



VERTICAL HARVEST FARMS

PRODUCE SALES SET TO SOAR IN MAINE AS VERTICAL HARVEST AND NATIVE MAINE PRODUCE & SPECIALTY FOODS PARTNER IN WESTBROOK

Vertical Harvest Maine will produce more than one million pounds of produce annually when it opens in 2022

Westbrook, Maine (June 17, 2021) – Two companies based in Westbrook, Maine – [Vertical Harvest Maine](#) and [Native Maine Produce & Specialty Foods](#) (“Native Maine”) – have teamed-up in a partnership to substantially increase the distribution of locally grown, fresh and nutritional produce in the State of Maine.

Vertical Harvest Maine will be Maine’s first vertical urban hydroponic farm when it opens in 2022 as part of a [master-planned development](#) spearheaded by The Day Brothers, [TDB, LLC](#), (TDB) in a public private partnership with the City of Westbrook. The project is multifaceted and includes Vertical Harvest’s 70,000-square foot urban farm which will produce specialty greens, microgreens, herbs and lettuces at commercial scale, co-located with 60 residential housing units, retail space, and a parking garage that is free to the public.

Greg Day, TDB President said, “Native Maine provides the infrastructure and customer base to distribute the produce that will be grown in the urban center of Westbrook. They are a critical partner in this project and a strategic alliance towards the goal of becoming less reliant on imported produce and keeping nutritious food and jobs here in Maine. It’s a natural fit and we are absolutely delighted to have them on board.”

Native Maine Produce & Specialty Foods President Vinnie Caliendo said, “We are very excited about Vertical Harvest coming to Westbrook, and the model they represent. Maine will have a producer that can provide high-quality and nutritious greens year-round and Native Maine will be here to distribute it throughout the state and beyond. The samples from their Jackson, Wyoming Greenhouse were among the finest quality ever tasted and we look forward to sharing their product with everyone in the state. This is a partnership to last in perpetuity.”

Nona Yehia, CEO of Vertical Harvest Farms stated, “In Westbrook, we see this model for food production, urban housing and infrastructure as being adaptable to other urban areas across the country. The big picture is about re-defining and transforming food



production and work environments that meet the needs of community, underserved, under resourced populations whether its individuals or entire urban areas. This is a social and environmental impact model to energize cities and serve the needs of its residents for generations to come.”

Vertical Harvest is a leader in the industry for controlled environmental agriculture. The company was recognized earlier this year by *Fast Company* in the annual World’s Best Ideas issue for the categories of Social Justice, Food and Best Idea North America; *CNN’s “10 Champions for Change”* and *NBC’s Today Show* for their profitable business model that strengthens food security while addressing social justice issues by growing nutritious food, creating good jobs, and providing affordable housing in communities that need all three.

The City of Westbrook’s Director of Economic Development, Dan Stevenson, has been a leader for this project and commented, “This is a true public/private partnership project that offers free, covered, public parking. Growing produce from a vertical farm in downtown Westbrook year-round, demonstrates how diverse the City’s economic development has become. This project will be a catalyst for future innovative development and, in the more immediate future, will increase foot traffic downtown, boosting business.”

“This project exemplifies the goals and vision of Maine’s 10-Year Economic Development Strategy,” said Heather Johnson, Commissioner of the Department of Economic and Community Development. “The Vertical Harvest project is helping to drive agricultural innovation in our state, which helps to grow our economy in a sustainable way. We know that innovation in our food economy is an area of opportunity for Maine. We also know that Vertical Harvest will provide good-paying jobs to its workers, and companies like Vertical Harvest will help attract talented workers to Maine.”

TDB expects to break ground early fall 2021.

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About Vertical Harvest:

Vertical Harvest is a vertical farm that provides consistent, meaningful employment for people with intellectual and physical disabilities by cultivating nutritious food for the community. The Vertical Harvest company impact is much larger, joining private investment, public resources and philanthropy as a model to create positive economic and social impact for communities. Vertical Harvest’s focus is to create partnerships to build cost effective, profitable hydroponic farms that will not only act as innovative urban models for growing fresh food, but will have a substantial social impact. The first of these is a state-of-the-art, three-story hydroponic farm in Jackson Hole, Wyoming. The second location will be in Westbrook, Maine. In 2020, a documentary on Vertical Harvest was released on PBS called Hearts of Glass: <https://www.heartsofglassfilm.com/>

About vertical farming:

Vertical farming is an industry that can work to supplement traditional agriculture by developing controlled indoor growing environments that save space, water and energy use. The UN Food and Agriculture Organization estimates that by 2050 the human population will increase by 3 billion people demanding a 70% increase in agricultural production. Globally, over 80% of arable land is in use. At the same time, food deserts, where affordable and healthy food is difficult to obtain, are becoming more common in urban neighborhoods. Hydroponic agriculture uses a fraction of the water and energy of field agriculture.

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