

CATEGORY: POPULATIONS/PROGRAMS

Corrections Populations & Programs

Horticulture for health initiatives for incarcerated individuals include gardening, vocational horticulture programs and therapeutic horticulture interventions. Restorative nature activities, plant production/ecology programs, beekeeping, delivery of horticulture certificate courses, and garden programs with a food security focus including food donations to local community partners are also part of this sector. These programs provide physiological benefits including relief from stress (cortisol production), physical activity, mood regulation, improved brain functioning, as well as development of positive leisure, vocational skills and psychological benefits according to empirical studies. Their impact on recidivism is an area of study as well (Holmes & Waliczek, 2019; Ives, 2022).

Studies on horticulture and green spaces used in correctional settings, previously emerging from the U.K., are now being studied more broadly by others (Hodges Snyder et al, 2016; Baybutt et al, 2019; Devine Wright et al, 2019; Stevens et al, 2022; Gerlach-Spriggs & Healy, 2019; Jewkes et al, 2020). Research is examining the efficacy of horticulture, horticulture training and inmate behavior. More recent studies have included incarcerated juveniles, with numerous online videos documenting food gardens at detention centers, many involving master gardener volunteers. This trend identified in the FLHHN Resource Hub in 2022—farm to prison cafeteria models seen at facilities for male, female & youth offenders, appear to be gaining traction in the U.S. College students seem interested in this topic which is related to food security; several theses are available online (Larson, 2022; Jenkins, 2016; Benham, 2014; Choi, 2020; Granger, 2017). Other topics emerging within the corrections field: access to outdoors (Morris & Izenberg, 2023; Reddon & Durante, 2019; Zeng et al, 2024); connecting with nature (Alexander, 2024; Grant, 2020); horticulture-based programs specifically for female inmates (Cochrane, 2019; Jauk-Ajamie & Blackwood, 2024; Jauk et al, 2022; Toews et al, 2018); and benefits/problems with prison agriculture programs (Chennault & Sbicca, 2022; Everhardt et al., 2024; Hazelett, 2022).

A 2024 book, *Gardening behind bars: Clinical sociology and food justice in incarcerated settings* by Gill, Lindhorst Everhardt & Carmody examines multiple issues related to gardening in correctional facilities.

For related resources refer to category: Populations/Horticulture Programs in Specific Settings – Mental Health; category: Food, Nutrition & Food Action – food action; category: Horticultural Therapy & Health Services – all sections.

Key Organizations

[Harvest Now](#)

[Planting Justice](#)

[Sustainability in Prisons Project](#)

[The Hort](#) (the Horticultural Society of New York)

[Washington State Department of Corrections](#)

Books, journals & epublications on corrections populations and programs

Donoghue, C. (2020). [Agroforestry development planning in state correctional facilities.](#)

Gill, B.I., Lindhorst Everhardt, S., & Carmody, S.B. (2024). *Gardening behind bars: Clinical sociology and food justice in incarcerated settings.* Springer International Publishing.

Granger, K.V. (2017). *Grow where you are planted: The use of gardening as offender rehabilitation In*

Prison. (Doctoral dissertation, Eastern Kentucky University).

Jorgenson, C. (2020). *Helping people with substance use disorders: Drug court and care farms*. Graduate School at OpenSIUC.

[Journal of Offender Rehabilitation](#)

Larson, A. (2022). [Horticultural therapy in prison populations](#). DigitalCommons@SHU.

LeRoy, C.J., Trivett, J.R., Bush, K. et al. (2013). *The sustainability in prisons project handbook: Protocols for the SPP network*, 1st ed. Gorham Publishing.

Smoyer, A.B., & Kjaer Minke, L. (2016). *Food systems in correctional settings: A literature review and case study*. World Health Organization Regional Office for Europe.

Sustainability in Prisons Project (2017). [Beekeeping in prisons program guide](#).

