

COMPENDIUM: COMMUNITY POLICING
AND PROCEDURAL JUSTICE IN JAILS PART 5.6

CASE STUDY

The Farm Program

Plymouth County (Massachusetts) Sheriff's Office



COPS
Community Oriented Policing Services
U.S. Department of Justice

 **National Policing Institute**
PURSUING EXCELLENCE THROUGH SCIENCE AND INNOVATION



This project was supported, in whole or in part, by cooperative agreement number 2018-CK-WX-K017 awarded to the National Police Foundation by the U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Community Oriented Policing Services. The opinions contained herein are those of the author(s) or contributor(s) and do not necessarily represent the official position or policies of the U.S. Department of Justice. References to specific individuals, agencies, companies, products, or services should not be considered an endorsement by the author(s), the contributor(s), or the U.S. Department of Justice. Rather, the references are illustrations to supplement discussion of the issues.

The internet references cited in this publication were valid as of the date of publication. Given that URLs and websites are in constant flux, neither the author(s), the contributor(s), nor the COPS Office can vouch for their current validity.

This resource was developed under a federal award and may be subject to copyright. The U.S. Department of Justice reserves a royalty-free, nonexclusive, and irrevocable license to reproduce, publish, or otherwise use and to authorize others to use this resource for Federal Government purposes. This resource may be freely distributed and used for non-commercial and educational purposes only.

Recommended citation:

National Policing Institute and National Sheriffs' Association. 2023. *The Farm Program: Plymouth County (Massachusetts) Sheriff's Office*. Compendium: Community Policing and Procedural Justice in Jails Part 5.6. Washington, DC: Office of Community Oriented Policing Services.

Published 2023

Compendium Contents

<u>Part 1</u>	Adapting Community-Oriented Policing Strategies and Procedural Justice for Jail Communities
<u>Part 2</u>	Quick Reference Guide
<u>Part 3</u>	Research Brief
<u>Part 4</u>	Promising Practices, Examples of Promising Practices from the Field
<u>Part 5.1</u>	<i>Case Study.</i> Pathways ARC (Achieving Recovery by Choice) Franklin County (Ohio) Sheriff's Office
<u>Part 5.2</u>	<i>Case Study.</i> The Inmate Growth Naturally and Intentionally Through Education (I.G.N.I.T.E.) Program Genesee County (Michigan) Sheriff's Office
<u>Part 5.3a</u>	<i>Case Study.</i> Gender Responsive Programming Los Angeles County (California) Sheriff's Department
<u>Part 5.3b</u>	<i>Case Study.</i> Town Sheriff Model Los Angeles County (California) Sheriff's Department
<u>Part 5.4</u>	<i>Case Study.</i> Familiar Faces Action and Community Transition (F ² ACT) Program Louisville (Kentucky) Metro Department of Corrections
<u>Part 5.5</u>	<i>Case Study.</i> Behavioral Care Center (BCC) Davidson County (Tennessee) Sheriff's Office
<u>Part 5.6</u>	<i>Case Study.</i> The Farm Program Plymouth County (Massachusetts) Sheriff's Office
<u>Part 5.7</u>	<i>Case Study.</i> Sheriff's Anti-Trafficking Initiative (SATI) Suffolk County (New York) Sheriff's Office
<u>Part 6</u>	Jails and Community-Based Strategies Survey Community Oriented Policing Strategies Employed in Jail Communities
<u>Part 7</u>	Pandemic Behind Bars—Lessons Learned in Handling COVID-19 in Jails Strategy Brief
<u>Part 8</u>	Appendix A. Agencies that Participated in the Survey
<u>Part 9</u>	Appendix B. Focus Group Overview and Script

Part 5.6 Contents

Overview	PART 5.6 5
What is the farm and what are its program features?	PART 5.6 6
How does the farm exemplify the principles of community-oriented policing?	PART 5.6 6
Problem solving to tackle the problem of hunger and community engagement	PART 5.6 7
Does the farm program work?	PART 5.6 7
Appendix. History of the Sheriff's "Farm"	PART 5.6 9
Growing Old, Growing New	PART 5.6 9
About the National Sheriffs' Association	PART 5.6 11
About the National Policing Institute (formerly known as the National Police Foundation)	PART 5.6 12
About the COPS Office.	PART 5.6 13

Plymouth County (Massachusetts) Correctional Facility

Current Sheriff: Joseph D. McDonald Jr.

