



News Release

STATE OF MARYLAND

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY AND CORRECTIONAL SERVICES

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**Keeping a Thanksgiving Tradition Going:
Inmates at Maryland Correctional Enterprises Meat Plant in Hagerstown
Will Prepare 700 Turkeys for Bea Gaddy Dinner**

Turkeys Arrive November 6

TOWSON, MD (October 29, 2009)---Once again this year, Maryland Correctional Enterprises (MCE), the prison industry arm of the Division of Correction, will play a key role in one of the nation's largest Thanksgiving charity dinners, when inmates at the Hagerstown Meat Plant prepare 700 turkeys for the annual Bea Gaddy dinner in Baltimore.

The late Ms. Gaddy, a champion of the poor and homeless and a former Baltimore councilwoman, turned to the Division of Correction years ago for help in de-boning, cooking, and shipping hundreds of donated turkeys.

This year, the turkeys will arrive on **Friday, November 6 between eight and ten a.m.** at the plant, which is located at the Maryland Correctional Institution-Hagerstown on Roxbury Road. **Members of the media are invited to see the turkeys off-loaded, and to speak with several inmates and members of Ms. Gaddy's family; reporters may also return to the plant by appointment on Tuesday of the following week, when the turkeys will actually be cooked and prepared.**

Once thawed, the turkeys will be prepared by inmates inside one of the most successful MCE operations, which employs 86 inmates and is second only to the upholstery plant (also in Hagerstown) in annual sales. The plant employs approximately 85 inmates, who transform 50,000 pounds of meat a week into more than 80 products, from hot dogs and sausage to ground beef and chops.

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In addition to feeding thousands of inmates, the meat is also served at countless gatherings and functions of state agencies, hospitals, and nonprofit groups. By law, MCE products are sold only to state and local government agencies and non-profits; the operation is not designed to compete with small businesses.

Inmates working at the plant earn approximately \$150 per month, and the waiting list for the highly-coveted jobs is long. Inmates at the plant learn valuable skills that can translate into well-paying jobs once they return to society.

In addition to the meat plant, MCE's Hagerstown operations include Brush and Carton, Metal, Picture Frame, Upholstery, Graphics, Partition, Recycling, and Metal Fabrication, as well as a large warehouse from which the products are shipped.

MCE is a statewide operation, with plants in Cumberland, Jessup, and Westover in addition to the Hagerstown units. It provides valuable job skills to more than 2,000 inmates. In addition to being totally self-supporting and the ninth-largest prison industry group in the nation, the business turns over millions of dollars to the state's general fund and supports a wide variety of correctional education programs.

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