inspector. This includes a ride along observation each quarter, in which supervisors use a Likert-type scale for the rating of each competency.

One evaluation is conducted annually based upon the employees' overall progress to include the total number of inspections (50% weight) completed coupled with their mean score on all 24 competencies (50% weight). As a result, we are seeing increased proficiency, consistency, as well as an increased number of inspections completed annually, helping us attain more completion relative to our targeted goals.

We have added alternate members to our (10) Weights and Measures Commission members seats, facilitating a higher probability of quorum attainability for each hearing. In addition, this has allowed us to vet as well as educate new alternate members from industry, as well as the general public regarding Weights and Measures Laws.

### **STRATEGY 3.2      Provide training for personnel**

We have developed five inspector training and five consumer educational YouTube videos for all inspection areas in conjunction with Louisiana Civil Service and our own video coordinator. In addition, we have developed one YouTube video designed to educate the public regarding our mission and outcome based indicators. This is not only useful for new staff being on-boarded, it has also enhanced the skill set of our incumbents. Monthly training is encouraged at the district level and we provide quarterly training for our middle management team as well.

We have developed three state credentialing examinations that are tied to our training videos as well as on the job training, using recently developed curriculum and are adding many more in the future. In addition, we currently have over 20 team members who have taken, passed and now possess 33 NIST/National Conference of Weights and Measures (NCWM) credentials. Previously, Louisiana had zero (0) inspectors with NIST/NCWM credentials.

Our goal is to have each inspector and middle manager secure all Louisiana state credentials in conjunction with at least one NIST/NCWM credential. This criteria is also being incorporated into our on-boarding process and training strategies to ensure all hired employees receive systematic training; thus creating a more uniform system throughout the state relative to the



inspections conducted. These standards will continue to develop our departments professional competency goals; they will also strengthen our inspectors professional resumes as well as their ability to establish and define strong cases to our Weights and Measures Commission hearings.

Reducing accidents is a current and continual priority for Weights and Measures team members. We have developed a safety committee comprised of seven inspectors, who are overseeing this initiative. Their overall objective is to enhance departmental safety and reduce the number of accidents that occur through quarterly training sessions, real time peer-to-peer training and through leading by example. Incentives in addition to corrective actions are being developed by this committee of peer leaders who feel safety is a critical aspect of each inspectors' everyday work. A driving course is currently being developed to include in our on-boarding process for all potential and new hires. We will also be implementing an annual driver safety course certification for all current employees. Full implementation is scheduled for July, 2019.

### **STRATEGY 3.3      Continue to incorporate more Information Technology (IT) services and program efficiencies**

We plan to continue updating the IT and other equipment for field inspection performance and reporting. We have provided every field inspector MiFi connectivity, enhanced hardware and software training, and better connectivity to our inspection software package in an effort to allow for more real time reporting statewide. We also plan to continue our efforts in developing an online registration system for payment processing to reduce postage costs and improve efficiency in obtaining fees in a more timely manner. The program will allow our department to accept all forms of payment instead of being limited to just checks, cash, or money orders.

We are currently in collaboration with our inspection reporting software vendor (WinWam) to incorporate business registration, renewal and payment capabilities into this one program. At present, we are using two separate programs, one to record inspection data (WinWam) and one to record licensing, renewals and payments (USA Plants). This process has proven to be both cumbersome and time consuming, in an effort to ensure that all data recorded between both programs remains accurate and up to date. The new all inclusive system (WinWam2) will allow for a greater efficiency in time management for all of our team members and businesses alike.

### **STRATEGY 3.4      Upgrade our Fuel Lab services**

As funding becomes available, we plan to upgrade our fuel lab by purchasing equipment that will allow us to test the amount of water in fuel per the ASTM test method. In adding this equipment to our lab, we will have integrated three new pieces (Viscometer and Gas Chromatograph in place) of equipment in the past year while employing only one chemist. With that being said, we would add a second full time chemist to our lab. This position would be included in a series that

would eventually end as a chemist manager, overseeing all motor fuel lab activities. This additional position would allow our department to double the amount of fuel and other fuel fluid samples we are able to test while at the same time reducing our turn-around times for results regarding samples and fuel complaints.

We would also like to locate a mini fuel lab somewhere in the middle part of the state. It would be equipped with a Flashpoint, a distillation machine, and an ethanol analyzer only. This would allow our inspectors in the northern part of the state to access the basic equipment needed to retest a station without having to drive all the way to Baton Rouge. This would not only save us the cost of our personnel transporting the fuel but would also allow us to perform a quicker and safer turnaround when a station's pumps have been shut down. Currently an inspector in the Shreveport or Monroe area must go to the station, obtain a sample, and drive that sample to Baton Rouge ( round trip 8-10 hours). If the results are good, the inspector must then go back to the station to remove the red tags.

### **STRATEGY 3.5      Lab Metrology Training and Certification**

Presently, we have one metrologist in training who should complete the NIST Metrologist training, to become a metrologist, by the end of 2019. Our plan is to add a second full time metrologist in training position this summer using the Agriculture Specialist, Metrology working title. We are incorporating premium pay into this pay scale to entice as well as retain current and subsequent employees in the metrology lab.

This specialized training only available through NIST is critical to credentialing staff members as Metrologists and is required to maintain our current certification as well as ability to test our and private industry weights and volume measuring devices. These methods should ensure that we will always have a Metrologist on staff as well as a succession plan to allow continued operation of our metrology lab that supports numerous Louisiana companies that service the businesses we regulate.

The above mentioned criteria will ensure that our metrologists retain proper certification and that any metrologists in training are able to secure appropriate NIST credentials

### **STRATEGY 3.6      Maintain the Licensing and Registration Programs**

To ensure that service personnel are qualified and that devices meet both [National Type Evaluation Program](#) (NTEP) and Louisiana requirements. The LDAF website now hosts the Petroleum Technician, Scale Service Technician, and Weighmaster Exams and Study Guides. The website also includes links to the Weights and Measures Fee Schedule, Placed in Service Report Templates, and a registration form for New Businesses/Device Registration.

### **STRATEGY 3.7      Increase Package Inspections**

As a department, we would like to see an increase in the number of routine package inspections being performed, specifically monitoring packages sold by net weight for accuracy. The overall volume of package inspections was reduced when the Price Verification Program for scanners began demanding more time from our inspection team members. Package inspections are a time consuming process and, depending on the commodity being tested, can require a great deal of specialized training. We are in the process of establishing procedures designed specifically for inspecting packaged commodities that are unique to Louisiana. Once accepted by NIST, these inspection procedures will aid in creating a more just marketplace for Louisiana producers and consumers nationwide.

#### **Challenges and Opportunities for Weights and Measures:**

Two of the main challenges that the Weights and Measures Division face include recruitment and retention of qualified inspectors and the demand of the ever increasing number of devices requiring inspection. Like many other governmental agencies, our starting salaries are below the salaries offered by private businesses for candidates with baccalaureate degrees. The starting salary was increased recently in an effort to be more competitive with recruiting and subsequent onboarding qualified candidates.

We have also extended our recruiting practices to include social media and employee recruitment websites such as Indeed.com. We are incorporating more specific instructions in our postings for potential candidates, detailing the requirements of applying for open positions within the department, regarding particulars such as completing the required professional level exams through Louisiana Civil Service system. In addition, we are connecting more regularly with our local four year universities and increasing our participation/presence at career fairs as well as with other professional organizations statewide.

We have added a substitution for our heavy duty inspector positions of certified work experience in lieu of a four year degree. This has proven to be an effective modification as we recently advertised and on-boarded a (non-baccalaureate degree) new employee with 30 plus years experience working with large capacity scales in Louisiana. Furthermore, we have included both engineering and math degrees as qualifying standards for candidates applying for our Metrology positions.

The total number of devices requiring annual inspections continues to grow daily. This is partially due to gas stations installing more pumps per location than in the past. Gas stations also continue to offer a larger variety of fuel grades at their locations. In conjunction, the outbreak of

credit card skimming devices combined with our efforts to combat them has also created a strain on our time and productivity.

Collectively, the addition of mass flow meters to many of our registered industrial businesses has created further constraints to the time it takes to complete our inspections, and has introduced a need for supplemental education, thus, increasing the overall training timeline. Simultaneously, there has also been an increase in the use of barcode scanning devices within retail locations. As technology continues to progress in the many devices we regulate, so will our need to maintain a continuous education and training regime.

Maintaining effective records of all new and current businesses coupled with registration has proven to be a laborious challenge in the past. In an effort to alleviate some of this burden, we have added four field inspector positions over the last two years. Another considerable obstacle we are faced with is determining the most effective and efficient ways in which to identify business utilizing devices that require registration with our department. Until recently, we have depended heavily on our inspectors recognizing when new businesses open in their area. In an effort to alleviate some of this burden from our inspectors, we have incorporated an automated system through the Louisiana Secretary of State website that now alerts new businesses to contact our offices, to register their scales and scanning devices.

By increasing the number of inspectors we have in the field combined with the online alert system through the Secretary of State, we have enhanced our ability to be more effective in registering more businesses as well as ensuring their compliance with Weights and Measures laws. We currently regulate 8,715 retail outlets with price scanning systems, 13,206 category I, II and III scales, 4,623 gas stations, and 1,948 taxi meters. We are working to identify more efficient methods to reliably recognize any new stores/businesses that we may have missed previously.

