

The goals of Salvation Farms' (SF) work at the Southeast State Correctional Facility (SESCF) in Windsor include but are not limited to the following:

1. take surplus Vermont-grown crops and process them for easy distribution to and use by sites such as food shelves, soup kitchens, schools, prisons, veterans homes, etc.
2. provide valuable job skills and a sense of purpose to inmates through work and certification programs
3. develop a facility that can easily wash, sort and bag surplus farm-foods, with the potential to explore increasing activities to include lightly processing foods that could be frozen, canned or dehydrated
4. have the program at the SESCOF develop into a Correctional Industry that not only covers the cost of the program but has products that generate operating capital for Corrections
5. develop a model that can be replicated in-state and nationally

Millions of pounds of food go to waste in farmers' fields every year, farms that are eager to donate this food to a program equipped to handle it; not to compete with private business, but provide necessary foods to the undernourished in Vermont.

SF is asking the State of Vermont and the Dept. of Corrections for an ongoing active partnership, to continue building off of the success of the Windsor-based program – this program aligns with many of Vermont's Farm to Plate Goals.

It is SF hope that you will seriously reconsider your recommendation to close the SESCOF.

Since November of 2012

- 50 inmates have participated in SF "Vermont Commodity Program" pilot at SESCOF; all have received on-the-job training, some trainings included certifications of completion
- 275,414 pounds, including 7 crops from only 14 farms, have been received, sorted, and packed at SESCOF
- These crops have been distributed to 14 sites including SESCOF, Southern State Correctional Facility, and local schools as well as into the Vermont Foodbank's network of more than 200 agencies statewide
- SF has invested \$7,231 in Black River Produce to transport produce into and out of SESCOF

Community & Department Support

- 130 individuals and businesses have donated a combined \$73,500, while 10 foundations have granted \$82,500 to SF for the renovation of a building at SESCOF – a total of \$156,000
- As of May 2014, SF has given approximately \$20,000 to the Dept. of Corrections for architect & engineering expenses related to the renovation of a building at SESCOF
- SESCOF/Dept. of Corrections has covered costs associated with:
 - Pack room construction – including inmate labor, materials, and pack-line equipment
 - Building operational overhead, i.e. heat & lights
 - SF contract to oversee inmate crew, provide crew trainings, and all transportation logistics

Security and Safety

- I, Theresa Snow, feel safe in this working environment
- SF requests cameras & motion sensor lights be an essential part of the building renovation
- In comparison to most correctional facility deliveries, this project's deliveries are not regular and come from a variety of commercial farms. SF believes that coordinating the trafficking of contraband via this program would be very difficult due to irregularity of shipments and the unpredictability of contributing farms.

"... you have given me a chance to expand my knowledge and understanding in how our food is grown and handled, as [to] where it comes from; in doing so **ignited a passion per se in seeking stronger ties with the world around me.**" - SESCOF Inmate, Vermont Commodity Crew 2013-2014

"As a school system we have been very impressed with the level of volunteer support that we see in this organization. We are sometimes the beneficiary of the produce. This is a great organization in our community and **a model that we can all follow.**" - David Baker, Superintendent, Windsor Supervisory District

"The Vermont Commodity Program provides inmate crews with workforce development skills relevant to Vermont's expanding agricultural economy, helps increase food rescue processing infrastructure which in turn increases the amount of local food available for Vermonters at charitable food organizations throughout the state—**all of which align directly with Vermont's Farm to Plate goals to strengthen the food system.**" - Rachel Carter, Communications Director of Vermont's Farm to Plate Initiative

"This facility, the engagement of incarcerated individuals, and the growth of this program overcomes major obstacles to capturing more unmarketed crops in order to address our region's food and nutritional needs," says Theresa Snow, founder and director of the organization. A recent report assessing how local infrastructure can benefit the charitable food system, **written by an Emerson Hunger Fellow serving in Vermont**, backs her up: "There are three main factors that can be adjusted to keep costs low when processing for the charitable food system: the cost of labor, the cost of raw materials, and the cost of maintaining the processing facility."