

## **Jacksonville Correctional Center Sustainability**

In FY2012, Jacksonville Correctional Center and its two satellite facilities, Pittsfield Work Camp and Greene County Work Camp, formed a cross-functional sustainability committee to explore modifications that could be made to transform its environmental impact. The facilities chose to stop being a mere consumer of scarce resources and become a producer of its subsistence. Since then, the facilities have experienced great success and realized tremendous savings by implementing a number of green policies and initiatives.

### **Recycling Program**

Recycling of materials, such as plastic, tin, paper and cardboard, is conducted at all three facilities. A baler is online at both Jacksonville Correctional Center and Pittsfield Work Camp. With these two balers, the recycling capacity equals that of other institutions that have been recycling far longer. As the recycling programs have grown and matured, recyclable waste is consolidated from all three facilities in the Jacksonville family, developing partnerships with community businesses and municipalities to process their waste and reducing non-recyclable waste collection. With the help of Illinois Correctional Industries, the Jacksonville facilities expanded its offender workforce to as many as 25 Earned Good Conduct Credit-qualified offenders to staff its recycling operations. The offenders will learn valuable work skills to use in the rapidly growing green economy following their incarceration.

### **Waste Contract**

As a result of the Recycling Project, the number of pickups by waste haulers has been cut in half at Jacksonville Correctional Center and Pittsfield Work Camp, which has resulted in a savings of more than \$10,000.

### **Gardening Projects**

Garden produce is being grown at Jacksonville Correctional Center, Pittsfield Work Camp and Greene County Work Camp to feed offenders and staff. Food not consumed is donated to local food banks. To manage its gardens, the facilities have reached an unprecedented level of coordination and cooperation, not just between the three local facilities at Jacksonville, but with other facilities in the IDOC system. Garden managers at each of the three local facilities place seed orders online for all fruits and vegetables. All seed orders are processed at Menard Correctional Center and distributed to Jacksonville facilities' gardens.

The on-site Horticulture Program is staffed with a full-time educator at Jacksonville, who serves as instructor and guide for all three facilities and continues to be a great resource for staff. Each satellite facility has security staff supervising the offender workers.

The gardens have proven effective supplements to the dietary needs of the facility. As the program matures, so will the evaluation tools used to measure their continued effectiveness. The tools will allow dietary managers the freedom to order less produce. Any food not consumed in the facility will be distributed to local food banks and the Global Outreach Center.

## **Composting Projects**

Composting operations are underway at all three facilities, using traditional composting and on-site trench and expanded to include vermicomposting. The compost is used for facility flower and vegetable gardens and has easily reduced waste by 20 percent. Composting is a crucial piece of the plan to reduce waste cost. It also has helped process aging paper records at all three facilities. Instead of burning or paying for the disposal of records, the facilities will shred and use them for compost.