



GROWING GARDENS



Lettuce Grow Program



What Lettuce Grow Does

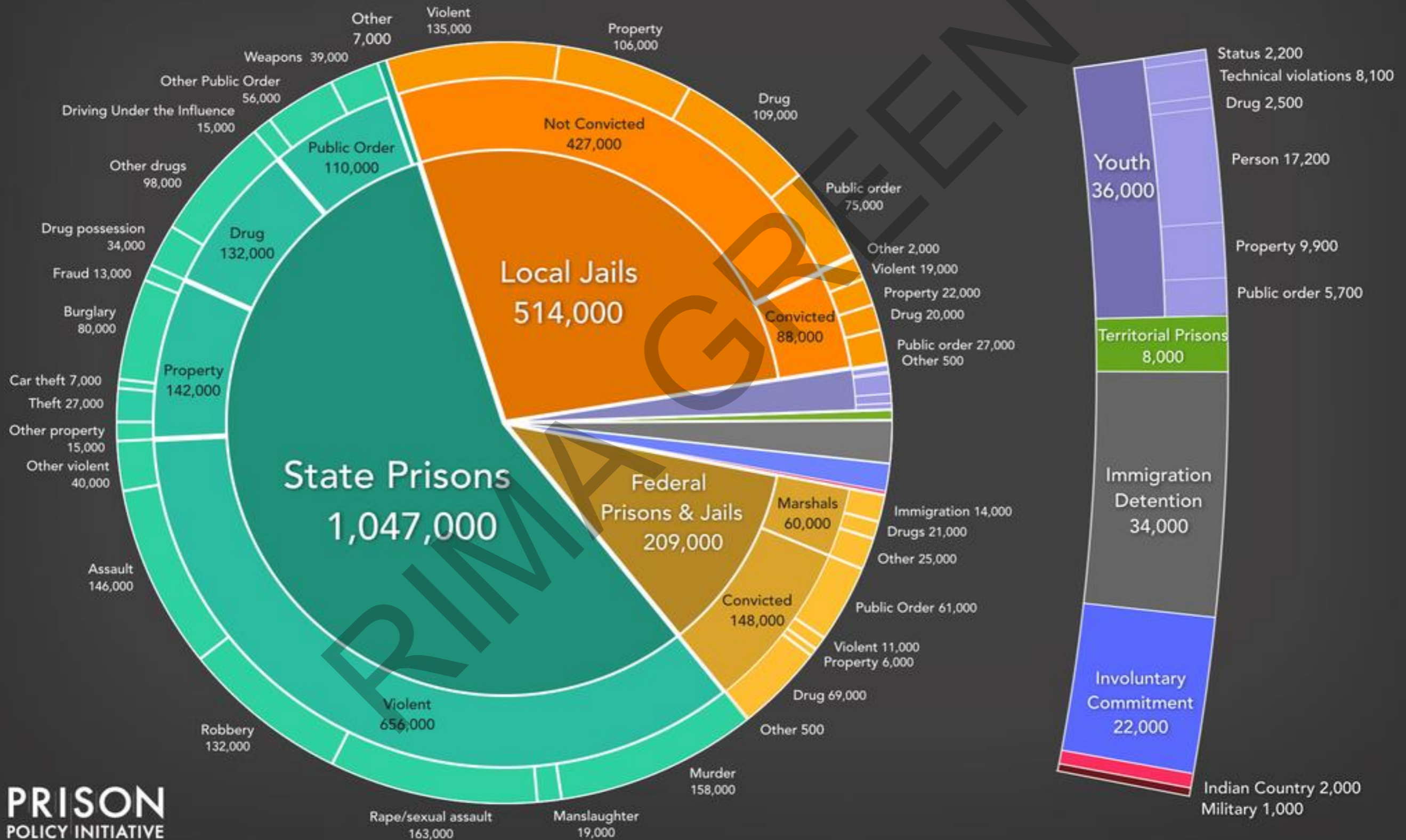
Provide horticultural education class at 14 Adult and Juvenile Correctional Institutions across Oregon.

