

Aroostook Inmate Work Programs

The Sheriff's Office works closely with two local charities to address food insecurity in Northern Maine. These charities, with the assistance of our inmate workers, raise fresh vegetables that are donated to food pantries, low income working families and the elderly in Aroostook County and parts of Washington and Penobscot Counties. This is our third year of partnering with Friends of Aroostook in Houlton. We provide inmates workers to plant, weed and harvest over twenty acres of crops. In the summer of 2016 we entered into a partnership with Farm for Me, a program of Catholic Charities, in Caribou, doing the same work with them. Our inmate workers have been integral in the donation of hundreds of thousands of pounds of fresh vegetables to families in need. During harvest, fresh produce also finds its way to the jail kitchen, helping reduce our food budget. As of September, inmate workers had logged nearly 4,000 hours on these projects.

In 2016, we also began community work projects for municipalities. Two days per week, inmate workers are taken to various towns to do such things as scrape and paint fire hydrants, collect trash from roadways, repair cemetery and monument walkways, remove rocks from gravel roadways, shovel gravel, stack brush, etc. We have also provided labor for non-profit charities. As of September, this work crew has donated more than 700 hours to Aroostook County communities.

These programs are much appreciated by those receiving the help and they have the potential to be very beneficial to the inmates as well.