Research & articles

Recently published selected research & articles:

Adams, S., Houston-Kolnik, J., & Reichert, J. (2017). [Trauma-informed and evidence-based practices and programs to address trauma in correctional settings](#). *Illinois Criminal Justice Information Authority*.

Alexander, Z. (2024). "The island is now a big vegetable garden": Imaginaries of nature and carceral reform at Rikers Island. *Antipode*.

Arimoto, M., & Michaux, M.B. (2020). Community partnership through transformative justice: The healing garden project at the Oregon State Penitentiary. In *Higher education accessibility behind and beyond prison walls* (pp. 281-301). IGI Global.

Ascencio, J. (2018). Offenders, work, and rehabilitation: Horticultural therapy as a social cognitive career theory intervention for offenders. *Journal of Therapeutic Horticulture*, 28(1), 21-28.

Baybutt, M., Dooris, M., & Farrier, A. (2019). Growing health in UK prison settings. *Health Promot Int.*, 34(4), 792-802.

Baybutt, M., & Chamlal, K. (2016). Health-promoting prisons: Theory to practice. *Glob Health Promot.*, 23(1 Suppl), 66-74.

Becker Green, J., & Trivett, J.R. (2017). [A day for pollinators in prisons](#). *Sustainability in Prisons Project*.

Benoit, E. (2019). [Rethinking the landscape of incarceration](#). *Sustainability in Prisons Project*.

Bulger, M. (2017). [Six U.S. correctional facilities with 'farm to prison' local food sourcing programs](#).

Chennault, C., & Sbicca, J. (2022). Prison agriculture in the United States: Racial capitalism and the disciplinary matrix of exploitation and rehabilitation. *Agric Hum Values*.

Choi, K.Y. (2020). Prisons, sustainability and resistance: Exploring the benefits of therapeutic horticulture programs and animal programs in carceral settings. Thesis: Monash University.

Cochrane, R. (2019). Passionate partners transform incarcerated women into urban farmers. *AHTA Magazine*, 47(3), 11.

DelSesto, M. (2022). Therapeutic horticulture and desistance from crime. *The Howard Journal of Crime and Justice*, 61(4), 444-462.

Devine-Wright, H., Baybutt, M., & Meek, R. (2019). Producing food in English and Welsh prisons. *Appetite*, 143, 104433.

Everhardt, S.L., Jauk-Ajamie, D., Carmody, S.B., & Gill, B.I. (2024). Building capitals pending revolution: Gardens behind bars as clinical sociology. In *Gardening behind bars: Clinical sociology and food justice in incarcerated settings* (pp. 175-197). Springer International Publishing.

Everhardt, S.L., Jauk-Ajamie, D., Carmody, S.B., & Gill, B.I. (2024). Creating a garden in a community-based corrections facility in the US Midwest. In *Gardening behind bars: Clinical sociology and food justice in incarcerated settings* (pp. 175-197). Springer International Publishing.

Everhardt, S.L., Jauk-Ajamie, D., Carmody, S.B., & Gill, B.I. (2024). The exploitation of incarcerated