**TABLE 1. Total number of inspections that were done in 2018:**

<b>Type of Device or Inspection</b>	<b># of Inspections Performed in 2018</b>
Small Scales (Capacity of under 1000 lb)	19,627
Medium Scales (Capacity of 1001 to 10,000 lb)	1,218
Large Scales (Capacity over 10,000 lb) (not included in the inspections below)	76
Livestock Scales	112

Vehicle Scales	1,411
Railroad Scales	138
Liquid Measuring Device (Retail Motor Fuel Dispensers)	74,653
Taximeters	1,948
Mass Flow Meters	66
Gas Stations	4,623
Farm Milk Tanks	4
Packages (Number of Lots)	900
Price Verification Inspections	8,846
Total Inspections	113,622

## Conclusions and Implications

Our Weights and Measures Division is a very dynamic part of Agro Consumer Services within the Louisiana Department of Agriculture and Forestry. We self generate all of our funding and have adapted to industry growth in Louisiana to stay ahead of the curve. We have implemented new evaluation as well as on-boarding and training methods that are being implemented by Louisiana Civil Service and other state agencies as a template for them to follow.

To meet the ever increasing demand of the number of businesses in the ever growing retail and industry we regulate, we have been very progressive relative up upgrading as well as securing new and better equipment and current training for all team members. In addition, we have added a new heavy duty truck (Category 3 scales) and inspector position. All fuel storage tanks are new in our 47 inspector test trucks. We also upgraded and added equipment in our fuel and metrology labs and added a position in the metrology lab. Our goal is to add one position in our fuel lab to enable us to be more proficient relative to sampling and testing fuel and other petroleum products statewide. We have added four field inspection positions (three regular and one heavy duty inspectors) and one administrative assistant position in our headquarters. Our plan moving forward is to add two more field positions once funding becomes available.

We have re-structured our regions and districts to better align supervisory responsibilities uniformly as well to maximize efficiencies relative to inspection completion and inspector responsibilities. We will continue to look for opportunities to reach team goals through reducing

geographic challenges of inspectors. We will continue to aggressively on-board and train new team members while enhancing the professional competencies of incumbents.

Success relative to meeting the needs of 4.6 Million citizens to ensure that *equity prevails* in all retail transactions they conduct in Louisiana is the responsibility of the Weights and Measures Division. We are prepared to meet this challenge with the best trained team in the United States and we will continue to enforce our Weights and Measures laws accordingly to make sure businesses (and their 100,000 plus weighing and measuring devices) are in compliance, as that is our overall goal.



## **OFFICE OF ANIMAL HEALTH AND FOOD SAFETY**

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Jim Jenkins, Director of the Louisiana Egg Commission  
and Meat & Poultry Inspection, Poultry & Eggs  
and Food Quality Service Divisions

Mack B. Williams RD, Director of Food Distribution Division

Jonathan Roberts DVM, Director of Commercial Feed Program

Rebecca Riecke, Director of Strawberry Marketing Board



# **OFFICE OF ANIMAL HEALTH AND FOOD SAFETY**

## **MISSION**

The mission of the Office of Animal Health & Food Safety, through state and federal mandates, is to guard and protect the integrity of the livestock industry against animal diseases through diagnostic, preventative, eradication and other deterrent measures. Additionally the office is responsible for protecting the food chain, public health and general welfare of the Louisiana citizenry by assuring that meat, seafood, poultry, eggs, fruits and vegetables, animal feeds, pet foods and these products are properly identified, labeled, inspected and accurately graded. The Office of Animal Health & Food Safety shall also be responsible for the control of livestock theft and denying a market for stolen cattle and horses in Louisiana, all in accordance with applicable law. The Food Distribution Program administers the USDA Commodity Program (Sections 2 and 6 of the Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act, The Emergency Food Assistance Act of 1983, and 7CFR 250, 251). The Office of Animal Health & Food Safety is presently responsible for coordinating the department's Emergency Management and Response before, during and after a disaster. LDAF administers ESF-4, Firefighting and ESF-11, Agriculture. LDAF Emergency Management Division manages the business of these vital functions; a complex endeavor that requires planning, preparation and practice to fulfill the mission when the need arrives.

## **GOALS**

The goal of this program is to maintain a safe and healthful food supply for the people, livestock and pets of Louisiana, while simultaneously protecting and safeguarding the producers of these products. The program inspects and grades food products, controls livestock diseases and tracks ownership of livestock through a branding activity. This program also regulates the sale and use of animal feeds and pet foods. The activities of this program are: Administrative, Federal/State Meat Program, Poultry and Egg Inspection, Food Quality Services, Livestock Disease Prevention, Livestock Theft Prevention, Feed and Pet Food Program, Emergency Management and Food Distribution Program.

**PROGRAM ACTIVITY: LIVESTOCK BRAND COMMISSION - (R.S. 3:732)** The Livestock Brand Commission is responsible for the protection of property through the investigation of farm related crimes with the main focus on the identification of livestock through registered brands and markings. Twelve employees across the state are commissioned law enforcement officers who protect lives and property, deter and investigate agricultural related crimes, bring perpetrators to justice and perform other related duties. They are responsible for performing the following tasks: monitoring and inspecting all livestock at video or public sales as well as any livestock either in shipping or to be shipped; identifying criminal activity involving farm related crimes and apprehending criminals; providing specialized assistance when a massive application of manpower is required during disaster, civil disturbance or terrorist situation; providing assistance to law enforcement agencies in investigating farm related crime; providing assistance to persons unable to help themselves, or are in danger or in need of other emergency services; and conducting various informational programs for the public in regards to livestock identification and farm related crimes.



**PROGRAM ACTIVITY: FOOD QUALITY SERVICES - (R.S. 3:405) (Title 3, Chapter 5)** The Food Quality Services (FQS) program provides unbiased third party (collaborator) inspections, state inspections, and shipping point inspections for fresh fruits and vegetables. This program inspects and certifies grade, quality and condition of fresh fruits, vegetables, peanuts and pecans at shipping ports and receiving markets in the state; and inspects and certifies fresh produce purchased by federal and state institutions. The FQS program has a cooperative agreement with the USDA Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Branch to provide Federal/State inspection services and Good Handling Practices/Good Agricultural Practices (GHP/GAP) audit services. Food Quality Services is in its fourth year of providing grower training for implementation of the Food Safety Modernization Act (FSMA) Produce Safety Rule.

**PROGRAM ACTIVITY: POULTRY AND EGGS - (R.S. 3:405; 3:410) (Title 3, Chapter 5)** The Poultry & Egg Division is responsible for establishing grades for poultry and eggs sold in Louisiana. The Division is authorized through cooperative agreements with the USDA to establish and maintain grading services at authorized USDA poultry and egg plants; provide fee grading services at off-plant locations; and perform shell egg surveillance at all shell egg plants and hatcheries. The Poultry and Eggs Division is responsible for enforcing State regulations for egg and poultry production, packaging and sales. Acting under authority of the State Legislature, the Louisiana Egg Commission is responsible for promoting eggs and egg products in Louisiana, issuing licenses to all egg producers, packers, processors, wholesalers, brokers, or any other entity except retailers. In addition the Commission has the authority to hold hearings on any violation of the State Egg Marketing regulations and revoke or suspend licenses if necessary. The LDAF Poultry and Egg Division is responsible for enforcing all regulations relative to the Egg Commission. The Commission is composed of seven members appointed by the Commissioner of Agriculture and Forestry. The Commissioner, or his designee, serves as ex-officio and has all rights and responsibilities of appointed members. The Commissioner appoints someone from his staff to serve as Director of the Egg Commission and the Department provides staffing for the Commission. In return, the Commission provides \$30,000 per year to the Department to cover the cost of these services. The Egg Commission derives its funding from a \$0.02 per case assessment on all eggs sold in Louisiana, a \$100 per year license fee, and per diem and travel charges for audit work.

**PROGRAM ACTIVITY: VETERINARY HEALTH DIVISION (formerly known as LIVESTOCK SANITARY BOARD) - (R.S. 3:2091)** The mission of the Office of Animal Health & Food Safety, Veterinary Health Division, is to protect livestock from infectious diseases through detection, prevention, eradication and other response measures. The Division is responsible for protecting the public health and general welfare of Louisiana citizens by ensuring the health and well-being of the animals that are raised to enter the food chain. Program activities include: 1) supporting animal disease diagnostic capabilities with the LDAF Poultry Diagnostic Lab and the Louisiana Animal Disease Diagnostic Lab; 2) conducting disease surveillance, including monitoring movement of animals into and out of Louisiana at livestock congregation points such as public auction markets and livestock shows; 3) issuing and

approving livestock entry permits and health certificates; 4) conducting disease investigations of reportable diseases, including possible Foreign Animal/Emerging Disease reports; 5) implementing USDA disease programs at the state level through cooperative agreements; 6) conducting program outreach and providing supplies to stakeholders, including producers, academia, industry, and veterinarians; 7) enforcing compliance with state/federal animal health regulations within the state; 8) approving animal biologics used in the state; 9) coordinating state implementation of the National Veterinary Accreditation Program; 10) inspecting and approving animals purchased by LA Prison Industries; 11) certifying bonds and letters of credit for auction markets; 12) inspecting litter/poultry disposal sites, offal & inedible businesses, and rendering plants; 13) providing regulatory monitoring for the turtle and the alternative livestock industries; and, 14) providing resources for activities of the Boards of Animal Health and the Louisiana Aquatic Chelonian Research & Promotion Board.