Working in the sites' gardens alongside inmates to weed, water, and harvest.

We advocate for organic practices and integrated pest management in prison gardens.

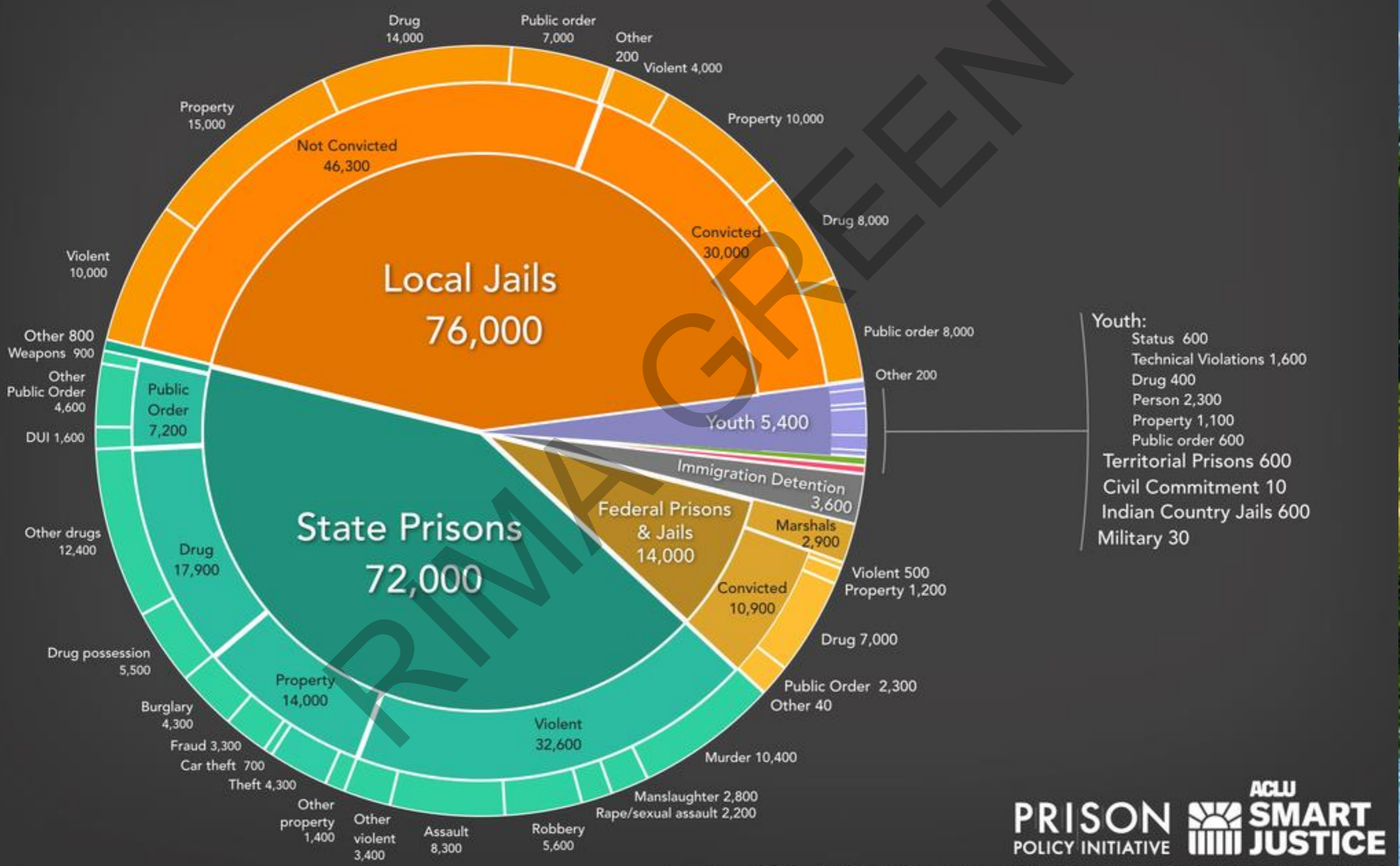
How many people are locked up in the United States?

