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# Dept. of Corrections: Inmate workers earn Dairy Worker Training Certificate

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Contact: DOC Communications, 608-240-5060
DOCMedia@wisconsin.gov

WAUPUN – Wisconsin Department of Corrections (DOC) Secretary Jon Litscher joined Lt. Governor Rebecca Kleefisch, leaders from Moraine Park Technical College, and guests to celebrate the second completion ceremony for inmate workers completing the Dairy Worker Training Certificate.

The Bureau of Correctional Enterprises, which is part of DOC, has four dairy farms near Waupun, Fox Lake, Oregon, and Green Bay, as well as a dairy and creamery in Waupun. In total, there are 62 inmate workers managing a herd of more than 552 milk cows, 73 dry cows, and 659 heifers. There are 26 inmate workers at DOC's dairy and creamery.

The milk, ice cream, and sherbet produced are sold to correctional facilities in Wisconsin and Minnesota for consumption and cream is sold to the University of Wisconsin-Madison to make ice cream. The farms also produce crops for livestock feed.

Moraine Park Technical College and DOC worked to develop a training program for inmate workers at DOC's Waupun State Farm. The Dairy Worker Training Certificate is a two-credit transferable credential which includes instruction in milking, feeding, cow reproduction and calf care, as well as farm maintenance and other critical skills.

The Bureau of Correctional Enterprises also operates a transition program for inmate workers to find employment in related fields upon their release.

Lt. Governor Kleefisch said: “At a time when Wisconsin’s unemployment rate is at its lowest in history, it’s smart to prepare today’s inmates to be tomorrow’s workers, especially at dairy farms and creameries where farmers say we face critical worker shortages.”

DOC Secretary Litscher said: “Making vocational training available for inmates is one way we can prepare inmates for release. Under Governor Walker’s leadership, we worked with the Department of Workforce Development and local technical colleges to greatly expand skills training for in-demand careers in fields like construction, industrial maintenance, welding, CNC machining, construction, and agriculture. With tens of thousands of available jobs and a historically low unemployment rate, we want inmates to release with the necessary skills to find a job and become productive citizens.”

Moraine Park Technical College Vice President of Academic Affairs Jim Eden said: “Moraine Park Technical College is proud to be in a continued partnership with the DOC Dairy Training program and we celebrate this innovative approach to helping employers fill open positions. Our College aims to benefit our communities by providing skilled workers for our market. The skills gained through this program will benefit this important industry, as well as our local and state economy. We look forward to continuing this partnership of enrichment and growth for the inmate population.”