**PROGRAM ACTIVITY: MEAT INSPECTION - (R.S. 3:4201)** Louisiana's Meat and Poultry Inspection Program is a cooperative state-federal program. Its mission is to provide consumers with safe, wholesome, properly labeled meat and poultry products. The Program is responsible for inspecting all livestock and poultry harvested and processed in Louisiana regulated facilities; inspecting state regulated meat and poultry processing facilities for compliance with federal and state requirements; operating an accredited laboratory that analyzes meat and poultry products for economic and microbiological adulteration; reviewing and approving the labels of meat and poultry products to assure that accurate product information is supplied to the consumer. This Program provides continuous inspection to commercial slaughter and processing facilities, as well as periodic inspection of custom slaughter and processing plants. Inspected slaughter establishments, inspected processors, custom slaughterers, custom processors and warehouses distributing meat and poultry products must be permitted by the Louisiana Department of Agriculture and Forestry. The Program also has a compliance segment responsible for investigating violations of meat and poultry regulations such as illegal slaughter, processing, and sale of uninspected meat and poultry products. Program compliance officers conduct in commerce surveillance reviews at retail stores, restaurants, and distribution warehouses to ensure that meat and poultry products in commerce have been inspected, are being stored properly and have not been adulterated or contaminated after leaving the processing facility. Compliance officers also investigate consumer complaints. Under the state-federal cooperative agreement, the Program must enforce requirements "at least equal to" those imposed under the Federal Meat Inspection Act and the Poultry Products Inspection Act. FSIS provides up to 50% of the State's operating funds, as well as training and other assistance.

**PROGRAM ACTIVITY: GRADING AND CERTIFICATION -** The Meat Inspection Division provides a voluntary Grading and Certification Program for meat, poultry, and fish products. This program assures that meat products purchased by institutions and schools meet the USDA Institutional Meat Purchasing Specifications and that poultry and fish products meet the Louisiana Department of Agriculture and Forestry Standard Specifications for Grading & Certification. The Grading & Certification Program prevents a vendor from shipping a lower valued product than what the purchaser specified, which results in substantial savings for both state institutions and participating school systems. This Program is funded through a \$0.04/pound fee paid by participating vendors for the certification of their product.

**PROGRAM ACTIVITY: FOOD DISTRIBUTION** – The Food Distribution Program ensures the USDA commodities are distributed to eligible recipient agencies and that those agencies are reviewed as required. Further, the office ensures the safe storage and handling of the commodities until consumed. The Food Distribution Program is responsible for the ordering, warehousing, and distribution of foods purchased by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) for use in federally approved child nutrition programs and for food purchased for distribution to low income citizens and families. It also is responsible for ensuring that recipient agencies are operated in compliance with federal requirements (agreement, regulation and law) by monitoring receiving agencies (schools, summer feeding sponsors, food banks and their member agencies), resolving findings and reporting activities to the USDA which ensure that these foods are protected and are distributed only to those who are eligible to receive these benefits.

**PROGRAM ACTIVITY: EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT** – (R.S. 29:726) LDAF has the responsibility as authorized by the Louisiana Emergency Operation Plan to administer two of the fifteen Emergency Support Functions. These functions are ESF-4, Firefighting and ESF-11, Agriculture. LDAF Emergency Management Division manages the business of these vital functions. Emergency management is a complex endeavor that requires year round planning, preparation and practice to fulfill the mission when the need arrives. Full time year round staffing is utilized by LDAF to meet the needs of its emergency response responsibilities

**PROGRAM ACTIVITY: FEED & PET FOOD PROGRAM** – (R.S. 3:1381-1407) Louisiana's Feed & Pet Food Program is a state regulatory program, as well as a cooperative state-federal program. The Feed & Pet Food Regulatory Program regulates the sale and use of animal feeds and pet foods to ensure that these products meet standards set forth by the Association of American Feed Control Officials (AAFCO) and the Federal Food and Drug Administration (FDA) as well as the State of Louisiana, as provided for in LRS Title 3, Chapter 10-A, Sections 1381-1407 (Feed and Fertilizers) and LAC Title 7 Parts XI and XVII. The LDAF Feed & Pet Food Program also partners with the FDA to conduct contract inspections of feed manufacturers, distributors, retailers and veterinarians concerning current Good Manufacturing Practices (cGMPs), Hazard Analysis, and Preventative Controls for Food for Animals, Sanitation, Licensed and Non-Licensed Medicated feed manufacture and Veterinary Feed Directives, ensuring compliance with the Food Safety Modernization Act (FSMA) of 2011.

## **LIVESTOCK BRAND COMMISSION**

### **OVERALL MISSION:**

The Livestock Brand Commission is an enforcement agency in the Department of Agriculture and Forestry that specializes in the theft of animals, the illegal branding or marking of animals, the theft of any farm machinery, equipment, or any other farm-related crime.

**OBJECTIVE:** The Livestock Brand Commission strives to protect and safeguard Louisiana agriculture. It comprises five major areas: theft prevention, investigative, identification, Crimestoppers Program and public relations.

### **PERFORMANCE INDICATORS:**

**Key Indicator 1**                      Percent of Theft Cases Cleared

**Key Indicator 2**                      Percentage of cases in which you were able to account for the property

**STRATEGY 1.1**                      To provide theft prevention and investigative services to a 2.176 billion dollar agriculture industry which includes the following: cattle, equine, hogs, emu, ostrich, turtle, sheep, exotic, chemicals, farm machinery and equipment.

**STRATEGY 1.2**                      To provide annual educational enforcement training to all of our employees.

Customers:

Farmers

Cattlemen

Horsemen

Limiting Factors:

Funding

Manpower

## **LIVESTOCK BRAND COMMISSION**

The Livestock Brand Commission is a law enforcement agency with (6) employees:

(1) Director; (4) Commissioned Livestock Brand Inspectors and (1) State Brand Recorder. The office consists of five (5) major components:

- 1) Theft Prevention
- 2) Investigative
- 3) Identification
- 4) Crimestoppers Program
- 5) Public Relations

### **STATE BRAND RECORDING**

In accordance with Louisiana Revised Statutes (RS 3:736-741) the Livestock Brand Commission maintains a file of all brand or mark for cattle, horses, mules, sheep, hogs, dogs, and other animals as determined by the commission for the state of Louisiana. The Livestock Brand Commission also publishes a list of all recorded brands and marks in a book form.

### **INVESTIGATIVE SERVICES**

The Livestock Brand Commission provides theft prevention and investigative services to a 2.176 billion dollar agriculture industry which includes the following: cattle, equine, hogs, emu ostrich, turtle, sheep, exotic, chemicals, farm machinery and equipment. The Livestock Brand Commission conducts all investigations, both interdepartmental and otherwise, as directed by the Commissioner.

### **CRIME PREVENTION**

Livestock Brand Commission officers inspect and individually identify each head of livestock sold in public markets in the State of Louisiana including video sales. Descriptions, hot iron, cold brands and electronic identification, along with serial numbers, are all valid identification tools. Officer patrol service is also included in this category during high crime periods. Livestock Brand Commission officers patrol 4H and FFA livestock shows to prevent cheating among contestants. Livestock Brand Commission officers also make public appearances with assorted agricultural groups with tips on how to better protect their livestock and property from theft.

### **CRIMESTOPPERS PROGRAM**

The Livestock Brand Commission Crimestoppers Program is another tool used to assist law enforcement agencies in detecting and combating agricultural crime and is sponsored by the Louisiana Cattlemen's Association and the Louisiana Farm Bureau. The program is made public through posters and the media.

## **FOOD QUALITY SERVICES DIVISION**

### **OVERALL MISSION**

The mission of Food Quality Services is to provide unbiased third party (collaborator) inspections at terminal markets, provide shipping point inspections and inspections for state institutions and other state and parish entities participating in the voluntary program. Program personnel performing collaborator and shipping point inspections are licensed by the USDA.

### **OBJECTIVE**

Continue to provide unbiased third party (collaborator) inspections at terminal markets, provide shipping point inspections and inspections for state institutions and other state and parish entities participating in the voluntary program.

## **PERFORMANCE INDICATORS:**

**Key Indicator 1**      Percent of fruit & vegetables inspected and passed

**Strategy 2.1**    Maintain cooperative agreements with USDA by way of collaborator and shipping point inspections.

**Strategy 2.2**    Continue all State programs that are now in existence through school lunch and state institution inspections of fruits and vegetables.

**Strategy 2.3**    Enforce the regulations governing the marketing of fresh fruits and vegetables.

**Strategy 2.4**    Continue enforcement of the citrus regulations.

## **PROGRAM IMPACT for FY 2018**

Number of Food Quality Inspectors	6
Number of inspections performed	701
Pounds of product inspected	7,555,809
Money generated	\$98,903.91

## **POULTRY AND EGG DIVISION**

### **OVERALL MISSION**

The overall mission of the Poultry and Egg Division is to protect consumer health and prevent consumer fraud by ensuring that poultry meets the quality grade and specifications represented on the packaging and that egg and egg products are wholesome and of the quantity and quality represented on the packaging. The Poultry and Egg Division also promotes the consumption of eggs through the Louisiana Egg Commission.

