

Text of 2010 Press Releases

IDOC Works to Cut Food Costs

BOISE – In a move aimed at decreasing its already low operational costs, the Idaho Department of Correction (IDOC) is developing a business plan to reduce the department's food service budget.

“We're proud that we have one of the lowest inmate cost-per-day figures in the country, but we can always do better,” said IDOC Director Brent Reinke. “That's why I'm challenging our food service staff to find ways to trim more than \$1 million from their budget by the end of the next year.”

The cost-saving measures fall in four categories:

- Menu modifications including the elimination of juices.
- Switch to a self-select feeding system so offenders can choose one serving of the item they want instead of serving a standardized meal to everyone.
- Operational changes including standardized purchasing and greater reliance on bulk items for serving.
- Staffing adjustments through modification of work schedules.

“We've had staffers digging through the dumpsters to determine what's being wasted,” Director Reinke said. “But while we're serious about saving money, we also know food management is critical to the safe and orderly operation of our institutions, so we'll be moving forward very carefully.”

IDOC serves 4,700,000 meals a year. The average cost per meal is now \$1.63. The department's goal is to reduce the figure to \$1.47.

*Still photos of lunch being served at South Idaho Correctional Institution are available upon request.