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NEWS RELEASE

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Jan. 27, 2016

Missouri Department of Corrections donates 91 tons of fresh produce to Missourians in need

Jefferson City, Mo. — The Missouri Department of Corrections announced today that its Restorative Justice Garden Program donated 91 tons of fresh produce in 2015 to local food pantries, shelters, churches, nursing homes and other organizations throughout the state.

"I am proud of the efforts of our staff and volunteer offenders, who have worked hard to help families in need," said George A. Lombardi, director of the Missouri Department of Corrections. "The garden program is one of many Restorative Justice Program within the department, where offenders learn about compassion and altruistic behavior, qualities which help them on their road to rehabilitation."

While an overabundant late spring rain ended a three-year streak of record breaking yields, the program managed to produce an impressive 91 tons at the gardens at the adult correctional centers and three community supervision centers in the state.

For many of the local food pantries, shelters and other organizations that receive the produce, the offender-grown produce is the only fresh produce that is available. Nursing homes and after school programs also take donations from the institutions to incorporate the fresh fruit and vegetables into the meals for its residents and students.

The Boonville Correctional Center was the department's top producer this year with nearly 19 tons of produce donated, while the Farmington Correctional Center donated the second-largest amount with more

than 16 tons. The Southeast Correctional Center rounded out the department’s top three with nearly 13 tons of produce donated.

Restorative Justice Garden coordinators receive many letters of gratitude from the beneficiaries of the donations, expressing their appreciation for the fresh produce that they can use to feed those in need.

“The donation you provided means a lot to the kids who are often times hungry after being at school all day. Again thanks for your assistance in making our program a success,” said Brenda Robinson-Echols of the Lincoln University Cooperative Extension Afterschool Program in Sikeston, Missouri after receiving a donation of produce from the Southeast Correctional Center.

The department’s Restorative Justice Garden Program operates without the assistance of taxpayer money and grows a variety of produce every year at all 21 adult institutions and three of the community supervision centers of the Division of Probation and Parole in Missouri. A new Restorative Justice Garden Program came online this year at the Kansas City Reentry Center (KCRC), with a year-round aeroponic Tower Garden. KCRC, which was transitioned in September from a community release center into a minimum security facility, made its first donation of four pounds to a local organization on Christmas Eve.

Offenders typically start cultivating the garden plots in April, while the harvesting usually begins in July and ends in late fall. All of the seeds and plants for the gardens are donated to the institutions, and in return, all the produce grown is then donated.

Restorative Justice is an ancient belief that addresses criminal behavior with the fundamental philosophy that when a crime is committed, a debt is incurred. Restorative Justice holds offenders accountable, while providing a means for them to repay their debt to the victim as well as to the community. It gives offenders the opportunity to transition from an institutional setting with an improved attitude, which helps strengthen the social bonds that serve as the foundation of our communities.

In addition to donating produce, several institutions donated whole plants to various outreach organizations in Missouri. The Missouri Eastern Correctional Center donated 250 tomato plants to Agape House, while the Farmington Correctional Center donated nearly 2,500 various plants and 37 pints of strawberries to a local food pantry and a community outreach organization.

Here are the totals for the Restorative Justice Gardens in 2015 and the organizations that received donations:

Restorative Justice Garden Produce Donations

(as of Dec. 31, 2015)

Institution	Number of Pounds Donated	Donated to -
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Algoa Correctional Center 	6816	Salvation Army; Blue Springs Baptist Church in Eldon; Holts Summit Soup Kitchen; Missouri Foster Care & Adoption Association; Citizens for a Better Community