### **OBJECTIVES**

Continue to protect consumers by ensuring that poultry meets the quality grade and specifications represented on the packaging and that egg and egg products are wholesome and of the quantity and quality represented on the packaging

## **PERFORMANCE INDICATORS:**

**Key Indicator 1**      Percent of poultry passed

**Key Indicator 2**      Percent of eggs and egg product inspected and passed

**Strategy 3.1**    Maintain cooperative agreements with USDA.

**Strategy 3.2**    Provide qualified, licensed graders for all USDA poultry & egg facilities in Louisiana.

**Strategy 3.3**    Provide fee grading service for non USDA poultry & egg facilities.

**Strategy 3.4**    Provide graders to perform federal egg surveillance for Louisiana egg plants and hatcheries.

**Strategy 3.5**    Perform all USDA destination inspections and reviews for poultry and eggs.

**Strategy 3.6**    Continue all state programs that are now in existence.

**Strategy 3.7**    Enforce the State Egg Marketing Law.

**PROGRAM IMPACT for FY 2018**

Number of poultry & egg inspectors	13
Number of poultry inspections performed (fee)	128
Number of pounds inspected	4,727,935
Number of egg inspection performed	3537
Number of dozens inspected	1,738,028
Money generated	\$537,246.15

**VETERINARY HEALTH DIVISION**

**OVERALL MISSION:**

The overall mission of the Veterinary Health Division is to protect the food chain and ensure public health by ensuring the health of animals through the prevention, control, and eradication of diseases in livestock, poultry, and companion animals. The division conducts livestock inspections and administers Federal/State regulatory programs through cooperative agreements that involve cattle, horses, poultry, swine, cervid, sheep, goats, farm raised turtles, and companion animals.

**OBJECTIVES:**

Continue to monitor, test, control, and eradicate diseases in livestock, poultry, farm raised cervid (deer, elf, and antelope), aquatics, turtles, and companion animals and to document the number of infectious disease cases that would restrict movement of animals in commerce.

## **PERFORMANCE INDICATORS:**

**Key Indicator 1**      Number of livestock disease cases that would restrict movement of animals in commerce including quarantines and restricted movement permits.

**Strategy 4.1**      Maintain USDA Cooperative Agreements.

**Strategy 4.2**      Monitor test reports from diagnostic labs to identify disease cases.

**Strategy 4.3**      Investigate suspicious animal disease reports from other state/federal agencies, private veterinarians, and producers.

**Strategy 4.4**      Issue quarantine notices to stop livestock or poultry movement if infectious disease is suspected.

**Strategy 4.5**      Issue VS Form 1-27 or other permitted movement document to control movement of livestock or poultry if infectious disease has been confirmed.

### Performance indicators

- Number of livestock and poultry inspections
- Number of tests conducted and entered into spreadsheets and electronic databases
- Number of Foreign Animal/Emerging/Zoonotic Disease cases reported to the office and entered into the Emergency Management Response System (EMRS)
- Number of disease investigations conducted
- Number of quarantine notices issued
- Number of VS Form 1-27 notices issued

## **VETERINARY HEALTH DIVISION**

The Division has 1 administrative veterinarian and 3 administrative office staff that are supported by 4 veterinarians, 10 animal health technicians, and 2 laboratory technicians in the field who work to ensure the health of meat and poultry that enter the food chain. Office personnel coordinate cooperative agreements, take calls from other agencies and the public, and manage paper and electronic records of animal health certificates and livestock testing information that attest to the health of animals within the state, leaving the state, and entering the state. Field personnel inspect production and processing sites, investigate reportable diseases, and monitor livestock sold at auction markets for signs of disease. Livestock identification and premises information is collected and maintained to trace an animal's movement or to stop animal movement in the face of a disease outbreak. The Poultry Diagnostic Lab works closely with commercial and backyard flock owners in testing birds that may be sold locally, nationally, or internationally or that may be entered into a local 4-H show. The division provides outreach to producers and veterinarians at local and regional meetings and to veterinary students through federal accreditation and loan repayment programs. The division coordinates activities and meetings for the Board of Animal Health and the Louisiana Aquatic Chelonian Research and Promotion Board.



Federal/State Programs include:

1. Animal Disease Traceability
2. Avian Health
3. Cattle Health
4. Equine, Cervid, Small Ruminants
5. Swine Health
6. One Health
7. Feral Swine
8. Alternative Livestock
9. Trichomoniasis
10. Equine Infectious Anemia
11. Reportable Diseases--Equine Encephalitis
12. Farm Raised Turtles
13. Brucellosis Calf-Hood Vaccinations
14. National Veterinary Accreditation Program
15. Veterinary Loan Repayment Program
16. Animal Care Standards
17. Biological Approvals
18. Rendering Plant Inspections
19. Prison Enterprise Inspections
20. Certified/Accredited Herds

## **MEAT AND POULTRY INSPECTION PROGRAM**

**OVERALL MISSION:** The mission of the Louisiana Meat and Poultry Inspection Program is to protect consumer health and prevent consumer fraud by ensuring that meat and poultry products are safe, wholesome and free from economic adulteration.

**OBJECTIVES:** To ensure consumers are provided meat and poultry products that are safe, wholesome and free from economic adulteration.

### **PERFORMANCE INDICATORS:**

**Key Indicator 1**      Percent of meat & poultry inspected and passed

**Key Indicator 2**      Percent of noncompliant laboratory samples

**Key Indicator 3**      Number of meat & poultry product recalls for state facilities

**Strategy 5.1**    Inspect all animals harvested and/or processed in state regulated establishments.

**Strategy 5.2**    Assure that custom facilities are maintained in a sanitary manner.

**Strategy 5.3**    Enforce the regulations through an in-commerce compliance program.

**Strategy 5.4** Maintain laboratory testing for food borne pathogens, i.e., *Listeria*, *Salmonella*, *Escherichia coli* 0157:H7.

**Strategy 5.5** Continue cross-utilization cooperative agreement with USDA by staffing federally regulated establishments with state inspection personnel.

**Strategy 5.6** Continue analyzing the chemical composition of meat products to protect consumers from economic fraud.

**Strategy 5.7** Continue in plant residue testing of high risk animals.

**Strategy 5.8** Continue to provide training for inspection personnel.

**Strategy 5.9** Continue to provide outreach for industry personnel.

**Strategy 5.10** Continue to maintain a record of daily inspection procedures through the LDAF/MPIP TASK system.

### **MEAT AND POULTRY INSPECTION PROGRAM**

In accordance with Louisiana Revised Statutes (RS 3:4201 - 4233), the Meat and Poultry Inspection Program continues to ensure that consumers receive only safe, wholesome, unadulterated meat and poultry products that are properly labeled. The program is responsible for inspecting all livestock and poultry harvested and processed in State regulated facilities, inspecting and approving the premises of meat and poultry processing facilities according to federal and state requirements, operating a USDA accredited laboratory for analyses of meat samples, reviewing and approving labels for all meat and poultry products to assure that accurate product information is provided to the consumer and investigating suspected violations of meat and poultry regulations such as illegal slaughter, processing, and sale of uninspected meat products. The Program also provides staffing in USDA regulated meat and poultry establishments under a signed cross-utilization agreement where the state is reimbursed for each hour of inspection provided. In addition, the Program provides a voluntary Grading and Certification service for meat, poultry, and fish products. This service certifies that products purchased by institutions and schools meet specified quality characteristics and prevents vendors from substituting lower quality products.

### **FOOD DISTRIBUTION DIVISION**

The Food Distribution division is responsible for administering the USDA donated food commodity program in Louisiana. A staff of 17 employees is utilized to order, warehouse and distribute these donated foods to approximately 700 recipient agencies throughout the state, and to monitor these recipient agencies to ensure compliance with all State and Federal policies and laws. Program categories include:

1. National School Lunch and Breakfast Program
2. Emergency Food Assistance Program
3. Summer Feeding Program
4. Disaster Assistance Program

Commodities are ordered from USDA based upon the needs of recipient agencies and the availability of items. Products are received at contract and state-operated warehouses. Strict inventory and quality control are maintained at these warehouses under the supervision of the Food Distribution Division.

Commodities are distributed to recipient agencies on a regular basis. As an added service, the division provides delivery to all parish and diocese school food authorities who are unable to pick up the commodities.

Monitoring is accomplished through the use of field staff who visit recipient agencies on a regular basis. These field audits ensure that all policies are understood, that commodities are stored and utilized in the most effective manner, that all civil rights requirements are met, and that all recipients of commodity assistance are eligible to receive benefits.

The Food Distribution division also administers the USDA Donated Food Processing Program. The program allows recipient agencies to contract with food processors in order to convert USDA commodities into finished end products at low cost. This is not only advantageous to the recipient agency, but also is a source of revenue for processing firms.

Value of commodities distributed annually ranges from \$25-40 million, depending on USDA purchases.

