

2016 Jail Best Practices Award

OFFICIAL ENTRY FORM

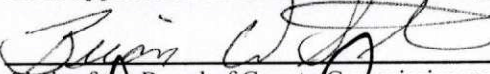
This form must be attached to all entries. Entrants must complete all sections for the entry to be considered complete. A copy of this official entry is available electronically at <http://www.pacounties.org/ProgramsServices/Pages/CriminalJusticeSystemBestPractices.aspx>

County Name Wayne County County Class GM
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Project Information

Title Prison Gardening Program Start Date 05/31/15

Each application must be submitted with **two** signatures. Place appropriate signatures on two of the lines below:


Chair of the Board of County Commissioners


Chair of the County Prison Board


County Chief Executive Officer

Program Narrative

A separate program narrative document must be attached to this form that answers the following questions in the order presented. This must be typed in a Word-document, Times New Roman, 10-point type.

- **Need:** a description of the identified need and the background including what programs were in place before the current project, if any, and how it led to this effort
- **Program/policies:** a description of how the project enhanced general operations programs/policies, treatment, and custody
- **Approach:** a description of the project, including any evidenced-based approaches to jail diversion, community involvement strategies, formation of stakeholder groups, county-wide planning strategies, etc.
- **Evaluation:** a brief description of how the project was evaluated and any lessons learned
- **Stakeholders:** a brief description of the community, including a description of key stakeholders, organizations, and county departments that were involved in the project
- **Processes:** a description of how the activities or processes utilized in this project were altered or will be continued based on experience, including plans for leveraging additional resources
- **Costs:** a description of any costs associated with the project and how it was funded; cost savings, if any and any change in community acceptance, reductions in insurance costs, or inspection improvements that resulted from the program

Scoring will be based on the elements as described above.

Please attach supporting documents, forms or other information that support the award entry. **Entries must be received by close of business on February 12, 2016.** Winners will be announced during the CCAP Spring Conference, March 13 – 16, 2016. More information: Brinda Carroll Penyak, bpenyak@pacounties.org or (717) 526-1010.

2016 Jail Best Practices Award

Wayne County

Prison Gardening Program

The Gardening Program here at the Wayne County Correctional Facility was the first of its kind and there are plans in the future to continue to develop and enhance our program. The initial idea for the Prison Gardening Program at that time was taken on by Director of Inmate Services Justin J. Rivardo. The original plan was to develop a vegetable garden that inmates at our facility would have the opportunity to plant, fertilize, weed, water, and harvest.

This program provides inmates with an opportunity to develop or enhance skills that can be used once released from prison. It also provides inmates with education and learning experiences in the agricultural field. Looking at the program from a treatment perspective it was able to provide inmates with a sense of accomplishment which increased overall self-esteem. It was observed that inmates that were part of the program noticed a decreased level of stress and overall feelings of accomplishment. It seems to be that the garden here at our facility is one of the topics of conversation throughout the growing season. You will often hear inmates and staff members discussing the weekly harvest or engaging in conversation about the overall well-being of the garden. It provides healthy conversation for both staff and inmates which produces a positive working environment.

The original plan was to develop a vegetable garden that inmates at our facility would have the opportunity to plant, fertilize, weed, water, and harvest. The produce that was grown would then be used in our food service here at the facility. In our first year there were six beds that were 4 feet by 14 feet in dimension. We consulted with our local PSU Extension office to receive guidance and direction on soil testing, bed construction and also the types of plants that may benefit or grow best in this type of environment. The six beds consisted of tomatoes, peppers, cucumbers and zucchini. This past year the gardening program was taken on by current Director of Inmate Services, Ryan Williams and the plan was to double the size of the garden. Therefore, six more beds were added as well as several different types of vegetables such as; yellow squash, jalapeño peppers, yellow peppers, green peppers, three different types of tomatoes, and egg plant. This garden provided our facility with a great deal of produce and not only was it able to be used within our facility we were also able to donate over 400 pounds to the Area Agency of Aging here in Wayne County. The end result was that we produced over 1,200 pounds of vegetables which were both used within our facility as well as donated. Once the beds were planted inmates were escorted twice a day and were responsible for watering and removing weeds from the garden. Bi-weekly, inmates would take part in harvesting the vegetables from the garden. We would then consult with food service to see how much of the harvest could be utilized for staff dining as well as for our inmates.

We based our evaluation of this program on the amount of vegetables we were able to produce as well as the effect that the program had on our inmates. The inmates that were part of the garden detail often reported a decreased stress level. They also reported less feelings of anxiety while knowing that they had something to look forward to each day. In the future our facility would like to focus on the educational aspect of the program in regards to teaching inmates more about the agriculture field. As with any project there are always lessons to be learned and observed from your mistakes. There were several issues such as over planting and over watering that will need to be taken into consideration in the future. Both the inmates as well as myself had learned a great deal in regards to proper planting and fertilizing, which is necessary in order to produce a healthy garden.

There are plans for the future to continue to increase the size of the garden as well as becoming dependent upon our own resources. One area that will aid our facility in becoming self-sustaining would be to invest in a green house. This would allow our facility to become self-dependent and save money by not spending in on plants each

year. This would also help to continue our program throughout the year instead of just offering it during the traditional growing months.

At no cost to county tax payers, the project is funded by our facility's inmate account fund. This account is made available to us through the money which inmates spend on commissary items as well as our inmate phone system. In order to get our program up and running the facility purchased the wood necessary for the construction of the raised beds as well as the top soil needed to fill the beds. The inmates were able to work together as a team to build the beds as well as prepare them for planting.



