

Background

Flavors of Health is an emerging community nutrition education program of the Louisiana State University AgCenter. Launched in 2017, its objective is to motivate and empower Louisianans to adopt healthy food and fitness routines. Flavors of Health has a presence in each of Louisiana's five AgCenter regions. To accommodate unique needs and opportunities within their geographically diverse locations, Flavors of Health nutrition agents have a high degree of flexibility in how to engage with their communities. Until now, no formal benchmarks have been established through which to gauge agent performance.

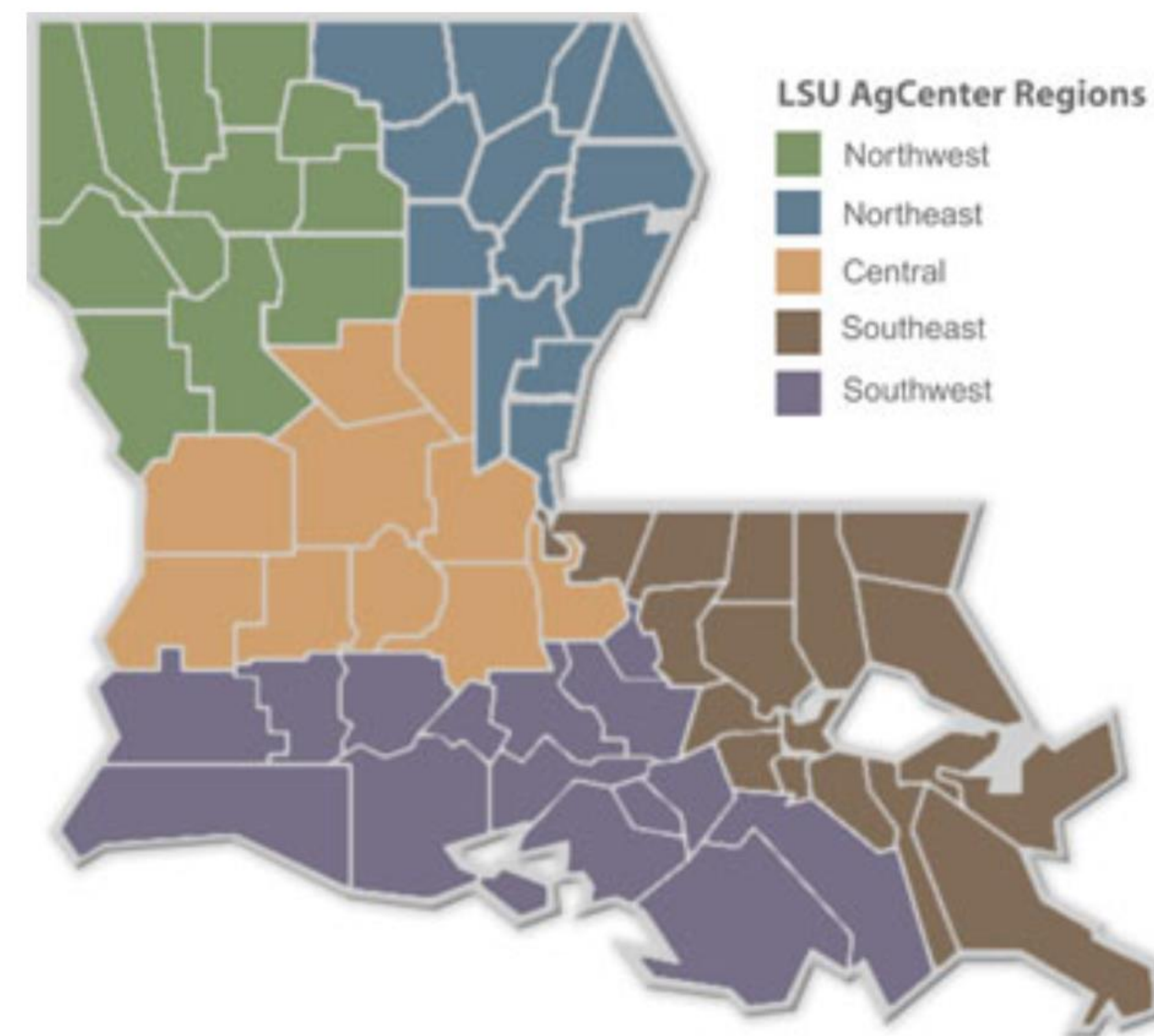
Process

From January to December of 2019, documentation of primary activities (e.g. programs, presentations, events) was collected monthly, directly from agents. Descriptions of supportive activities (e.g. media communications, resource development, planning, leadership) was collected through individual discussion and monthly group conference calls. Baseline productivity was determined for each agent, then assessed to inform pragmatic expectations for all Flavors of Health nutrition agents.

Result

This is a first and basic attempt to methodically develop a set of standards/agent expectations for what is necessarily a non-standardized (local, community-driven) approach to nutrition education. This process utilized quantitative data, supplemented by discussions, observations, and estimations to capture the agent influence as a function of activity, and the potential for long term program impact. The evaluation process is ongoing; as Flavors of Health continues to develop, so will agent expectations.

LSU AgCenter Regions



6 months of data collection resulted in 7 categories of tangible activities

- Series programs - nutrition education in multiple sessions
- Single-session programs - one-time, single topic presentations
- Program promotion within the community
- Community planning/advisory councils
- Community/Parish/Regional nutrition education events
- Cooking classes/workshops/demonstrations
- Community-based group physical activity

Survey results were supplemented by qualitative data collection. Activity categories were then expanded to include:

- local media, mass media, social media, video shoots
- Healthy Communities
- State Fairs
- School gardens
- Resource development
- Professional development
- Evaluation

Together with data on time, frequency, and reach for each of these items, **General guidance/expectations were established for areas of:**

- Community Relations
- Advisory Committee
- Evaluation and Reporting
- Media and Marketing
- Professional Development
- Diversity and Cultural Competency

Specific program implementation guidance/expectations (e.g. minimum # of programs, participants, community contacts, communication/media products, trainings/continuing education hours, and suggested schedules/spread) were established for:

- Series /multiple session Programs
- Single-Session/single topic Programs
- Variable Activities (advisory committees, youth programs, state/regional/local fairs, community events and/or leadership)
- Mass Media/Social Media
- Continuing Education