**OBJECTIVE:** To maintain the administrative cost of the Food Distribution Program at no more than six percent of the value of commodities distributed.

### **PERFORMANCE INDICATORS:**

**Key Indicator 1** Number of Compliance audits

**Strategy 6.1** Maintain less than a six month supply of commodities on-hand at any time during the school year.

**Strategy 6.2** Upgrade the Food Distribution computer system to be completed by 2022.

**Strategy 6.3** Continue expansion of diversion of commodities options to approved processors as requested by School Food Authorities.

**Strategy 6.4** Process claims for losses of commodities within 30 days of receipt.

**Strategy 6.5** Process claims for reimbursement from food banks within 30 days of receipt

#### **Customers**

- School children
- Needy families

#### **Limiting Factor**

- Funding

## **FEED AND PET FOOD REGULATORY PROGRAM**

**OVERALL MISSION:** The mission of the Louisiana Feed & Pet Food Regulatory Program is to protect consumers, livestock and pets by ensuring that the animal feeds and pet foods meet standards set forth by the Association of American Feed Control Officials (AAFCO) and the Federal Food and Drug Administration (FDA) as well as the State of Louisiana. This program works with industry to provide education on cGMPs and labeling requirements while reinforcing support for the program.

**OBJECTIVES:** Program objectives are to ensure consumers receive products that meet label guarantees while providing a safe and unadulterated product for their livestock and pets. Other objectives include working with the Feed & Pet Food Industry to provide education on Current Good Manufacturing Practices, Hazard Analysis, Risk Based Preventive Controls for Food for Animals and Sanitary Transportation of Human and Animal Food under the Food Safety Modernization Act of 2011.

### **PERFORMANCE INDICATORS:**

**Key Indicator 1**      Percentage of pet food sold that meets guarantees and standards

**Key Indicator 2**      Percentage of livestock feed and feed ingredients sold that meets guarantees and standards

**Strategy 5.1** Inspect the manufacturing sites and retail outlets where these products are produced or housed to ensure good manufacturing practices, proper storage, and correct labeling.

**Strategy 5.2** Take samples of the products and submit them to the laboratory for chemical analyses to ensure quality and safety and ensure that they meet label guarantees.

**Strategy 5.3** Investigate consumer complaints related to alleged problems arising from the use of these products.

**Strategy 5.4** Work closely with manufacturers to reduce deficiencies and ensure that products do not harm crops, animals, humans, or the environment.

**Strategy 5.5** Maintain records of registration of products, inspections, analyses, and all other pertinent data.

**Strategy 5.6** Continue to work cooperatively with the FDA to conduct inspections of feed and pet food manufacturers, distributors, retailers and veterinarians to ensure compliance with the Food Safety Modernization Act of 2011.

**Strategy 5.7** Continue inspector training and to honor our commitment toward full implementation of the Federal Animal Feed Regulatory Program Standards (AFRPS).

### **FEED & PET FOOD DIVISION**

The Division has a director, 3 administrative staff personnel, 1 AFRPS Grant Coordinator, 12 full-time basic field inspectors, and 4 full-time veterinarians that are advanced field inspectors. Field personnel divide their time between the Feed & Pet Food Division and the Veterinary Health Division. Field personnel inspect livestock and pet food products at manufacturers, distributors, retailers and veterinary offices to ensure proper labeling and program registration. Field personnel also submit regulatory and investigative feed and pet food sample to the Agricultural Chemistry Laboratory to ensure that products meet label guarantees and those products are safe and free from adulteration. Advanced Inspectors also perform FDA contract work concerning inspections of feed manufacturers, distributors, retailers and veterinarians concerning current Good Manufacturing Practices (cGMPs), Hazard Analysis, Preventative Controls for Food for Animals, Sanitation, Licensed and Non-Licensed Medicated feed manufacture and Veterinary Feed Directives, ensuring compliance with the Food Safety Modernization Act (FSMA) of 2011. The Feed & Pet Food Division provides outreach to feed manufacturers, distributors, retailers, veterinarians and producers to ensure compliance with FSMA. Our veterinarian Advanced Inspectors conduct field investigations involving animal feed and pet food complaints as well as animal mortalities possibly associated with animal food. The Feed & Pet Food Division maintains a federal AFRPS Cooperative Agreement Grant to help fund progression toward full implementation of the AFRPS Standards

### **OFFICE OF ANIMAL HEALTH AND FOOD SAFETY BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS**

#### **BOARD OF ANIMAL HEALTH**

The Board of Animal Health was established in (RS 3:2091) as the regulatory body responsible for adopting rules and regulations for the control of livestock disease, holding hearings and conducting investigations, issuing public charters (auction markets), holding civil proceedings and imposing civil penalties for violations.

#### **LIVESTOCK BRAND COMMISSION**

The Livestock Brand Commission was created within the Department of Agriculture and Forestry. The commission shall exercise and perform its powers, duties, functions, and responsibilities as provided by (R.S. 36:629)(D)(1). Also to provide for the protection of the assets and property of the Department of Agriculture and Forestry, to enforce the rules and regulations pertaining to the Louisiana Board of Animal Health adopted pursuant to Part I of Chapter 16 of Title 3 of the Louisiana Revised Statutes of 1950, as authorized in R.S. 3:2093, to

enforce all of the provisions of this Part, and the rules and regulations adopted pursuant to the provisions of this Part and provisions in the Louisiana Criminal Code relating to the theft of animals, the illegal branding or marking of animals, the disposition of strayed animals, the theft of any farm machinery, equipment, or supplies, and to perform such duties with respect to any other farm-related crime.

### **LOUISIANA EGG COMMISSION**

The Louisiana Egg Commission consists of seven members appointed by the Commissioner of Agriculture and Forestry and confirmed by the Senate.. The Commissioner appoints from his staff a Director of the Egg Commission and the Department provides staffing for the Commission. The Commission provides the Department \$30,000.00/year to help offset the cost of these services

The Egg Commission derives its funding from a \$.02/30 dozen case assessment on all eggs produced and processed in Louisiana and all eggs produced elsewhere and distributed in Louisiana. All entities engaged in producing, processing, packaging and distributing eggs for retail must have a license. All licensees can be audited yearly and must be audited at least every two years. Licensees will pay mileage and per diem.

The purpose of the Louisiana Egg Commission is to educate the consumers of Louisiana on the nutritional benefits of eggs. The Egg Commission also approves and issues licenses for all entities engaged in the production and wholesale distribution of eggs. The Egg Commission has the authority to hold hearings and, if necessary, suspend or revoke licenses of those found in violation of the regulations.

### **LOUISIANA STRAWBERRY MARKETING BOARD**

Established in (R.S. 3:471-478), now listed as (R.S. 3:730.1-730.8) to promote the general well being of the strawberry industry of the state of Louisiana by promoting increased production and quality in Louisiana strawberries through marketing and research; by expanding the market for Louisiana strawberries through promotion and marketing; by increasing the consumption of strawberries in Louisiana through advertising, promotion and marketing; by providing producers, distributors, retailers and consumers with educational information as to the nutritional and health value of strawberries, and by performing any other act deemed advisable in promoting this industry and the general welfare of the people of this state.

The department collects an assessment that is levied on all strawberries produced in Louisiana or produced elsewhere and distributed in Louisiana. For all strawberries sold by volume or dry measure, this assessment is levied on each pint, or equivalent, of strawberries in the amount of \$.00165 for each pint. For all strawberries sold by weight, this assessment is levied on each pound of strawberries in the amount of \$.00185 per pound. Assessments are remitted to the department by dealers and supplies of containers used for Louisiana produced strawberries and by retailers for strawberries produced elsewhere and sold in Louisiana.

The board working with the department implements all promotional campaigns for advertising, publicizing, projects, and activities for promoting the increased consumption of Louisiana strawberries. The department also provides financial reports to the board detailing all

assessments collected and funds transferred to the board to cover administrative costs and to fund promotional endeavors.

### **LOUISIANA CRAWFISH PROMOTION AND RESEARCH BOARD**

Established in R.S. (3:556.1-556.13) for the purpose of providing a voluntary method of raising revenues to be used to develop markets for Louisiana crawfish and for funding research which will increase production of Louisiana crawfish. The department collects assessments on all crawfish bags sold in Louisiana to crawfish farmers and harvesters at the rate of 2.0 cents per bag and on all artificial bait sold in Louisiana at the rate of 1/4 cent per pound (\$5/ton). The assessments are paid by crawfish farmers and harvesters at the first point of sale and remitted to the department on a quarterly basis by the manufacturer or distributor. Each farmer or harvester who purchases bags or artificial bait in Louisiana may obtain a refund of the assessments by submitting a written request within fifteen days after the end of the quarter in which the bait or bags were purchased. Copies of sales receipts or invoices showing the amount of bait or bags purchased must accompany the request. The department retains 3% of the assessment collected for administrative costs and transfers the balance to the board.

Department staff provides financial reports to the board detailing all assessments collected, refunds to farmers and harvesters and funds transferred to the board to cover their administrative costs and to fund promotion and research projects.

### **LOUISIANA AQUATIC CHELONIAN RESEARCH & PROMOTION BOARD**

The Chelonian Board was established in (RS 3:559.23) to promote the growth and development of Louisiana's aquatic chelonian industry by expanding research related to aquatic chelonians, improving the quality and variety of Louisiana aquatic chelonians through research, and increasing sales of Louisiana aquatic chelonians through advertising and marketing, thereby promoting the general welfare of the people of this state.