Number of beds/inmates: 1,140 (design capacity)

Overview

The Plymouth County Correctional Facility (PCCF) is designed to hold more than 1,200 inmates, making it the largest correctional facility under one roof in New England. The jail holds a diverse population, including county, state, and federal prisoners. Some inmates have been sentenced; others are awaiting trial. Opened in 1994, the PCCF's design reflects modern corrections management practices, allowing for safe and secure operation. In addition to providing for the security and safety of those incarcerated, the PCCF offers rehabilitative, educational, and vocational programs. Qualified persons are eligible for work assignments within the facility, on the county farm, or in supervised work crews.

The farm has been a working farm for more than 100 years (for more details, see the appendix on p. 9). The farm has played a major role in offender rehabilitation and community engagement through its horticultural program. The philosophy of the program is that instead of sitting in a cell, participation in the program is a chance to give back to the community.¹



Photo courtesy of PCSO

Inmate assists with the delivery of produce to South Shore Community Action Council for distribution to the community

1. WarehamTV, "Queen's Specials – Plymouth County Farm," YouTube, August 21, 2019, <https://youtu.be/HoBPc07ks9Y>.

Inmates work the farm and grow produce, which is then donated to the South Shore Action Council and food pantries throughout the region, helping feed those facing food insecurity in the county. All proceeds from seasonal plant sales are used to fund inmate rehabilitation programs.

What is the farm and what are its program features?

Jail and prison farming has been in existence for many years and has remained sustainable because of the types of crops grown and the community needs this type of programming addresses. With respect to programming, the farm essentially works as a job-training program, and it is the inmates' labor that helps to sustain the program. The farm provides a setting for incarcerated individuals to experience the responsibility and joy of caring for animals in the petting zoo. The petting zoo is one of the most popular destinations for many people in the community.

The Plymouth County Sheriff's Office (PCSO) serves the city of Brockton and 23 rural towns. Among the benefits of this program is that it allows individuals to work with their hands and to work with animals outside, all of which reportedly brings a lot of satisfaction to the inmates. While the majority of individuals in this male-only facility are not going to go into the farming profession, the program allows for them to gain a real sense of accomplishment, especially in terms of the impact it has on feeding people in the community.

How does the farm exemplify the principles of community-oriented policing?

Community-oriented policing is a philosophy that promotes organizational strategies that support the systematic use of community partnerships and problem-solving techniques to proactively address the immediate conditions that give rise to public safety issues (see figure 1).² Components of community policing include problem solving, the development of community partnerships, and organizational transformation.

Figure 1. Community policing components



Source: COPS Office, "About the COPS Office," accessed December 9, 2021, <https://cops.usdoj.gov/aboutcops>.

2. COPS Office, *Community Policing Defined* (Washington, DC: Office of Community Oriented Policing Services, 2014), <https://cops.usdoj.gov/RIC/ric.php?page=detail&id=COPS-P157>.

