

GEORGIA DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS Standard Operating Procedures		
Functional Area: CORRECTIONS DIVISION/ FACILITIES OPERATIONS	Reference Number: IVM01-0007	Revises Previous Effective Date:
Subject: Vegetable/Row Crop Operation		12/15/02
Authority: DONALD/ADAMS	Effective Date: 9/01/04	Page 1 of 7

I. POLICY:

The vegetable and row crop operations shall generate products for use in livestock rations and vegetables for institutional use, all in an effort to match the requirements of the Food Service Master Menu.

II. APPLICABILITY:

All GDC farms with vegetable or row crop operations.

III. RELATED DIRECTIVES:

NONE

IV. DEFINITIONS:

NONE

V. ATTACHMENTS:

NONE

VI. PROCEDURE:

- A. Vegetable/Row Crop operations function under the general direction of the State Farm Administrator who has sole authority to determine crops, set production goals, and institute any other fundamental farm management policies.
- B. The type of vegetables to be grown and quantity needed is determined by planning based on the Food Service Master Menu needs.

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- C. Row crops for other than human consumption are grown for animal feed. Quantity, variety, and planting schedule are determined by projected feed needs.
- D. The State Farm Advisor is the official representative of the State Farm Administrator and is to work with each farm manager closely to keep the State Farm Administrator informed about conditions on the farms. The State Farm Advisor is to inspect operations, provide advice for problems, and be able to give assurance to the State Farm Administrator that official policies and agendas are being met on the farm.
- E. All farm staff in non-security positions shall be acutely aware of the need for inmate security at all times and shall support correctional officers in security-related functions if it is necessary for the maintenance of security. Said staff shall also observe all facility rules concerning security in all contexts, and shall seek clarification from supervisors or correctional officers when in doubt concerning some security aspect of the farm operation.
- F. Crop Production Procedures:
 1. After determining what crops and/or vegetables are to be grown, planting dates are to be established for each crop by the farm manager with advice from the State Farm Advisor.
 2. Prior to planting, soil samples are submitted for laboratory analysis. Fertilizer needs are determined based on the results of these soil test analyses.
 3. A copy of the entire crop plan will be submitted to the State Farm Advisor.
 4. Land is to be prepared for planting. The methods used to prepare the land will vary according to ground conditions and the type of crop or vegetable to be planted.
 5. After the land has been prepared, fertilizers and herbicides are incorporated as dictated by the type of crop or vegetable being planted. The farm

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manager or pesticide agent is responsible for insuring that the proper types and amounts of chemicals are utilized.

6. Planting is to be closely supervised to insure that the proper plant population is achieved.
7. After planting, field scouting will be conducted to monitor needs for pesticides, herbicides, fertilization, and irrigation.
8. All pesticide application is to be done in accordance with guidelines specified by the Georgia Department of Agriculture to be in compliance with the Georgia Pesticide use and Application Act of 1976 and the federal "Worker Protection Standards." A pesticide agent is on staff at Rogers State Prison and should be consulted as needed.
 - a. All chemicals used in the farming operation are to be stored in compliance with Georgia Department of Agriculture regulations, the United States Department of Agriculture regulations, the federal Worker Protection Standards, and the Georgia Department of Corrections procedures as indicated.
 - b. Prior to applying chemicals, inmates are to be instructed in the safe methods of use, and are issued gloves, goggles, and other protective clothing as may be required. The federal Worker Protection Standard and OSHA rules and regulations regarding hazardous chemicals shall be assumed to apply.
 - c. A shower area is designated and maintained at all times for proper and adequate cleaning if so needed.
9. Cultivation of crops is to be performed as required depending upon factors affecting each farming operation.

G. Harvesting:

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1. All farm staff shall be acutely aware of the importance of harvesting vegetable crops in a timely manner. The timely and efficient harvest of vegetables and row crops require a coordinated effort to insure adequate labor, supplies and transportation are available each day. It is the responsibility of the institutional farm manger to coordinate these efforts.
 - a. The farm manager should advise the institutional warden of anticipated labor needs a minimum of thirty (30) days prior to the projected harvest date. After harvest begins, the labor needs must be monitored daily by the farm manager to insure needs are met.
 - b. An accurate inventory of supplies (i.e. packaging material, sugar, etc.) must be maintained at all times to insure harvesting needs are met.

2. Fresh Use Vegetables:
 - a. Picking should begin as early as possible in the morning hours in an effort to maintain crispness and also reduce as much field heat as possible before packaging.
 - b. Adequate gathering tools in good working order must be supplied in order to prevent unnecessary bruising and tearing of freshly gathered vegetables.
 - c. Trailers and hampers used to bring product from field to packaging facility, as well as, grading lines and packaging tables must be cleaned thoroughly on a daily basis.
 - d. Before transporting to packaging area, all vines, stems and crowns should be removed from fresh gathered vegetables and left in the field.
 - e. After filling trailers, hampers or field-type bags should immediately be removed from the field and transported to the processing area.