The U.S. locks up more people per capita than any other nation, at the staggering rate of 565 per 100,000 residents. But to end mass incarceration, we must first consider *where* and *why* 1.9 million people are confined nationwide.



How many women are locked up in the United States?

The United States is one of the top incarcerators of women in the world. Changing that will require knowing where the 173,000 incarcerated women fall within our decentralized and overlapping systems of mass incarceration.



Why Care About Incarcerated Individuals?

- Inmates are part of the community food system
- Inmates experience food injustice in prison and within home communities
- In 2022, 12,299,000 people in Oregon are confined in state prisons, 898 are women confined at Coffee Creek Correction
- In 1980 there were 3,000 prison inmates in the state system*

* Source: Oregon Dept of Corrections

Financial Costs in Oregon

- The Governor's Biannually budget for Oregon Department of Corrections (ODOC) is \$2 Billion
- ODOC accounts roughly 8% of the states \$25 billion general fund
- It cost \$140.87 per day to house an inmate in the state correctional system \$2.45 goes for food*

* Source: Oregon Dept of Corrections

Previous Work Done at Coffee Creek

- In 2012 a joint study was done by Department of Corrections and the Oregon Health Authority's Public Health Division looking at the food situation at Coffee Creek.
- The work was funded by a grant from Kaiser Permanente Community Benefit Fund
- The gray slides are from that study



Creating a Healthier Food Environment for Incarcerated Women in Oregon

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Incarceration is a Family Health Issue

Most inmates are parents:

About 7.4 million U.S. children have a parent in prison, jail, or under correctional supervision.

The average age of these children is 8 years old.

Parental incarceration affects children adversely:

- Over half of male inmates with children were the primary source of financial support before incarceration.
- Children of women inmates more likely to experience disruption—28% of female inmates' children live with other parent vs. 90% of male inmates' children

Incarceration & Mental Health



- Mental health conditions far more prevalent:*
- Symptoms of mental health disorder : 4-6x higher
 - Major depressive disorder: 2-3x higher
 - Psychotic disorder: 3-8x higher
 - Mania disorder: up to 25x higher
- 49% of Oregon prison inmates have been diagnosed with an Axis I or II condition.
 - About 7% of OR's prison population has SMI.
- Oregon jails spent \$3.3 million on mental health meds in 2010; prisons ~\$3.5 million

*Data from Bureau of Justice Statistics and a 2009 Cambridge Health Alliance study. See Rich J et al Medicine and the Epidemic of Incarceration in the United States. NEJM 2011. 364: 22.

Incarceration & Physical Health

- Chronic and communicable diseases are more prevalent among incarcerated populations:*
 - 38%-43% have at least 1 chronic medical condition
 - Rates of diabetes, hypertension, asthma, and HIV elevated compared to general population.
- Rates of substance abuse are high:
 - 60% of ODOC inmates addicted/dependent
 - 15% have “some substance abuse”
 - 13% “no reported problem”

*Data from Bureau of Justice Statistics and a 2009 Cambridge Health Alliance study. See Rich J et al Medicine and the Epidemic of Incarceration in the United States. NEJM 2011. 364: 22.

Medical Care in Prison

- Oregon prisoners receive medical care:
 - Provide ongoing care on an HMO model
 - Prioritize needs according to medical relevance
- Commonly treated conditions include:
 - Diabetes
 - Chronic pain



The Dangers of Re-Entry

- Health often not a top priority given so many serious issues to juggle after release.
 - Have 30 day supply of medicines.
 - Healthy eating difficult due to cost, lack of kitchen space, etc.
- Staying abstinent from drugs, alcohol, and cigarettes is a challenge for most.
- Risk of death for ex-prisoners is elevated in first year after release: suicide and drug overdose are common.
 - Homicide, accidents, HIV, CVD, liver disease/cancer cause excess mortality in male ex-prisoners.