- labor: An examination of federal laws, policies, and programs. In *Gardening behind bars: Clinical sociology and food justice in incarcerated settings*. Springer International Publishing.
- Everhardt, S.L., Jauk-Ajamie, D., Carmody, S.B., & Gill, B.I. (2024). Therapeutic gardening in incarcerated settings in the USA. In *Gardening behind bars: Clinical sociology and food justice in incarcerated settings*. Springer International Publishing.
- Farrier, A., & Baybutt, M. (2024). Therapeutic gardening in English prisons post-pandemic: Implications for health and wellbeing. *Health Education*.
- Farrier, A., Baybutt, M., & Dooris, M. (2019). Mental health and wellbeing benefits from a prisons horticultural programme. *Int J Prison Health.*, 15(1), 91-104.
- Fleming, L., Bethel, M., & Roberts, T. (2023). Self-regulation, its neuroscience foundations and horticultural therapy: Growing the connections. *Journal of Therapeutic Horticulture*, 33(1).
- Fisk, I., & Hamilton-Giachritsis, C. (2024). Positive impacts of prison-based gardening and horticultural activities for previously incarcerated individuals. *Ecopsychology*.
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- Gottfried, E.D., & Christopher, S.C. (2017). Mental disorders among criminal offenders: A review of the literature. *J Correct Health Care.*, 23(3), 336-346.
- Grant, G. (2020). Nature deficit and the potential of green prison programs to transform US prisons. *Fresh Writing*, 20.
- Hardin-Fanning, F., Adegboyega, A.O., & Rayens, M.K. (2018). Adolescents' perceptions of a gardening activity at a juvenile justice center. *J Holist Nurs.*, 36(2), 170-178.
- Hart, F.B., & Reisner, M. (2021). More than just gardening program – using horticultural therapy and mindfulness practice to promote health and connection for incarcerated individuals and those preparing to re-enter their communities. *ISHS Acta Horticulturae 1330: XV International People Plant Symposium and II International Symposium on Horticultural Therapies: The Role of Horticulture in Human Well-being and Social Development*.
- Hazelett, E. (2022). Greening the cage: Exploitation and resistance in the (un)sustainable prison garden. *Antipode*.
- Hecker, I., & Kuehn, D. (2019). Apprenticeship and the justice system. *Urban Institute*.
- Hoffman, A.J. (2020). Going 'green' from gray: Providing opportunities of community development and sustainability within a correctional facilities program. *J Prev Interv Community.*, 48(3), 272-280.
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- Holmes, M., & Waliczek, T.M. (2019). The effect of horticultural community service programs on recidivism. *HortTechnology*, 29(4).
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- Jauk, D., Gill, B., Caruana, C., & Everhardt, S. (2022). Systemic inequality, sustainability, and COVID-19 in US prisons: A sociological exploration of women's prison gardens in pandemic times. *Research in Political Sociology*, 29. In Aladuwaka, Wejnert & Alagan (Eds.) *Systemic inequality, sustainability and COVID-19*. Emerald Publishing Ltd., 185-209.
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- healthy blue space. *Criminology & Criminal Justice*, 20(4), 381-398.
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- Maloney, S. (2021). [A garden can cultivate an inmate: Reimagining youth incarceration.](#)
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Turner, M., King, N., Mojtahedi, D. et al. (2021). Well-being programmes in prisons in England and Wales: A mixed-methods study. *Int J Prison Health*.

Watkins, C. (2017). Industrialized bodies: Women, food, and environmental justice in the criminal justice system. In Nocella, Ducre & Lupinacci (Eds.), *Addressing environmental and food justice toward dismantling the school-to-prison pipeline*. Palgrave Macmillan.

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Examples of corrections populations & programs

5 *Incredible Prison REhabilitation Programs* includes gardens, farm & exotic animals.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XmqL65ZBx44>

Cook County Jail Gardening Program in Chicago - inmates comment on their experiences growing produce including donations, sales to local restaurants, transformations in attitudes & activities.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=i0h1vX7Sv1A>

Could Meditation and Gardening Break the Cycle of Prison [youtube] video shares insights from inmates, shedding light on horticultural therapy interventions referencing neuroscience responses.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qkaDxV4Eg9w&t=6s>

Farm and Rehabilitation Meals (FARM) program in San Diego grows and serves farm produce in prison.

<https://time.com/2795982/california-prison-farm-to-table-scheme-may-help-keep-inmates-fed-and-free/>

Greenhouse at Rikers Island Prison is a horticultural therapy & vocational training program, with adjunct programs Apple Seed, Greenteam, Neighborhood Plaza program, & NYDigs.

<https://www.thehort.org/about/>

Growing Opportunities Gardening Program for girls at the Youth Transition Campus in Kearny Mesa, Cal. With participation in vocational horticulture programming as a pathway/exploration for career choices for girls aged 13-17, delivered in conjunction with Master Gardener volunteers.

