



Agriculture Division

Introduction

The Agriculture Division encompasses the Cummins Unit, Tucker Unit, Wrightsville Unit, East Arkansas Regional Unit and the North Central Unit. This year's annual operation budget is over 18,000,000. The division farms an average of 21,500 acres in cash crops and livestock, generating about \$6,000,000 in cash crops and over \$6,000,000 in inmate consumption.

The cold storage/slaughterhouse and vegetable-processing facilities produce two-thirds of the total inmate consumption income. We operate with two layer houses, which produce enough eggs to sustain all our units at a much cheaper cost than powered eggs or eggs bought from outside suppliers. We grow our own pullets from day old chicks.

Each day, 350 inmates "turn out" for work in the Agriculture Division. The division provides inmates the opportunity to learn skills that will help them find employment in the free world upon their release. Inmates participating in our agricultural programs earn work-credit achievement certificates that reflect the skills they have learned. These certificates can be used when seeking employment.

Below is some information about the different components of our farm operation.

Beef

- 1.) We do all our calving in the spring
- 2.) Depending upon their age, cows are given two chances to breed. If those attempts are unsuccessful. The cows are sold or processed as cull
- 3.) Breeding season is 75-90. We run one bull to 20-25 cows

- 4.) Bulls are given a soundness exam prior to breeding season and culled if they do not pass the test.
- 5.) Cattle are fed primarily hay, silage and mineral supplement. Replacement heifers are fed grain to reach their potential.
- 6.) Calves are put on a pre-condition program for 45-60 days, bunk broke and age/source verified.
- 7.) Calves are sold through Superior Livestock Auction via video.
- 8.) Depending on the cattle market, cull cows might be processed as ground beef or roast.

Dairy

- 1.) There are 369 head in the dairy herd currently.
- 2.) We are milking each day at 6 a.m. and 5 p.m. but there are times the number of milking may change due to the number of head fluctuating.
- 3.) The milk parlor is a double-eight herringbone configuration. It takes 2.5 to 3 hours to milk and clean the system.
- 4.) Replacement heifers are raised from our calves. They are culled through different stages of life to get the most desirable heifers back into the herd.
- 5.) Bull/steer calves and culls are sold at auction sales across the state. Dairy breeds have a low cut-out percentage, so it is more profitable to sell instead of processing the beef in our cold-storage facility.
- 6.) Milk is processed on-site and packaged in 8-ounce pouches for inmate consumption or gallon-bags for cooking. The milk is blended with powder to get the proper mix of low-fat milk for inmates. (1.5 to 2 percent)
- 7.) The dairy utilizes AI breeding on the top 10 percent of the milking herd with sexed semen. We try to breed the best to the best. We do not breed to calve in the hot months of summer. It causes heat stress on the calves and dystocia in the cows. The remaining herd is now being bred to Angus/Brangus semen to increase in the value of those calves at the sale barns.

Poultry

- 1.) We have three layer houses and one pullet house.
- 2.) We purchase 1-day-old chicks and raise them to go into our layer houses. That process takes 18 to 20 weeks
- 3.) We have tried three different types (breeds) of birds. Those are: Bovans, Hyline 36 and Lohman. The Hyline 36 is our bird of choice. It is the most efficient layer, taking into consideration the feed consumption and laying percentage.
- 4.) We keep birds until they are 75 weeks of age. This schedule allows us to continue to rotate chicks from the pullet house into the layer houses.
- 5.) Eggs are processed and packaged into 30 dozen cases for shipment to the units.
- 6.) ADC uses 700 cases per week.
- 7.) A primary and secondary backup generator are in place.

- 8.) The poultry operation will produce 6,000 tons of litter per year to be applied to the pastures and row-crop ground
- 9.) There is a composting shed on the premises to allow for the composting of dead birds, leaves and manure for potting soil for use in our greenhouses.

Feed Mill Grain Bins

- 1.) There are 350,000 bushels of storage at the Cummins Farm. None of the other farms have storage.
- 2.) The feed mill produces, on average, 430 tons of feed per month.
- 3.) The mill provides feed for our dairy and beef cattle. Currently, it provides 60 percent of the poultry feed.
- 4.) Corn is stored in the grain bins since it is the primary ingredient in each feed that we make.
- 5.) Soybean meal, cotton seed and vitamin/mineral packs are purchased to add to the corn to make a complete ration.
- 6.) Oats are raised at Cummins for horse feed.

Maintenance

- 1.) Farm maintenance at Cummins is responsible for the repairs and upkeep of all the building and operating systems associated with the farm.

Farm Garage

- 1.) Each of the major farm units has a farm garage for repair of equipment.
- 2.) When it comes to the more up-to-date equipment, it's not always possible for us to make our own repairs due to the need for computer equipment.

Row Crops

- 1.) The row crops follow a strict crop rotation and fertilization program.
- 2.) Row crops are chosen based on markets and rotational needs.
- 3.) Herbicide-resistant weeds are a constant battle at our farms. The Liberty Link Technology has been a big help in combatting the problem.
- 4.) The farms are starting to use new satellite technology for field and yield mapping.

Vegetables

- 1.) 785 acres of vegetable are produced throughout the prison system. Nearly all the units have their own gardens so that they can grow their own fresh produce.
- 2.) Extra production is sent to vegetable processing for processing and freezing for later use.
- 3.) Four units have greenhouses to start seed for transplants. Those houses are also used to raise some produce year-round.
- 4.) The land is double, or triple cropped with vegetables.
- 5.) Vegetable waste that can not be used in our kitchens is used for extra livestock feed.

Cold Storage

- 1.) The cold storage facility processes beef cattle and ground beef.

Summary

The Agriculture Division gives ADC the ability to provide food for its prison units at a reduced cost. For this reason, it is a boon to both the state and its taxpayers. The program provides jobs for inmates and helps to cultivate a work ethic. Inmates who participate in this program leave prison with new skills that will improve their chances of securing employment on the outside. Farms played a vital role in shaping Arkansas history. Our agriculture employees embrace that history even as they continue to explore new technology and approaches to farming. Both the staff and our inmates take great pride in what they can do for the state of Arkansas and its prisons.