Women & Incarceration



- The number of women in prison has grown 400% since the mid-1980s.
 - Proportion of women incarcerated for drug offenses now higher than among men.
 - Rates rising faster than for men.
 - Most incarcerated women are nonviolent, first-time offenders.
- Women inmates have high rates of physical and sexual violence:
 - BOJ stats: >50% physically or sexually abused in lifetime
 - 23-27% experienced childhood sexual violence



The Healthy
Food Access
Project at
Coffee Creek
Correctional
Facility



Facilitating Positive Change

Growing Food Justice in Prison



- Women inmates at CCCF identified unhealthy eating and weight gain as priority health issues
 - Overeating common way to deal with:
 - Withdrawal from cigarettes, alcohol, and other drugs
 - Emotional trauma, boredom, and stress
- Average weight gain for women inmates is unknown, estimated to be about 30 lbs:
 - Some gain 60 lbs or more

Current Nutritional Environment

- Menu at CCCF currently ~3,000 calories/day
- A medium sized woman who eats 75% of the food offered daily would gain 1 pound every 14 days or 21 lbs/year
- Canteen offers mostly high fat, low nutrition snack foods for purchase
- Corrections food budget is \$2.40/inmate/day
- Many statutory requirements to meet while creating menus (e.g., daily calcium requirement for women)

Consequences of Weight Gain

- Risk factors for chronic disease.
- Exacerbates existing physical and mental health issues.
- Can create barriers to employment and successful reintegration.

“They took away our cigarettes and gave us diabetes.”

CCCF Inmate

Healthy Food Access Project Objectives



- Expand existing CCCF garden and integrate inmate-grown, fresh produce into menus.
 - Change menus:
 - Increase availability of fresh fruits and vegetables
 - Adjust caloric intake to be gender appropriate
 - Display calorie information during mealtime.
- Provide onsite training to help women develop gardening and other food system skills.

Growing the CCCF Garden

- Increased garden space by >100%
- Expanded from 10,000 to 23,000 square feet
- Adding greenhouse for four-season growing potential, plant propagation, and expanded classroom space
- Integrating locally-grown produce into menus
- Goal for 2012 growing season is 4,000 pounds of inmate-grown produce

Changing the CCCF Menu



- **Developed gender-appropriate menus**
 - Draft menus= 2,200 calories/day, feature smaller portions of dessert and bread.
 - Thought to be budget-neutral; costs will be examined.
 - Will be integrating more produce from garden, as available.
- **Began menu labeling: posted boards with calorie info.**
 - Began in February; positive feedback from inmates
 - Considering a green/yellow/red light system of coding
 - May integrate additional nutritional info (beyond calories)

Reduce Unhealthy Food Availability

- The Canteen is virtual and services all ODOC facilities via weekly order & delivery to each facility
 - Runs as for-profit; uses traditional supply & demand model
 - Women are small proportion of total prison population, so have low “purchasing power” or market influence
 - Price is important. Average inmate makes \$26/month. Unhealthy snacks are cheap.
- Women can purchase sugar-sweetened beverages
 - Minimum has open access; Medium has limited access

Redefining “Treats”

- “Treats” are provided at graduation ceremonies and other special events
 - Usually involve high-calorie, sugary baked goods
 - Trying to replace/augment with fruit plates or other healthier options
 - Recent survey event with strawberries & grapes was a huge hit



Promote Health & Food System Skills

- Three main strategies being used:
 1. Inmate education
 2. Menu labeling and coding of items on canteen list
 3. Job training in food production & preparation



Empower Change Agents

- Women with histories of poverty, trauma, substance abuse, and chronic health problems learn how to:
 - Differentiate between healthy & unhealthy food
 - Identify and select healthy food
 - Grow healthy food
 - Prepare healthy food
 - Eat healthy food
 - Provide healthy food to their children and grandchildren
 - Expect & prioritize healthy food

Inmate Education

- Like Farm-to-School Programs, we also need to increase demand for healthier items:
 - Important to success of in-prison program
 - Important for ex-offender's life at re-entry
- Inmate education includes comprehensive approach:
 - Classes (e.g., Seed to Supper, Nutrition, integration of topics into other existing classes)
 - Newsletter articles

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Creating Educated Consumers



- Menu labeling of food provided in dining hall & dorms
 - Meals served cafeteria style; women can make choices
 - Information provided on current and following days' menus
 - All items listed by meal; include calorie information
- Canteen list being coded with “Heart Healthy” symbols
 - Will help women determine healthier options
 - Currently, only 20% are “Heart Healthy”
 - Not clear what criteria being used

Who Sees a Farm?



