

Salvation Farms Vermont Commodity Program at the Southeast State Correctional Facility

*Prepared for the Vermont House Committee on Corrections and Institutions by Salvation Farms
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SESCF Building Renovation Timeline

January 2014 (funds are secured)

Buildings & General Services hires architect to create construction designs

February – March 2014

Buildings & General Services, Corrections & Salvation Farms work together to draft bid documents

April - May 2014

Project “goes out to bid”, General Contractors bid on the project

May - June 2014 (\$100,000 needed to move forward)

Contract is awarded

June 2014

Construction begins

September – October 2014

Construction nears completion

Salvation Farms, Vermont Commodity activities at SESCOF Successes

- From Nov. 2012 – Jan. 2014, 38 inmates have participated in Vermont Commodity raw packing activities at SESCOF; this includes cleaning, grading, and packing raw surplus crops
- Inmate crews have worked a total of 51 days with Salvation Farms’ Vermont Commodity Program
- More than 121,430 pounds of donated Vermont surplus produce
- Produce donations have come from *only* 10 farms – this is clear indication that the potential is significant to support scaling up operations.
- Crops cleaned and packed include potatoes, apples, winter squash, onions, carrots, and rutabaga.
- 11 food access sites/agency/institutions have received Vermont Commodity Products:
 - 5 Upper Valley food access sites
 - 2 Vermont Foodbank locations (reaching as many as 280 food access sites in Vermont)
 - 1 northern Vermont site
 - 2 out of state sites
 - the SESCOF Meal Program
- Black River Produce (paid by Salvation Farms) has shipped more than 120,000 pounds from farms to SESCOF and more than 104,150 pounds from SESCOF food to four different food access sites.
- Salvation Farms has transported roughly 1,000 pounds from farms to SESCOF and 11,200 pounds from SESCOF to nine food access sites.
- Roughly 6,000 pounds between receiving and shipping represents culls from the pack line destined either for the SESCOF meal program or the compost.
- Since September of 2013, 6 Vermont Commodity Program crew members have completed ServSafe, one inmate did not received ServSafe certification.

- 10 inmate crew members have participated in a Good Agricultural Practices (GAP) and Good Handling Practices (GHP) short-course specifically designed for them. All received certifications of GAP/GHP training completion.

Inmate & Partner Testimonies

“There are thousands of pounds of food just thrown out in Vermont when there are so many people going hungry. This should not be ignored when we can save the food for those people. I am proud to be part of the answer.” – George, SESCOF Inmate

“DOC is willing to make this commitment because we are impressed by how well Salvation Farms worked with the inmate population, how organized and efficient and simple the project is, the determination and resourcefulness of their leadership, and how the inmates involved in the pilot displayed pride, ownership and understanding. We believe this is an opportunity to stand in solidarity with the state’s goal of increasing local food production and consumption. Closer to our hearts, we know there is tremendous value in offering this type of vocational opportunity for the Vermonters our department serves while meeting the principles that guide Vermont DOC.” - Andy Pallito, Commissioner, Vermont Department of Corrections

“Salvation Farms is doing great work developing programs and systems that fill Vermont’s need to turn agricultural surplus into food for our neighbors. I see Salvation Farms serving the needs of farms statewide, supporting regional organizations that are building Vermont’s food Independence, and adding value to institutions like the Vermont Foodbank. We welcome large volume sources of fresh local food that can be easily integrated into our inventory and quickly distributed statewide.” – John Sayles, CEO, Vermont Foodbank

“As a farmer, I see firsthand the amount of edible food that goes to waste on my farm due to market fluctuations and customer demands. This is not unique to my business. Salvation Farms has been diligently working to address this food loss issue in Vermont for years. The organization’s leadership is competent, knowledgeable and highly respected by farmers across the state.” – Will Stevens, Golden Russet Farm, Shoreham Vermont

Inmate testimonies from the 2012 Potato Pilot

“It meant a peaceful place for me to work while I did my time.”

“Resourceful, economical, and practical”

“Glad I could help, would be proud to help again.”

“I found it interesting because is something I haven’t done before.”

“I think it is a great program and that it should continue.”

“The work was easy and had a good purpose.”

“I think they [DOC] should keep it and work on ways to do more.”

Salvation Farms Current Contract

Salvation Farms is contracted by the DOC to 1) develop standard operating procedures for the Vermont Commodity Program workspace, 2) provide on the job training, 3) inmate work crew oversight, and 4) measureable completion criteria. We are developing and implementing an educational compliment to the Vermont Commodity Program agricultural-based work opportunity, as an essential part of on the job training.

Web links

Fall 2012 "Potato Project Launch" WCAX video coverage

<http://www.wcax.com/category/166239/video-landing-page?clipId=7978633&autostart=true>

Crowd-funding video

<http://youtu.be/4dDjCxDfaAs>

November 2013 Times Argus article

<http://www.timesargus.com/article/20131115/NEWS03/711159939>

November 2013 Stowe Reporter article

http://www.stowetoday.com/stowe_reporter/news/business_news/article_d0d13406-47d8-11e3-9ee8-001a4bcf887a.html

September & October 2013 Press Releases, *Fundraising Events*

<http://vtdigger.org/2013/10/07/local-musicians-band-together-moogs-place-support-salvation-farms/>

<http://vtdigger.org/2013/09/01/the-bees-knees-commits-to-helping-salvation-farms/>