



First Summit on Building Integrated Sustainable Agriculture

by Sami Grover, Carrboro, NC, USA on 12.9.08

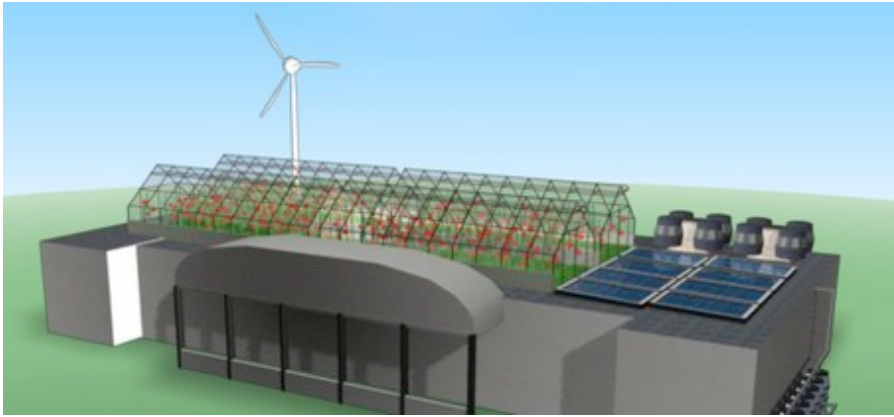


Image Credit: Sky Vegetables

Vertical Farming Innovators Convene for Two-Day Summit

Vertical farming, or building-integrated sustainable agriculture – call it what you will – the idea of commercial or residential buildings that can produce a significant proportion of their residents' food needs is certainly an attractive one on paper, though the world is currently short on working prototypes of any scale. From [Mithun architects' vertical farm in Seattle](#) to [Organitech's high-density food production units](#), the concept generated significant discussion about [the pros and cons of large-scale urban food production](#) over in our forums - and Adam Stein over at Terrapass hasn't held back on his views on why [Vertical Farms are just 'pie in the sky'](#). Now an invite-only event is being held this weekend in Berkeley aiming to explore all facets of building-integrated food production, including insight into a prototype for rooftop farming on grocery stores that hopes to be operational by Fall 2009. Here's more from the group's press release:

Experts will convene to share the best ideas and information about B-ISA systems from the diverse disciplines of architecture, structural engineering, aquaponics, controlled environment greenhouses, composting, alternative energy, automated systems, aquaculture, hydroponics, horticulture, integrated biological systems, sustainable farming, water economics, urban agriculture, and green business.

Summit hosts and co-organizers are Sky Vegetables' founder, Keith Agoada, and Technical Director, James Kalin, who introduced the concept of collaborative brainstorming for an open-source prototype for rooftop farming. Agoada is no stranger to big ideas. His brainchild Sky Vegetables business plan, to build hydroponic greenhouses on the rooftops of grocery stores, took home the top prize last year at the University of Wisconsin School of Business, where Agoada was a senior in their undergraduate program.

The [Sky Vegetables' website](#) will feature webcasts from the event, starting Friday 12th December, 8am PST – the site also has an introduction to Sky Vegetables' prototype rooftop farming systems (unfortunately rather flash heavy...). The keynote speaker for the weekend is Macarthur Fellow recipient Will Allen, who has already featured on TreeHugger for his inspiring work with [urban aquaponics and community farming](#). For those wanting more - fellow TreeHugger Jeff turned me on to an interesting article about [vertical farming and the future of food](#) over at the Walrus.

[Sky Vegetables](#)

More on Vertical Farming [Vertical Farming: The Future of Agriculture](#) [Diagonal Farming](#)
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