Convert Underutilized Land into Food Production



Before

After



RIVER GREEN



**In 2020 COVID 19
happened**

2012 Recommendation vs Current State

Plan	Current State
Expand the Minimum Garden to 23,000 sq ft	Minimum Garden is 23,00 sq ft
Integrate Fresh Produces into menus	Varies with seasonal availability
Reduce calories to 2200 per day	Done
Menu Labeling calorie information	Not being provided
Offer Gardening/Nutritional Classes	Currently gardening class are being offered
Offer healthier options in canteen and celebration	Currently not provided (with caveats)
Heart healthy labels in canteen	currently not being done

Current State 2023 Garden Space

- **Minimums garden is 23,000 sq ft and produces and avg of 3000 lbs. per year**
- **We are currently we are building a garden, 10 4x8 garden beds for the J & K units (long term residence units in the medium facility)**
- **J unit 50 of the 85 women took our basic Gardening class. 22 are currently in our advanced gardening Class. K Units classes will start in May**



Changing Menu

“Increased availability of fresh fruits and vegetables” - Not so much unless the garden is producing

“Adjust Caloric intake to be gender appropriate” - Current intake 2200 calories per day not including canteen

“Display Calorie information during mealtime” this is no longer being done



Increasing Availability of Fresh Fruit and Vegetables

Work with the Kitchen Coordinators to determine what produce should be grown

Create reports which notify the coordinators about produce availability near and long term

Work with the Kitchens to introduce new produce into the kitchens “microgreen program”



Limiting Food Waste

Working with the Kitchen staffs, we discovered garden product was being discarded because the kitchen did not know how to prepare it.

We created these documents for both Medium and Minimum Kitchens



Swiss Chard



Related to beets and Spinach, swiss chard is a fiber-dense, easily grown leafy green.

How to clean: Mature chard leaves have two edible parts: the tender greens and the more fibrous stems. To separate the stem from the leaf, use a knife to cut the leaf away or strip it off.

How to use: have it raw in salads; add the leaves to hummus, or add to a pizza topping; saute with olive oil or coconut oil and seasonings for a side dish.

How To Cook The greens cook quickly and are delicious raw, sautéed, or added to omelets, soups, stews, lasagnas, and gratins. Use them as you would spinach or beet greens. The stems take a bit longer to cook

How to Store: Store in a plastic bag or other sealed container, unwashed, in the fridge for 2-3 days. Use Swiss Chard quickly as it does not have a long shelf life.

. Nutrition Facts (per cup):

35 Calories

7g carbohydrates

3.7g of fiber

477% DV* of Vitamin K 60% DV of Vitamin A

35% DV of Vitamin C

36% DV of Magnesium 32% DV of Copper

25% DV of Manganese 22% DV of Iron

22% DV of Vitamin E 20% DV of Potassium 8% DV of Calcium

*Daily Value



Onsite Training

“Provide onsite training to help women develop gardening and other food system skills”

Currently we offer the following classes in both the Minimum and Medium facilities at Coffee Creek:

- OSU Seed to Supper
- OSU Extension’s Sustainable Gardening
- Greenhouse Management
- Plant Disease Diagnostics

Our volunteers also work in the gardens along side of the inmates



Conclusions

Not all of the recommendations from the study were implemented

Covid caused a lot of DOC people to move to different position or retire. More of the recommendation have fallen away.

We are involved in ongoing discussion with Food Services to explore reinstating some of the recommendations and to optimize the use of produce coming out of the gardens



Conclusions

What to do:

- I would like to see more research done or an expansion of the initial study
- Currently we have no nutrition class. Anyone interested in starting one? We will sponsor it.

