

**WHAT WILL YOU GROW IN  
OUR NFT SYSTEMS?**

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**INNOVATE THE WAY WE**

**GROW**



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# what will you

# GROW



One of the most important decisions you'll make as a HYDROPONIC rooftop or commercial farmer is the crop you will grow.

The starting point should always be the **market demand** and what **offset agreements you have in place** with Grocers or Restaurants. **NFT Hydro can design and plan, the layout of your Greenhouse and the Hydroponic systems you will require for your crops.**

Small, relatively fast growing plants are the most suitable for our NFT Hygro systems. They start in the profiles a few weeks before they are harvested and are replaced or cut back and allowed to re-grow.

Vegetative plants like Bibb and Cos type (Romaine) lettuces can be grown along with mustard greens, kale and many oriental vegetables.

Any of the fast growing herbs can also be grown in the same NFT system at the same time. A couple herb plants of each variety will produce quite a quantity of herbs.

**A few edible flowers such as nasturtiums and pansies can also be grown in NFT profiles. These can add interest to many salads and other food presentations.**

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# BASIL



**Hydroponic basil** is the most popular culinary herb that is produced hydroponically in our NFT Hygro systems.

Hydroponic production not only allows basil to be produced fresh and flavorful year-round, but the growth is three times faster compared to field production.

Basil (*Ocimum basilicum*) is a fast-growing herb that belongs to the aromatic Lamiaceae family, which includes several other herbs like mint, oregano, thyme, sage, rosemary, lavender, and lemon balm.

There are several types of basil that are available, with a distinct flavor and aroma. Among those, sweet basil is the most commonly grown type Hydroponically.

Basil grows extremely well in our NFT Hygro systems and we recommend that you propagate your basil in OASIS® Horticubes® or Horticubes® XL\* which ensures uniform germination and growth, without any concerns of disease-causing pathogens.

**Basil is sold as fresh cut or living basil with a root system intact.** Keeping the roots intact and moist can maintain the postharvest quality and improve the shelf life of basil.

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# LETTUCE



One of the most exciting new crops for hydroponics is salanova lettuce types, a recent innovation from Rijk Zwaan seeds in the Netherlands. Salanova lettuces are unique as they produce a full-sized lettuce head that consists of baby-sized, uniform leaves.

The Salanova range includes red and green butterhead, oak leaf, incised leaf and green frilly lettuce. **These lettuces are fast growing and uniform under indoor growing conditions, as they were largely bred for indoor production.**

Salanova lettuce can be grown alongside traditional hydroponic lettuce types and the plant is particularly well-suited to the NFT technique.

Seeds are best raised in Oasis propagation cubes to prevent any transplant shock. A well-balanced, grow hydroponic nutrient at an EC of 1.8 to 2.4 will assist with production in NFT systems.

Adjusting the pH with a high-quality pH down solution to between 5.8 and 6 and checking the nutrient solution temperature under warm growing conditions are all vital for lettuce production. Ideal nutrient solution temperatures for lettuce are cooler than other crops—around 14 - 18C. This crop benefits from installing nutrient chilling equipment for summer growing.

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# CORIANDER



## Cilantro or Coriander

Cilantro (*Coriandrum sativum*), sometimes referred to as leaf coriander, Chinese or Mexican parsley or simply as coriander in many countries, is a fast-growing, warm-season annual herb.

The cilantro flowers are edible, and can be used raw in salads as a garnish. It has a limited shelf, its flavor and aroma diminish with shipping and storage and the delicate foliage is easily damaged. **For this reason, it is an excellent herb to grow as an Urban rooftop farmer being in close proximity to restaurants and grocers as it should be harvested just before use when its flavor quality is highest.** Since cilantro has a habit of going to seed fairly quickly it is important to select cultivars that will not only grow large, quality foliage, but are also slow to bolt in the warm, protected environment of an indoor garden. Varieties such as Calypso, Santo and Marino are well-suited to hydroponic production, as they are slow to seed and allow for two to three harvests or cuts before plants need to be replaced.

## Cilantro Propagation

Under hydroponic production, many growers sow several seeds into OASIS® Horticubes® or Horticubes® XL\* each planting site and grow these mini bunches for just a few weeks before cutting.

By using successional sowings every two to three weeks, fresh cilantro can be harvested year-round, minimizing the issue of plants bolting after two to three harvests.

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# KALE

## Popular Kale Varieties



Kale is a deep flavored green and came into the spotlight in the everyday kitchen back in 2008, presenting a demand so great that farmers have had a hard time keeping up. Since then, it has been hailed as a superfood and weaved its way into home and restaurant menus alike.

Kale is a key ingredient in a variety of dishes across the world. Crop varieties from the Tuscan Kale to the Curly Kale grace our soups, smoothies, salads, and even our snack trays. Some varieties display shades of red and purple, like Russian Red Kale.

Kale's popularity can bring in good profit for farmers. The crop grows relatively quickly with a six-week turn from transplant to harvest, or can be harvested partially to regrow (no more than about 30% for quick regrowth).

Kale's wide electrical conductivity (EC) range makes it compatible with many different herbs and greens, though best growth is seen closer to 3.0.

Kale is a cool weather crop, and many growers even apply cooler temperatures purposefully to draw out a smoother, improved flavor in the green. Kale when grown in greenhouses, is targeted by only a few pests such as aphids and some powdery mildew.

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# ARUGULA



Arugula is a leafy green herb of the mustard family. It is also known as rocket, Italian cress, roquette, and rucola.

Arugula has elongated dark green leaves that are lobed like the leaves of an oak.