### **LOUISIANA ANIMAL CONTROL ADVISORY TASK FORCE**

The Louisiana Animal Control Advisory Task Force was established in (RS 3:2364) within the office of the Louisiana Department of Agriculture and Forestry under the direction of the state veterinarian for the purpose of assisting community programs in ensuring and promoting the proper treatment and well-being of animals.

### **LOUISIANA BOARD OF VETERINARY MEDICINE**

Louisiana Board of Veterinary Medicine was established in (RS 37:1515) within the Louisiana Department of Agriculture and Forestry to exercise the police powers of the state to promote the public health, safety, and welfare by safeguarding the people of this state against incompetent, dishonest, or unprincipled practitioners of veterinary medicine



## **OFFICE OF FORESTRY**

**WADE DUBEA, STATE FORESTER AND ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER**  
**(225)925-4500**

**Epney Brasher, Associate State Forester**

**Don Smith, Jr., Branch Chief**



# **OFFICE OF FORESTRY**

## **STRATEGIC PLAN**

# OFFICE OF FORESTRY

**MISSION:** The mission of the Office of Forestry is to protect, conserve, and replenish the state's forest resources.

**GOAL:** The goal of the Louisiana Office of Forestry is to ensure the sustained high level of production of wood fiber while enhancing the recreational, wildlife habitat, watershed protection, and air quality values of forestlands. Protection and management of these valuable forestlands is necessary for future generations.

Trees are Louisiana's number one agricultural crop and forestry is a major contributor to Louisiana's economy. Approximately 52,000 employees work in forestry-related jobs. In 2018, Louisiana landowners received over \$420 million from timber harvested from their lands. Severance tax receipts amounted to over \$15 million. Seventy-five percent of which was returned to the parish from which the timber was severed and the remaining 25% going to State programs.

To carry out this mission, Office of Forestry personnel conduct an intensive fire detection effort for the 18,931,000 acres under protection. The Office of Forestry operates 6 detection aircraft in the North Louisiana and 6 aircraft in the southern part of the state.

Forestry Enforcement Officers investigate arson, timber theft and other forestry-related crimes.

The Forest Health Program staff conducts monitoring programs for Southern Pine Beetle infestation and other invasive species such as Emerald Ash Borer, Gypsy Moth and Cogon Grass.

Office of Forestry personnel provides technical assistance for private forestland owners to encourage the use of sound forestry practices. Private, non-industrial forestland accounts for 81% of Louisiana's forest land base.

The Office of Forestry provides conservation education opportunities to further understanding and protection of the state's forest resources.

**OBJECTIVE 1**      **Maintain a 13 acre or less average fire size and minimize structure & property loss relating to wildfire.**

**STRATEGY 1.1**      Update & maintain the communications network that is vital to an efficient response to wildfires.

**STRATEGY 1.2**      By working with the staff from the State Fire Marshal's office, Emergency Management agencies, and Environmental Protection officials, a procedure for issuing burn bans, whether partial or statewide, will be established and updated to limit the potential hazard to the citizens and the environment.

**STRATEGY 1.3**      Analyze and review the latest equipment, technology, and detection/suppression methods to determine the most effective use of the limited resources and manpower of this agency and the State's wildfire community.

**STRATEGY 1.4**      Reactivate fire training program, including computerized fire simulator.

**Performance Indicators:**

- Number of wildfires
- Average fire size in acres
- Protected area burned (Land area burned compared to total land acreage protected by the agency)
- Residences protected (those protected from wildfires that were controlled by the agency's actions)
- Structures protected (Non-residential structures protected from wildfires that were controlled by the actions of the agency)

**Customers**

- Forest landowners in Louisiana
- Citizens with property adjacent to forest land
- Businesses and citizens with economic ties to forest resources

**Limiting Factors**

- Weather
- Fire occurrence (man-made ignition sources like arson and debris burning)
- Cooperation from others in the fire service
- Forest types, accessibility, terrain, etc.

**OBJECTIVE 2**      **Assist Rural Fire Departments and Cooperators by providing equipment, information, & training that is essential to their ability to protect the public from the threat of both structural and wildland fire.**

**STRATEGY 2.1:**      Establish fire protection procedures, both dispatch and suppression, between LDAF and local entities having fire responsibilities such as 911 dispatchers & Rural Fire Departments.

**STRATEGY 2.2**      Provide direct support in organizing, training, and equipping eligible Rural Fire Departments with cost-share assistance through the Rural Community Fire Protection Program.

**STRATEGY 2.3**      Administer the Federal Excess Property Program which allows this agency to look for and acquire useable excess property at military bases and government holding areas throughout the South. This acquired property can be loaned to Fire Departments across the state for use in fire suppression activities.

**STRATEGY 2.4**      Develop a training program dealing with wildland fire suppression techniques that can be offered to Rural Fire Departments.

**Performance Indicators:**

- Dollar value of FEPP property acquired
- Number of VFD assisted through RCFP program

**Customers**

- Rural volunteer fire departments

**Limiting Factors**

- Availability of federal property through FEPP, competition from other users.
- Availability of federal funding through RCFP program
- Coordination success with other VFD training entities (LSU Firemen Training)

**OBJECTIVE 3**      **Increase private, nonindustrial forest land productivity through the promotion of sound forest management practices by providing technical assistance.**

**STRATEGY 3.1**      Increase acres planted in trees by small-tract forest landowners by 10 percent each year.

Increase the number of prescribe burned acres

Provide financial assistance to eligible landowners for establishing and improving tree crops by utilizing the Forestry Productivity and other cost-share programs.

**STRATEGY 3.2**      Increase the number of forest management plans through actively engaging and educating forest landowners of the benefit.

Through personal, individual contacts, place under improved forest practices, the small timber tracts and farm woodlots in the state.

**STRATEGY 3.3**      Work with partners to promote sound forest resource management in urban and rural areas.

Foster working relationships with other State agencies and non-governmental entities through memorandums of understanding and cooperative agreements.

**STRATEGY 3.4**      Maintain or increase the percentage of managed forests utilizing Forestry Best Management Practices (BMPs)

Participate in training programs for landowners, managers and timber harvesters in the use of forestry BMPs.

Conduct surveys on implementation and effective monitoring of forestry BMPs.

Assist with updating the BMP manual.

**Performance Indicators:**

- Number of acres of tree planting, small-tract owners
- Number of acres of prescribed burning, small-tract owners
- Number of management plans written
- Implementation rate of Forestry Best Management Practices

**Customers**

- Forest landowners throughout Louisiana
- Forestry industry including timber harvesting businesses
- Support industries to forest industry
- All citizens who utilize our forest and forest-related resources

### **Limiting Factors**

- Landowners willing to actively manage forestland
- Funding for cost-share assistance
- Timber prices
- Technology
- Environmental constraints
- Availability of State General Funds in the Office of Forestry budget

**OBJECTIVE 4**      **Provide effective law enforcement to reduce loss of timber resources to landowners of this state.**

**STRATEGY 4.1**      Develop civil rules and/or regulations requiring certain information be collected and maintained by timber receiving facilities to aid in the investigations of timber theft complaints. Keep all complainants informed and updated on the progress of their complaint.

Continue emphasis to District Attorney' s, Judges and other enforcement organizations as to the seriousness of timber theft so that they may better understand the problem and better discern the difference between a criminal offense and a civil complaint.

Work with border states to develop and enact similar legislation to better document the movement of timber resources between our states.

**STRATEGY 4.2**      Increase landowner awareness of the loss of timber resources caused by fire and theft.

**STRATEGY 4.3**      Expand our media efforts with regard to public awareness.

Increase prevention efforts targeted at specific areas.

### **Performance Indicators:**

- Number of forestry investigations

### **Customers**

- All forest landowners
- Citizens with real estate or other property adjacent to forest lands
- Forest industry and related suppliers and vendors

### **Limiting Factors**

- Personnel
- Documentation requirements on timber movement
- Support from other law enforcement entities
- Public awareness and willingness to act



## **OFFICE OF MANAGEMENT & FINANCE**

DANE MORGAN, ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER  
(225) 952-8142

Kevin Finley, Deputy Undersecretary

Rene Simon, Director – LA Ag Finance Authority

Rebecca Dupree, Director – Fiscal Services

Melissa Sylvia, Director – Human Resources

Kelly Ransome, Director – Property Control

Jennifer Bello, Director – Procurement

Earl Thornton, Director – Information Technology Services

Scottie Harrell, Director – Fleet and Facility Maintenance

## **OFFICE OF MANAGEMENT AND FINANCE**

### **MISSION**

The Office of Management and Finance's mission is to provide timely and cost effective administration of accounting and budget controls, procurement and contract management, data processing, management and program analysis, personnel management, and grants management to ensure compliance with state and federal laws and to ensure that the department's offices have the resources to accomplish their program missions.

### **GOAL**

To comply with all federal and state laws, rules and regulations, and policies and procedures in regard to fiscal management, contracts and grants, purchasing and property control, and information technology. Specifically, this includes compliance with generally accepted accounting principles.