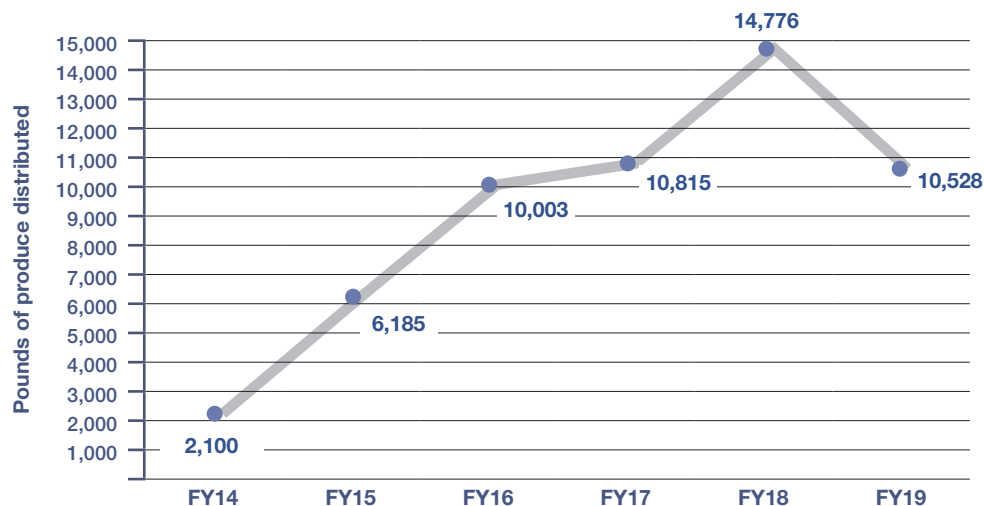


Figure 2. Produce distribution (in pounds) by the South Shore Community Action Council

Source: South Shore Community Action Council

Problem solving to tackle the problem of hunger and community engagement

In addition to being a program geared toward helping incarcerated individuals lead productive lives after incarceration, the farm is also an important community resource for Plymouth County. In a previous administration there was less commitment to the program; however, under Sheriff Joseph D. McDonald, Jr., the investment has resumed. Since 2014, there has been a link between the farm and the community via the South Shore Community Action Council.

Through the growing and harvesting of vegetables, the petting zoo, education programs, and community events hosted by the farm throughout the year, the community and inmates are brought together. Festivals are popular with the community, who generally know that the farm is staffed by inmates. The head of travel and tourism in Plymouth, which includes Plymouth Rock and the Plymouth Plantation, ranks the farm as a tourist attraction.



Photo courtesy of Plymouth County Sheriff's Office

A Plymouth County Inmate Works in the Greenhouse

Does the farm program work?

Assessing program effectiveness. While there has been no formal program evaluation conducted, there is some sense of the impact the program has for the community. Through a partnership, the South Shore Community Action Council makes food deliveries of produce harvested from the farm twice a week. The produce is then distributed to a food bank and senior care centers. Since inception, 54,007 pounds of produce cultivated and harvested by inmates working at the farm have been distributed to the community. This is the equivalent of 41,852 meals for the community. In 2018, the farm had its highest crop yield to date of 14,776 lbs. (See figure 2).

Replication. While it may be difficult to imagine how a farm program could be replicated given the land requirements, size, and magnitude of operation, the principles of the farm can still be replicated on a much smaller scale. For other jurisdictions interested having a similar type of programming, PCSO recommends starting small with raised beds. An operation of this size would still allow incarcerated individuals the opportunity to nurture something from seed to fruition, and it could also provide an opportunity for engagement with community youth on the importance of farms and horticulture. For example, in Plymouth County, the nonprofit organization Terra Cura has partnered with the PCSO to install six school and community gardens with the help of the Sheriff's Community Outreach Division.

The installation of raised beds, including starting the seedlings in the greenhouses at the farm, is part of the PCSO's partnership with Terra Cura. Terra Cura works with the student and community with hands-on lessons derived from gardening (chemistry, art, and where our food comes from).

For more information about this program, please contact:

Name: Karen Barry

Title: Deputy Director of Public Information

Email: kbarry@pcsdma.org

Phone: 508-830-6264

<https://www.pcsdma.org/farm.html>



Photo courtesy of PCSO

Officer Mike Cadete, who leads the Community Work Crew, works with students and faculty on the installation of the community garden at their school

Appendix.

History of the Sheriff's "Farm"

Growing Old, Growing New

The Plymouth County Sheriff's Farm and Horticultural Program

In some ways, the landing of the Pilgrims 400 years ago was the lucky result of farming. It is thought colonists settled at Plymouth Harbor partly because the land above the Rock had already been cleared by native inhabitants. Later, these natives taught the newcomers not only how to plant corn, but also provided the seed to allow them to survive those first troubling years.

And, for almost as many years, the Sheriff of Plymouth has found ways to house, feed and clothe those held at perhaps the nation's oldest jail.

