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**STATE OF IOWA  
LEGISLATIVE FISCAL BUREAU**

State Capitol  
Des Moines, Iowa  
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**MEMORANDUM**

To: Program Elimination Commission  
From: Beth Lenstra  
Date: October 10, 2002  
Re: Prison Farms

In regards to the dollar value of food produced by prison gardens, the Department of Corrections (DOC) states:

"The Department does not have the staffing resources from a pure accounting perspective to accurately determine the value of our produce nor the corresponding operational savings. For purposes of trying to respond to your questions, I would estimate that the value of the produce to be one dollar per pound. The Department serves between 10.5 and 11 million meals per year. Compounding the accounting problem is the fact that the Department gives some of our garden produce to charitable organizations."

The dollar value is approximately \$500,000.

In response to the question, if prison farms were sold, and there was no other way to keep inmates occupied, would the prisons need to hire more correctional officers to supervise the inmates? The DOC response:

"The institution would need to hire additional correctional officers if the farms were sold assuming the inmates stayed on the count of the institutions."

Please call me at (515) 281-6301 if you have any questions regarding these documents.

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