To streamline and coordinate Department functions and services to become an exemplary department in the areas of service delivery, cost efficiency and internal operations.

To increase the public visibility of the department.

### **OBJECTIVE 1**

Enhance the ability of each office within the department to meet its goals through information systems management and use of technology.

Preserve and protect state resources allocated to the department by maintaining effective property control, auditing, and fiscal management practices.

Continually evaluate policy, procedure and programs to ensure maintenance and development of best possible management practices.

Continue to provide a safe and healthful environment for employees through regular inspections, maintenance and up-grading of facilities and equipment.

Respond in a timely and satisfactory manner to all requests from the Commissioner and the various boards and commissions for non-routine services.

**STRATEGY 1.1** Monitor budget and advise various offices of budget status.



- STRATEGY 1.2**      Ensure that 100% of the checks received by Accounts receivable are deposited within the required time frame.
- STRATEGY 1.3**      Make training continually available to all users to further educate them in the computer systems that they are working in and have available to them.
- STRATEGY 1.4**      Continue an effective central receiving unit, following policies, procedures and regulations. Implementation of a computer program to track deliveries/receipts.
- STRATEGY 1.5**      Adequately respond to all requests for non-routine audit and accounting services.
- STRATEGY 1.6**      Continue to provide an internal audit oversight of programs and the offices within the department.

**Accountability (Performance Indicators)**

- \*      Number of repeat audit findings
- \*      Percent of technical support provided to meet internal customer requirements
- \*      Percent of helpdesk calls resolved

**Customers**

- Vendors
- Citizens of Louisiana

**Limiting Factors**

- Funding

**Objective 2**

To ensure that accurate and timely information is available to the state's agricultural community by providing timely market reports and opportunities for the sale of agricultural products and services through the Louisiana Market Bulletin in print on a bi-weekly basis and through internet access.

- STRATEGY 2.1**      To compile market reports on livestock, fruits and vegetable, grain, rice, poultry and eggs, pecans that will aid producers, consumers and distributors in the sale and purchase of the reported commodities.
- STRATEGY 2.2**      Provide marketing assistance to cattle producers in direct marketing of cattle to feedlots and processing plants.

**STRATEGY 2.3**      Provide opportunities for the sale of agricultural products and services through a bi-weekly Market Bulletin publication and through internet access.

**Accountability (Performance Indicators)**

\*      Number of copies of the Market Bulletin distributed per year

**Customers**

- Farmers
- Agribusinesses
- Data Users
- Governmental Entities

**Limiting Factors**

- Funding
- Personnel



## **OFFICE OF SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION**

**BRADLEY E. SPICER, ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER**  
(225) 922-1269

Joey Breaux, Director – Soil & Water Conservation District Programs

## **OFFICE OF SOIL & WATER CONSERVATION**

The Office of Soil & Water Conservation is charged by the State legislature with the conservation and protection of the state's soil and water resources "as necessary to protect and promote the health, safety and general welfare of its people". The OSWC is authorized to establish conservation programs for the purpose of working with landowners and other governmental entities in planning and implementing soil and water conservation and protective measures on the land. Many of the Office's activities are carried out in partnership with the 44 Soil & Water Conservation Districts, the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service, US Environmental Protection Agency, LA Dept. of Environmental Quality, the LA Coastal Protection & Restoration Authority and others. The Office of Soil & Water Conservation provides technical and financial assistance to the Soil & Water Conservation Districts through the State Soil & Water Conservation Commission.

**VISION:** "A Productive Louisiana Agriculture in Harmony with a Quality Environment"

**MISSION:** Mismanagement of agriculture processes and soil and water resources results in loss of soil productivity, degradation of water quality/quantity and wetlands, and increased flooding. The protection of these basic resources is necessary to protect the health, safety, and general welfare of our people. The mission of the Office of Soil and Water Conservation (OSWC) is to sustain and conserve water quality and soil stability on croplands, woodlands, grasslands, wetlands, and waterways of Louisiana. This is accomplished by interagency cooperation, and by providing financial assistance, administrative support, centralized direction and coordination to Louisiana's 44 Soil and Water Conservation Districts (SWCD) which provide conservation planning services to landowners and managers, and by serving as the official state cooperating agency with the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) as required for federal conservation program benefits. Through this unique federal-state-local partnership, agricultural water quality and soil loss problems will be proactively addressed while considering private landowner needs and objectives.

**PHILOSOPHY:** Louisiana agriculture is, and should be perceived as environmentally compatible with the quality of our soil, water, air, plants, and animals and a benign component of our state's bountiful natural resources and alluring landscape. This productive landscape, most of which is privately owned, must continue to be properly managed to maintain the subtle balance and compatibility between agriculture and the environment. By developing and implementing economically feasible, voluntary natural resource management programs, traditional land uses and agricultural activities will continue in an environmentally sound manner.

## **GOAL:**

To achieve a productive balance between Louisiana agriculture processes and a healthy environment, wherein soil loss is reduced to within tolerable limits, water quality impairments due to agriculture processes are significantly reduced, and the quality of the state's wildlife habitat, wetlands, and other natural areas are enhanced.

**OBJECTIVE 1. (SOIL EROSION CONTROL):** Apply soil erosion reduction practices on 450,000 acres of cropland, grazing land, rangeland and forestland, preventing the annual loss of 675,000 tons of topsoil for a cumulative total of 3,375,000 tons of topsoil saved from the 2021 level to 2025.

### **STRATEGY 1.1 Reduce cropland erosion on 250,000 acres.**

(Based on 2017-19 average annual total of cropland applied practices conducive to soil health)

- Encourage implementation by land users of conservation tillage practices, crop residue management, cover crops, contour strips and other Conservation Practices on highly erodible cropland through available conservation programs and initiatives.
- OSWC and SWCDs will develop Resource Management System Conservation Plans specific to individual land user operations.

### **STRATEGY 1.2 Reduce grazing land/rangeland erosion on 100,000 acres.**

(Based on 2017-19 average annual total of grazing/range land management practices applied)

- Promotion, planning and implementation of grazing systems, stream bank restoration practices, and multiple land use plans on grazing land through the Conservation Stewardship Program and other available programs.
- SWCDs will develop grazing plans that protect integrity of pastureland soils by promoting grazing management and diversity of land uses.
- Maintain native vegetation and hydrology on rangeland through the CSP and other programs.
- SWCDs will work to develop Resource Management System (RMS) conservation plans to enhance native range vegetation and restore proper hydrology.

### **STRATEGY 1.3 Reduce forestland erosion on 100,000 acres.**

(Based on 2017-19 average annual total of Forest Stand Improvement for soil health & quality)

- Promote conservation measures such as tree and shrub establishment on marginal cropland and barren land through the Wetlands Reserve Easement Program (WRE), EQIP and CSP programs.
- SWCDs will work with individual landowners to develop forest management plans and to promote forest stewardship on private lands.

### **STRATEGY 1.4 Ensure the availability of current scientific soils data and information to continue the development and application of effective conservation practices.**

- Maintain the Cooperative Soil Survey Agreement with the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service and the Louisiana Cooperative Extension Service.
- OSWC and SWCD will continually review and update program requirements.



- Assist the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service in revising soil classifications and soil use properties.
- SWCD and OSWC will periodically revise soil classifications through detailed field assessments.
- Continue conversion of soils data information to computer digital format.
- Provide land users with current site specific soils information for selected uses.

#### **Accountability (Performance Indicators):**

- \*Annual reduction in soil erosion (tons)
- \*Number of acres treated to reduce erosion
- \* No. Of Landowners Provided Technical Assistance

#### **CUSTOMERS**

- Land users/Cooperators
- Legislature
- Conservation Districts

#### **LIMITING FACTORS**

- Funding
- Soil Types/Topography
- Land use Practices
- Seasonal Environmental Conditions

**OBJECTIVE II. (REDUCTION OF AG WASTE ): Reduce the disposal of agriculture solid waste from agricultural processing operations by increasing its beneficial use as organic fertilizer, mulch, and other useful products to 64% from the 2021 level to 2025.**

#### **STRATEGY 2.1 Increase beneficial use of agricultural organic waste from processing operations by 5%**

(Based on No. of additional BMPs and conservation plans implemented in relation to total number of producers/processors, approx. 2,400)

- Implement agriculture solid waste and nutrient management plans for agriculture processors such as sugar and rice mills, cotton gins, and seafood processors.
- OSWC will determine need and design of waste management plan upon inspection and monitoring of processing facility.
- Assist processors to develop waste management plans that meet all state and federal environmental laws and regulations.

#### **STRATEGY 2.2 Manage and reduce disposal of waste from 100 animal waste facilities**

(Based on USDA-PRS and OSWC animal waste management figures)

- Design, implement, and/or rehabilitate animal waste management systems on livestock operations such as dairy farms, cattle and swine feedlots, and poultry operations through available State and federal conservation programs.
- OSWC will work with partnering agencies to determine need and design of waste management system.
- Design and implement agriculture nutrient management systems which promote utilization of agricultural waste, soil testing for fertilizer application, streamside management zones and buffers, legume cover crops, and green manure crops.

-OSWC and SWCD will determine nutrient application rates for site specific animal waste applications and land cover based on soils analysis.