Of course, like much of Plymouth, the office of Sheriff and its mission has changed many times over its long history. The original lockup was likely not far from those first corn fields. In fact, it was not until 1902 that the county jail moved out of downtown and further inland to the Chandler Farm. Beginning in January 1902, Sheriff Henry Porter also began a farming program and planned to build a sixth Jail at the Obery Heights locale.

Construction of the new facility was begun in 1908, and shortly thereafter, the remaining acreage was used to resume farming. In 1910, its first full year, Sheriff Porter's vision to allow inmates to feed themselves resulted in a bumper yield. Crops raised that year included "35 Tons of Hay, 600 bushels of corn, 1416 bushels of potatoes, three tons of cabbage, two of carrots and 489 bushels of turnips." Livestock and dairy production yielded 2,425 pounds of pork (presumably fattened on local corn) and almost 200,000 pounds of milk.

For almost seven decades, little changed at the Farm. All work was done by inmates supervised by correctional staff. In the winter, fields were cleared, roads and buildings repaired, and dairy cows and cattle fed. Milk was sold regularly to area hospitals and schools, and the rest used by the jail population.

Just like the farm, Plymouth County also continued to grow. Around 1990, then-Sheriff Peter Flynn began planning for a modern correctional facility to replace the Obery Street jail. The new building on Long Pond Road cost nearly \$110 million and was designed to hold nearly three times as many inmates. Meanwhile, farming continued on Obery Street. Later, the old jail was torn down and some land was taken to construct a new Registry of Deeds and a new courthouse.

Change, however, did not come without problems. By 2000, there were signs that the farm operation was in decline. The low point came in 2002, when the department closed its dairy operation and sold its herd in the midst of a budget crisis.

Newly-elected Sheriff McDonald, a prosecutor but also a former member of 4-H, arrived in January 2005. Among his immediate goals was to reenergize the farm as a community resource for inmates and the public.

Over the next decade, he and his staff undertook the refurbishing and repurposing of farm buildings, greenhouses and fields. A horticultural program was begun to allow inmates to grow flowers for sale, as well as pumpkins and even a beef herd. Proceeds went back into the farm and to support other inmate programs. The old dairy barn was repaired to house retired racehorses. A free petting zoo was opened to the public. The farm also sponsors two festivals – a planting event in May and a harvest celebration in October – that bring hundreds to the farm each year. Recently, inmates have begun raising vegetables to stock area food pantries to serve local families and each year the amounts of inmate produced foodstuffs have grown –literally!

Most importantly, in 2008, Sheriff McDonald, along with state and local leaders, entered into an agreement to keep the remaining 90 farm acres as a permanent inmate agricultural program and out of the hands of would-be developers.

Source: Plymouth County Sheriff's Office

About the National Sheriffs' Association

The **National Sheriffs' Association (NSA)** is a professional association, chartered in 1940, dedicated to serving the Office of Sheriff and its affiliates through police education, police training, and general law enforcement information resources. The NSA represents thousands of sheriffs, deputies, and other law enforcement agents, public safety professionals, and concerned citizens nationwide.

Through the years, the NSA has provided programs for sheriffs, their deputies, chiefs of police, and others in the field of criminal justice to perform their jobs in the best possible manner and to better serve the people of their cities, counties, or jurisdictions.

The National Sheriffs' Association headquarters is located in Alexandria, Virginia, and offers police training, police information, court security training, jail information, and other law enforcement services to sheriffs, deputies, and others throughout the nation. The NSA has worked to forge cooperative relationships with local, state, and federal criminal justice professionals across the nation to network and share information about homeland security programs and projects.

The NSA serves as the center of a vast network of law enforcement information, filling requests for information daily and enabling criminal justice professionals—including police officers, sheriffs, and deputies—to locate the information and programs they need. The NSA recognizes the need to seek information from the membership, particularly the sheriff and the state sheriffs' associations, in order to meet the needs and concerns of individual NSA members. While working on the national level, the NSA has continued to seek grass-roots guidance, ever striving to work with and for its members, its clients, and citizens of the nation.

The NSA has through the years assisted sheriffs' offices, sheriffs' departments, and state sheriffs' associations in locating and preparing applications for state and federal homeland security grant funding. The NSA record and reputation for integrity and dependability in such public safety programs among government agencies is well recognized and has led to continuing opportunities to apply for grants on the national, state, and local levels as well as management of service contracts.