Arugula is related to both the radish and watercress, and the flavor of the leaves is similarly hot and peppery. The leaves can be between 7.5-20 centimeters in length, depending on the maturity of the leaf. Native to the Mediterranean region, arugula has been grown as a vegetable since the Roman era.

Arugula likes to remain on the cool side, a well-ventilated machine with a cool ambient temperature is ideal. To harvest, cut the arugula greens with a sharp knife, garden shears or scissors.

**Arugula can also be grown very successfully as microgreens and is very popular with urban farmers.**



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# MICROGREENS



This popularity and demand for microgreens has increased, and made it one of the **best new crops for urban farmers**, as it takes very little space to grow microgreens, indoors or outdoors.

Microgreens are tiny edible plants that are older than a sprout, but younger than a full-grown plant. They are harvested after the first “true” leaves have developed and are the smallest of the salad greens, and can be grown from almost any plant variety that would produce a mature plant, such as beet, radish or mustard.

Because microgreens are widely used to add “zing” to a main course or salad, the most popular varieties are the spicy ones. These include **arugula, which adds a spicy, peppery flavor to other foods, basil, celery, cabbage, cilantro, a widely used spicy herb, endive, mustard and tangy radish.** In addition to the popular spicy microgreens, growers will also produce a wide range of colorful greens, such as rainbow chard or kale.

Because the crop cycle is so short, **commercial & urban growers can make a good income in a very small space.**

Most microgreen varieties are ready to harvest in about two weeks, so a capable grower can produce 20-25 crops per year.

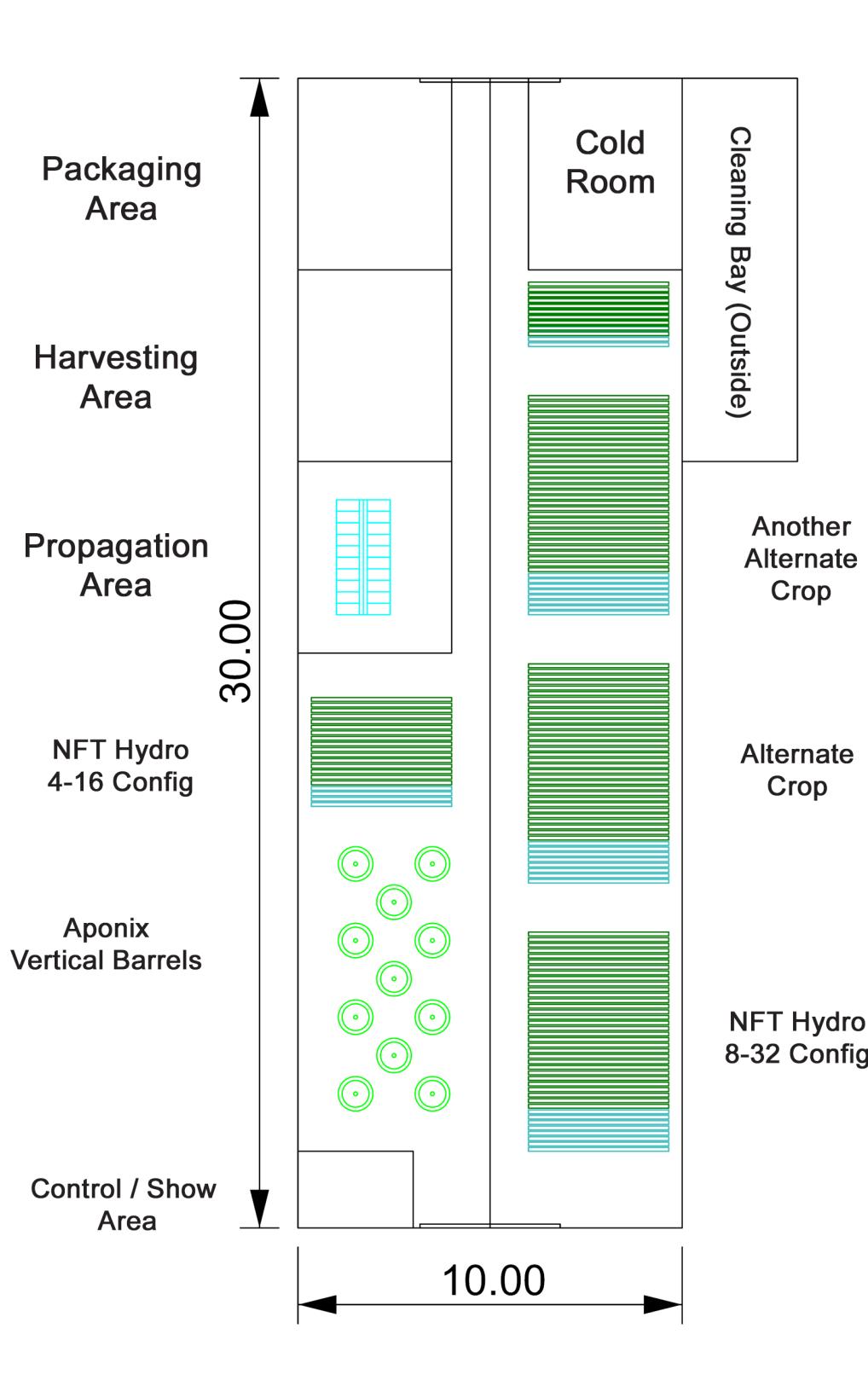


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let us design your

# GREENHOUSE LAYOUT

NFT Hydro Innovate the way we grow.



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with our  
**NFT  
SYSTEMS**