**STRATEGY 2.3 Design and implement composting and other beneficial use BMP plans for agricultural and other organic wastes for 60% of agriculture processors.**

(Based on current number of producers/processors and potential for facility construction/rehab.)

- OSWC and SWCDs evaluate agriculture operations as needed for development of BMP plan.
- Assist processor in seeking viable waste use options.

**Accountability (Performance Indicators):**

- \* Percent of agricultural waste utilized for beneficial use
- \* Number of waste management plans developed
- \* Number of Site Specific Waste Management Plans Implemented.

**CUSTOMERS**

- Local citizens/Community
- Private landowners
- Ag Processors
- Legislature
- Conservation Districts

**LIMITING FACTORS**

- Funding
- Product demand
- Soil Type/Topography
- Land use practices
- Seasonal Environmental Conditions

**OBJECTIVE III. (PROTECTION OF WETLANDS AND WILDLIFE HABITAT):**

Re-vegetate an additional 190 miles of coastal and interior shoreline for a cumulative total of 1,144 miles by 2025 and protect, enhance and restore 1,200,000 acres of inland and coastal wetlands, and wildlife habitat.

**STRATEGY 3.1 Enhance upland wildlife habitat on 100,000 acres**

(Based on average annual total of wildlife habitat managed as shown in PRS)

- Assist landowners to develop conservation plans on agricultural lands to include shelterbelts, field borders, riparian corridors and other wildlife management practices through the Conservation Stewardship Program and other available conservation programs.
- SWCD will assist to evaluate and rank area for habitat suitability and type and establish project priorities for enrolment in appropriate programs.

**STRATEGY 3.2 Restore or enhance 100,000 acres of interior wetlands and bottomland hardwoods on marginal cropland.**

WRE, EQIP and others protecting/enhancing these areas as shown in PRS

- Encourage the reestablishment of bottomland hardwoods and/or traditional hydrologic regimes on marginal cropland through the Wetlands Reserve Easement Program, the Ducks Unlimited-Louisiana Waterfowl Project and other programs.



-SWCD will assist in determination of site suitability for wetland and wildlife habitat value and enrollment in appropriate programs.

**STRATEGY 3.3 Re-vegetate 190 miles of coastal and interior shorelines and develop, revise, and implement plans to enhance 1,200,000 acres of coastal and interior marshlands.**

(2400 acres protected/mile planted thru CPRA, NRCS-CWPPRA project list, marsh plans)

- Continue implementation of the Louisiana Coastal Protection and Restoration Authority (CPRA) -LDAF/OSWC Coastal Marsh Re-vegetation Program.
- OSWC, SWCD evaluate sites for various environmental factors affecting success of re-vegetation projects.
- OSWC will continue to actively participate on the Louisiana Coastal Wetlands Task Force.
- Plan and implement marsh re-vegetation and restoration projects for Coastal Zone Parishes
- OSWC will establish project priorities for the Coastal Re-vegetation Program.
- OSWC will work with state and federal agencies in developing and implementing Coastal Wetland Planning, Protection, and Restoration Act Projects.
- OSWC will work with other state agencies in implementation of the Louisiana Coastal Conservation and Restoration Program.

**Accountability (Performance Indicators)**

- \*Acres of agricultural wetlands restored during year
- \*Acres of wetland habitat managed during year
- \*Miles of shoreline treated for erosion control

**CUSTOMERS**

- Landowners
- Recreational & Commercial Fishermen
- Parish Governments
- Interagency Personnel
- Conservation Districts
- Legislature

**LIMITING FACTORS**

- Climate/Storm events
- Funding
- Landowner management objectives
- Soil Type/Texture
- Herbivore damage
- Landowner participation
- Economic feasibility of erosion control practices

**OBJECTIVE IV. (WATER QUALITY): Reduce water quality impairments caused by agriculture production and processes, by establishment of vegetative buffers, riparian areas and nutrient management implementation.**

**STRATEGY 4.1 Establish a total of 400,000 feet of vegetative buffer (filter strips) between agricultural lands and waterways.**

Based on 5-year PRS average filter strip installations as of 2019

- Establish conservation practices such as riparian buffers, filter strips, grassed waterways, and wellhead protection areas through the CRP, EQIP and CSP.



-SWCDs will evaluate impairments to water bodies resulting from agricultural processes and establish watershed management approaches to address identified causes.

**STRATEGY 4.2 Restore 1,000 acres of riparian habitat**

Based on 5-year PRS average of Riparian Forest Buffers or inferred from WRE data (30%) and/or from wetland enhancement, restoration practices and wetland wildlife habitat management, as of 2019

- Implement conservation and restoration practices to protect stream banks, especially at cattle crossings and watering areas.
- SWCD will design and implement appropriate conservation management systems.

**STRATEGY 4.4 Reduce or eliminate discharge and runoff from 100 animal waste facilities. (Similar effort as in STRATEGY 2.2)**

- Design, implement and rehabilitate animal waste management systems on livestock operations such as dairy farms, beef cattle and swine feeding operations, and poultry operations through the CSP, EQIP and other state and federal environmental programs.
- OSWC will work with partnering agencies to determine need and design of animal waste management systems.
- Design and implement agriculture nutrient management systems which promote utilization of agricultural waste, soil testing for fertilizer application, streamside management zones and buffers, legume cover crops, and green manure crops.
- Determine the rate of site specific nutrient application for solid wastes, soils and land cover.

**Accountability (Performance Indicators)**

- \* Miles of vegetated buffer established.
- \* Acres of riparian habitat restored.
- \* Number of animal waste management systems implemented
- \* Acres of nutrient management systems implemented

**CUSTOMERS**

- Local citizens
- Land users
- Interagency Personnel
- Conservation Districts
- Legislature

**LIMITING FACTORS**

- Program funding
- Climate
- Altered Hydrology
- Land user Participation
- Land owner/user eligibility
- Soil Type

**OBJECTIVE V. (CONSERVATION INFORMATION EDUCATION AND OUTREACH):**

Soil and water conservation training events will be conducted for 1,000 educators; school and community water festivals and Soil & Water Stewardship events will be conducted for 25,000 grade school students; 125 agricultural producers will be certified as Louisiana

**Master Farmers; Agricultural Prescribed Burning certifications will be issued/reissued for 750 producers and 220 Locally-Led Conservation planning meetings will be conducted from 2021 to 2025.**

**Soil and water conservation education events will be conducted in schools and communities throughout the state, with special emphasis placed on those areas in which nonpoint source pollution, aquifer overdraft and other soil and water concerns are deemed most critical. Soil and water conservation materials will be disseminated through school and community venues.**

**STRATEGY 5.1 50 Project WET (Water Education for Teachers), Wonders of Wetlands, or Healthy Water, Healthy People workshops for educators will be planned and implemented.**

- OSWC and SWCDs will work with school administrators, Parish science supervisors, university education methods professors and others to plan educator workshops
- OSWC will work with other resource conservation agencies and organizations to maximize content and outreach potential.
- Correlate workshop activities to Grade Level Expectations as funding permits to maximize educator/student classroom relevance.
- Give priority to workshops planned in areas subject to NPS impairments, aquifer overdraft, etc.

**STRATEGY 5.2 5 Water festivals and 150 Soil & Water Stewardship events will be conducted for schools and communities.**

- Design a series of interactive activity stations for each water festival that illustrate local conservation concerns, needs and solutions.
- OSWC will work with SWCDs to encourage local participation in the annually revised Soil Stewardship Program and to tailor the information to local natural resource concerns.

**STRATEGY 5.3 Master Farmer training sessions will be conducted as necessary to accommodate enrollment of agricultural producers into the LA Master Farmer Program.**

- The OSWC and the local SWCDs will coordinate with the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service and the LSU Agricultural Center to maximize participation in the Master Farmer training sessions.
- The SWCDs will work with the USDA-NRCS and LSU to establish model farms as proving grounds and Master Farmer training sites.
- The SWCDs will review and approve Resource Management System conservation plans as required for producer certification as LA Master Farmers.
- the OSWC will document completion of all Master Farmer certification requirements.

**STRATEGY 5.4 Agricultural Prescribed Burning Certification training sessions will be conducted twice annually or as necessary to ensure maximum enrollment and participation by producers.**

-the OWSC will work with the LSU Agricultural Center to plan and implement burning certification trainings as necessary.

**STRATEGY 5.5 Each Soil & Water Conservation District will host at least one Locally-Led Conservation Planning meeting annually to determine local conservation needs and priorities.**

-the SWCDs will coordinate with the USDA-NRCS to advertise and to set up meeting times and places for maximum stakeholder and public attendance.

-the SWCDs will utilize information gathered and priorities established to guide their local efforts in conservation program delivery.

**Accountability (Performance Indicators)**

\* Number of educators trained in water and wetlands conservation

\*Number of students reached through conservation festivals and soil stewardship events.

\*Number of LA Master Farmers certified.

\* Number of producers certified/recertified for agricultural prescribed burning.

\* Number of Locally-Led conservation planning meetings conducted.

**CUSTOMERS**

-Local citizens  
-Land users  
-Interagency Personnel  
-Conservation Districts  
-Legislature  
-Formal and non formal educators

**LIMITING FACTORS**

-Funding  
-Teacher Participation  
-Public Participation  
-Land User/Producer participation