



WISCONSIN DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS

Governor Tony Evers / Secretary Kevin A. Carr

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DOC Communications, 608-240-5060

DOCMedia@wisconsin.gov

DOC's Oregon Farm Earns Achievement Award

DATCP Honor Recognizes the Farm's Quality Product and Conditions

MADISON – The Wisconsin Department of Corrections' (DOC) Oregon Farm has been honored by the state Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection. (DATCP)

The farm, part of the DOC's Bureau of Correctional Enterprises (BCE), received a 2019 Achievement Award from DATCP for producing high-quality milk and maintaining noteworthy farm conditions for more than three years.

"The employees and workers on our Oregon Farm team can take pride in this recognition that they continue the tradition of high performance in BCE Agriculture operations," said BCE Director Wes Ray. "They do this work every day, in any weather, and they do it very well."

The Oregon Farm consists of approximately 530 acres of mostly alfalfa, corn, soybeans and wheat. Those crops are primarily for feeding the Holstein dairy herd. Six Oregon Farm staff members train and supervise 21 workers in custody at Oakhill Correctional Institution.

"The growth of the workers at the farm is amazing. The job skills they gain are great, but the real positive aspect is seeing their confidence rise," said BCE Farm Supervisor Eric Trumm. "I feel the farms give the workers great opportunities to learn and grow."

One of those workers, Donnie, explained why he has been working at the farm for five months.

"(I) Like to learn new life skills and feel like I'm part of the team." He said, "I love taking care of the animals. I'm always looking for cows with poor milk quality or that aren't eating as much as they normally do."

In addition to running three farms and a dairy, BCE operates two warehouses and makes products in 12 industries. Statewide, BCE employed a daily average of 440 people in DOC care last year, paying them a modest wage and teaching them work skills.

"Save money to start over after my release," is the reason Thurman gave for working at the Oregon Farm, adding that he also enjoys the work. "I really like taking care of the calves. I also like hoof trim days because they are interesting and challenging."

The congratulatory letter from DATCP concluded with, "Thank you again for consistently producing the high quality milk that makes Wisconsin's dairy industry a leader in the nation and the world."