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Containers of fresh gathered vegetables should never be left standing in the field for a prolonged period of time.

3. Row Crops:

- a. Harvesting is to be done as dictated by type of crop grown.
- b. Harvesting of crops and vegetables is to be closely supervised by qualified personnel to insure that quality control is maintained.

H. Packaging/Quality Control of Fresh Vegetables:

1. All vegetables are to be graded and any damaged product must be removed before packaging. This is to include over-mature, bruised, spotted, split or irregular shaped products.
2. All vegetables are to be clean and free of any leaves, vines, crowns or excessive stem before being packaged.
3. Packaging shall consist of either vented wax-type boxing or mesh-type bag so as not to restrict air flow when placed in a cooler for holding or on a refrigerated truck for distributing.
4. Maintaining good quality of farm fresh vegetables is of the utmost importance. Not only is it necessary to randomly check all products during the grading process but also to pull aside filled containers of fresh product and dissect a percentage of its contents. The practice is to be followed as listed below based on 50 lb. cartons:
 - a. Cabbage - every 4,000 lbs., check 50% of contents of 1 box or approximately 9 heads.
 - b. Bell Peppers and Tomatoes - every 1,500 lbs., check 15% of contents of 1 box or approximately 20 pieces of vegetables.

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- c. Cucumbers and Squash - every 2,000 lbs., check 20% of contents of 1 box or approximately 15 pieces of vegetables.
- d. Carrots - every 2,000 lbs., check 10% of contents of 1 box or approximately 30 pieces of vegetables.

I. Storage of Fresh Vegetables:

- 1. Cooler floors, walls and racks are to be kept clean at all times.
- 2. Proper temperature setting must be maintained in order for vegetables to remain crisp and fresh. Preferable 34°F to 38°F.
- 3. Fresh vegetables placed in cooler awaiting delivery should be stacked in such a manner as not to restrict airflow. The movement of fan forced air around and through filled containers is necessary in keeping farm fresh vegetables crisp.
- 4. Vegetable containers must be given a lot number to insure shipment on a first picked basis. Never should today's product be stacked on top of or in front of yesterday's product.

J. Shipping Fresh Vegetables Via Refrigerated and Non-Refrigerated Trucking:

- 1. All vegetables should be handled carefully while loading in an effort to prevent any damage.
- 2. Height of stacking must be strictly adhered to in order to prevent boxing from collapsing resulting in bruising of product. Most boxing is labeled with height-poundage restrictions.
- 3. All trucks should be loaded in such a manner as not to restrict air movement around filled containers. The air stacking method should be practiced at all times.
- 4. Refrigerated trucks upon completion of loading must set their cooler unit's thermostat as near as

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possible to the same temperature as unit in which vegetables were removed.

5. Non-refrigerated trucks are sometimes used for the smaller deliveries. This practice should suffice for the deliveries within a 2-hour transportation range from the loading area due to the product being thoroughly chilled. Immediately after reaching destination, vegetables should be placed into a cooler until used.

K. Utilization of Produce:

1. After harvest, disposition of crop is carried out according to purpose for which grown.
 - a. Fresh vegetables grown for use by a local institution are transferred to institutional food service.
 - b. Transfer to Food Service is documented through use of a Waybill (IVM01-0001, Attachment 3). Farm Services personnel do not have responsibility for placing any dollar amounts on the waybill; institutional Food Service personnel will deal with monetary values of fresh farm products. (See IVM01-0001, Section G).
 - c. Row crops are transferred to a feed mill or to appropriate storage, unless other use has been determined.
2. All feasible measures are to be taken to insure that as much of crop as possible is utilized for that purpose for which it was intended, and that spoilage for whatever reason is avoided.
 - a. When instances of spoilage or other instances of low crop utilization occur (i.e., backlog at processing plant does not allow use of all product before spoilage occurs, or institutional Food Service is unable to use vegetables when available, or destruction by pests or weather occurs), documentation must be made to the State Farm Administrator.

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- b. A memorandum is advised to explain unusual circumstances not easily communicated. Major losses (in excess of ten percent) of the crop should be reported as soon as the problem is recognized to the State Farm Administrator or the State Farm Advisor; minor losses should be reported and sent along with the monthly farm production report to Central Farm Headquarters.
- c. Extent of crop loss should be accurately assessed, and disposition of crop should be indicated (whether left in the field, or harvested and disposed of).
- d. Any identifiable consequences resulting from crop loss should be noted.
- e. Give suggestions for remedies to prevent recurrence of situation in the future.

L. Safety:

- 1. Weekly safety meetings pertaining to work area specific topics will be mandatory. A copy of the meeting minutes including list of attendees should be maintained on site for a period of two (2) years.
- 2. It will be the responsibility of all farm staff to monitor farm operations on a daily basis to insure the safety of both the staff and inmates assigned to this work area.