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Boonville Correctional Center 	37057	Neighbors Helping Neighbors Food Bank; Chariton Co. Sr. Housing; Harvest House; Salvation Army; New Franklin Sr. Housing; Columbia Food Bank; CCBC; Pilot Grove Sr. Housing; Howard Co. Food Pantry
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chillicothe Correctional Center 	7802	Bella Brooke; Salvation Army; Sunnyview Nursing Home Livingston Co. Food Pantry; Ashbury Heights; Morningside Center; Second Harvest; Community Options; Baptist Home; Barnibus Home; Cameron Food Pantry; Lifepoint Food Pantry; Chula Farmers Co-Op; Chula Coop; RSVP; Grand River Area YMCA
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cremer Therapeutic Community Center 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Crossroads Correctional Center 	2023	Stewartsville Food Pantry; Women Green Hills Shelter; Cameron Food Bank; Walnut Street Baptist Church Food Pantry; Living Hope Food Bank; Community Cupboard
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Eastern Reception, Diagnostic & Correctional Center 	3800	Park Hills Senior Center; The Fredericktown Senior Center; Madison County Food Pantry; Harvest of Hope Emergency Food Pantry; Bonne Terre Nutrition Center
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Farmington Correctional Center 	32249	Shared Blessings Homeless Shelter; Ministerial Alliance Food Pantry; Faith Family Worship Center; Memorial United Methodist Church; Centenary Methodist Church; Fredericktown Senior Center; Faith Cowboy Church Food Pantry; Bismarck Church of Good Food Pantry; St. Francois County Board for the Developmentally Disabled Food Pantry; Bismarck Senior Center; SEMO Family Violence Council (Women's Shelter)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fulton Reception & Diagnostic Center 	118	SERVE
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Jefferson City Correctional Center 	10074	Central Baptist Church; Samaritan Food Bank; Old Paths Baptist Church; Russellville Assembly of God; 2nd Christian Church Outreach; TG's Barber Shop; United Pentecostal Church
Kansas City Reentry Center	4	City Union Mission
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maryville Treatment Center 	1252	The Ministry Center; Senior Center; Village Care Center;

		Parkdale Minor; Golden Living Center; St. Gregory's Catholic Church; Oak Point Assisted Living; Association of Group Homes; Laura Street Baptist Church; Conception Abbey; Benadicting
• Missouri Eastern Correctional Center	2723	Feed My People
• Moberly Correctional Center	1525	Higbee Senior Center; Christos Center; Cherish Brook Food Pantry
• Northeast Correctional Center	14435	Bowling Green Food Pantry
• Ozark Correctional Center	6332	Kings Food Pantry; Options Pregnancy Center; Webster County Food Pantry
• Potosi Correctional Center	2530	Sayers Senior Center; Fredericktown Sr. Center; Madison County Food Pantry; Ellington Food Bank; South Iron Food Pantry; Washington County Food Pantry; Park Hills Sr. Center
• South Central Correctional Center	5303	Texas County Food Pantry; Licking Food Pantry
• Southeast Correctional Center	25108	Shining Light Baptist Church; Charleston Nutrition Center; Shining Light; East Prairie Nutrition Center; Mission Missouri; Teen Challenge; Hope Missionary; Missouri Bootheel Regional Consortium; Green Memorial Church; SEMO Food Bank; Terra Nova Church; Charleston Housing Authority
• Tipton Correctional Center	2489	Moniteau County Nutrition Center
• Western Missouri Correctional Center	16164	Living Hope Food Pantry; Cameron Food Pantry; Hamilton Food Pantry; Stewartsville Food Pantry; Turning Point Church
• Western Reception, Diagnostic & Correctional Center	2015	2 nd Harvest Community Food Bank; Hamilton Food Pantry
• Women's Eastern Reception, Diagnostic & Correctional Center	375	Vandalia Senior Center; Countryside Nursing Home
• St. Joseph Community Supervision Center	357	
• Farmington Community Supervision Center	216	Ministerial Alliance Food Pantry
• Kennett Community Supervision Center	914	Helping Hand Food Bank; Hope International (Living Hope Outreach Ministries)
TOTAL	181,681 lbs equal to 91 tons	

- Garden finished for year.

Plants donated:

MECC donated 250 tomato plants to Agape House

FCC donated the following plants:

- 350 tomato plants to Ministerial Alliance Food Pantry
- 1200 tomato plants; 600 pepper plants; 100 cantaloupe cells; 150 yellow squash plants to Faith Family Worship Center for community gardens for their four children's homes.
- 37 pints of strawberries

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