To learn more, visit the NSA online at www.sheriffs.org.

About the National Policing Institute (formerly known as the National Police Foundation)

The **National Policing Institute** is a national, nonpartisan, nonprofit organization dedicated to pursuing excellence through science and innovation in policing. As the country's oldest police research organization, the National Policing Institute has learned that police practices should be based on scientific evidence about what works best, the paradigm of evidence-based policing.

Established in 1970, the National Policing Institute has conducted seminal research in police behavior, policy, and procedure and works to transfer to local agencies the best new information about practices for dealing effectively with a range of important police operational and administrative concerns. Motivating all of the National Policing Institute's efforts is the goal of efficient, humane policing that operates within the framework of democratic principles and the highest ideals of the nation.

To learn more, visit the National Policing Institute at www.policinginstitute.org.

About the COPS Office

The **Office of Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS Office)** is the component of the U.S. Department of Justice responsible for advancing the practice of community policing by the nation's state, local, territorial, and tribal law enforcement agencies through information and grant resources.

Community policing begins with a commitment to building trust and mutual respect between police and communities. It supports public safety by encouraging all stakeholders to work together to address our nation's crime challenges. When police and communities collaborate, they more effectively address underlying issues, change negative behavioral patterns, and allocate resources.

Rather than simply responding to crime, community policing focuses on preventing it through strategic problem-solving approaches based on collaboration. The COPS Office awards grants to hire community policing officers and support the development and testing of innovative policing strategies. COPS Office funding also provides training and technical assistance to community members and local government leaders, as well as all levels of law enforcement.

Since 1994, the COPS Office has been appropriated more than \$20 billion to add community policing officers to the nation's streets, enhance crime fighting technology, support crime prevention initiatives, and provide training and technical assistance to help advance community policing. Other achievements include the following:

- To date, the COPS Office has funded the hiring of approximately 130,000 additional officers by more than 13,000 of the nation's 18,000 law enforcement agencies in both small and large jurisdictions.
- More than 800,000 law enforcement personnel, community members, and government leaders have been trained through COPS Office-funded training organizations and the COPS Training Portal.
- Almost 500 agencies have received customized advice and peer-led technical assistance through the COPS Office Collaborative Reform Initiative Technical Assistance Center.
- To date, the COPS Office has distributed more than eight million topic-specific publications, training curricula, white papers, and resource CDs and flash drives.
- The COPS Office also sponsors conferences, roundtables, and other forums focused on issues critical to law enforcement.

COPS Office information resources, covering a wide range of community policing topics such as school and campus safety, violent crime, and officer safety and wellness, can be downloaded via the COPS Office's home page, <https://cops.usdoj.gov>.

Jails are communities in and of themselves, whose members are the individuals incarcerated and the correctional staff employed there; they are also part of the broader communities in which they are located, where the correctional staff live and to which the incarcerated population will eventually return. Community-oriented policing is as important in jails as it is in towns, cities, and counties; this compendium of community policing and procedural justice practices and programs, developed by the National Policing Institute and the National Sheriffs' Association, features research and promising practices as well as eight successful programs operated by seven sheriffs' departments that will be illuminating for other agencies nationwide.



COPS
Community Oriented Policing Services
U.S. Department of Justice

U.S. Department of Justice
Office of Community Oriented
Policing Services
145 N Street NE
Washington, DC 20530

To obtain details on COPS
Office programs, call the
COPS Office Response
Center at 800-421-6770.

Visit the COPS Office online
at cops.usdoj.gov.



National Policing Institute
PURSUING EXCELLENCE THROUGH SCIENCE AND INNOVATION

National Policing Institute
2550 South Clark Street, Suite 1130
Arlington, VA 22202

For details about National Policing
Institute programs, call 202-833-1460.
Visit the National Policing Institute
online at policinginstitute.org.



National Sheriffs' Association
1450 Duke Street
Alexandria, VA 22314

For details about NSA programs,
call 800-424-7827.
Visit the National Sheriffs'
Association online at sheriffs.org.