<https://www.countynewscenter.com/youth-reap-bounty-in-gardening-experience/>

Insight Garden Program in California transforms prisoners' lives through connection to nature.

<https://insightgardenprogram.org/>

Lookout Garden at Mission Institution partners with Correctional Service Canada (in British Columbia) addressing food security, food access for inmates & local communities, in particular, Aboriginal communities.

<https://www.lte-ene.ca/en/lookout-garden-mission-institution>

Prisneyland: California Shifts from Punishment to Rehabilitation video, based on Scandinavian model shows how female offenders are participating in the garden (& other) programs.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=buflgkW8J8Q>

The Prison Vegetable Garden [youtube] video demonstrates the success of the Isle of Man's project.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fqZl6M5cuCc>

Videos, websites & webinars on corrections populations & programs

Beekeeping in Prisons Program Guide from Sustainability in Prisons Project

<http://sustainabilityinprisons.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/02/SPP-Beekeeping-Program-Guide-2-3-17.pdf>

Community Contributions initiative from the Evergreen State College, Dept of Corrections Washington State & multiple corrections facilities partner with community groups.

<http://sustainabilityinprisons.org/spp-programs-in-wa/community-contributions/>

Could Meditation and Gardening Break the Cycle of Prison Recidivism? Video - a look at a California model.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qkaDxV4Eg9w>

Florida Farm to Inmate Program helps state and inmates. Dade County inmates produced 389,000 lbs. of fresh produce that fed hundreds of needy families and saved the state money.

<https://thecapitolist.com/farm-to-inmate-program-win-win-for-farmers-and-state/>

Garden for Good, Hutchinson Correctional Facility in Kansas, (video) provides individual garden beds for inmates to grow their own food; they donate food to local groups; sell produce to inmates & other innovative activities, these supported by Kansas State Research and Extension.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_VKDROXMYmQ

Gardening in Correctional Facilities fact sheet from New Jersey Agricultural Experiment station Rutgers provides info on starting a garden & considerations for detention center gardens.

<https://njaes.rutgers.edu/fs1241/>

Germany: Garden Therapy with Offenders with Mental Health Conditions symposium presentation by HT practitioner Rudiger Eckardt (2024) working with (the newer term) accommodated persons.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3Kobi7Q1yN4>

Benton-Franklin Juvenile Detention Center Garden has inmates grow food for educational purposes and for addressing food insecurity, working with master gardeners.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vawSAls1gdo>

Planting Hope Through a Jail Garden Program uses a garden and recycled materials. Inmates grow food in the Fresh Start Garden in conjunction with UTA & the local sheriff's dept.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=h7rnq4RVhfk>

Salvation Farms organization, with the Vermont Dept. of Corrections use locally grown potatoes & apples in prison cafeterias, in addition to hands-on food processing skills training, planting & donating food to local food banks.

<https://www.salvationfarms.org/our-work/#partners>

THAD (Therapeutic Horticulture Activity Database) offers TH activities across populations including corrections (activities like building & planting a pallet garden, celery seed plantings, hardening off plants & more).

<https://hort.ifas.ufl.edu/therapeutic-horticulture-activities-database/corrections/>

Washington Corrections Center for Women uses multiple horticulture-centric programs: Roots of Success, Prairie Conservation Nursery, Gardens & greenhouses, pollinator plantings, Mother Earth Farm, & Community College Horticulture courses.

<http://sustainabilityinprisons.org/spp-programs-in-wa/wccw/>

20 Organizations Planting the Seeds for Food Justice in Prisons article on Foodtank website identifies newer trends.

<https://foodtank.com/news/2018/08/20-organizations-planting-the-seeds-for-food-justice-in-prisons/>

Related organizations

[Food Matters](#) (U.K.)

Local Cooperative Extension & master gardener programs

Written & compiled by Lesley Fleming Dec 2021; revised in 2022 by Lesley Fleming, Bree Stark; revised in 2024 by Lesley Fleming, Joanna Brown