



# WE GROW ACES!



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## INTRODUCTION

# Overview of We Grow Aces

We Grow Aces is a student-led initiative at the University of Evansville focused on sustainable agriculture through hydroponic container farming. The program uses controlled-environment technology to grow fresh produce efficiently, without soil, and with significantly reduced water usage. By combining innovation, business strategy, and scientific knowledge, We Grow Aces creates a real-world model for local food production that is both scalable and impactful. The goal is not only to grow food, but to build a system that supports sustainability, education, and community engagement.



# Mission and Values of We Grow Aces

## Mission

At We Grow Aces, our mission is to develop a sustainable, innovative, and locally driven food production system that brings fresh, high-quality produce closer to the community. We aim to redefine how food is grown and distributed by combining advanced hydroponic technology with student leadership and real-world application.

Our work is guided by a commitment to sustainability, focusing on reducing environmental impact through efficient water use, controlled growing systems, and localized production. By minimizing waste and eliminating long-distance transportation, we strive to create a more responsible and resilient food system.



## Values

We also value community engagement and collaboration. We Grow Aces is designed to build meaningful partnerships with local businesses, organizations, and campus initiatives, creating opportunities for shared growth and impact.

In addition, the program emphasizes education and innovation. It provides students with hands-on experience in business, science, and operations, preparing them to think critically and lead in future industries.

Through these values, We Grow Aces is not just a growing system, but a platform for sustainable change, learning, and long-term impact.

# Operational Model and Growing System

We Grow Aces operates using a hydroponic system, where plants are grown without soil and instead receive nutrients through a carefully controlled water solution. This method allows for efficient use of resources while maintaining consistent plant growth.

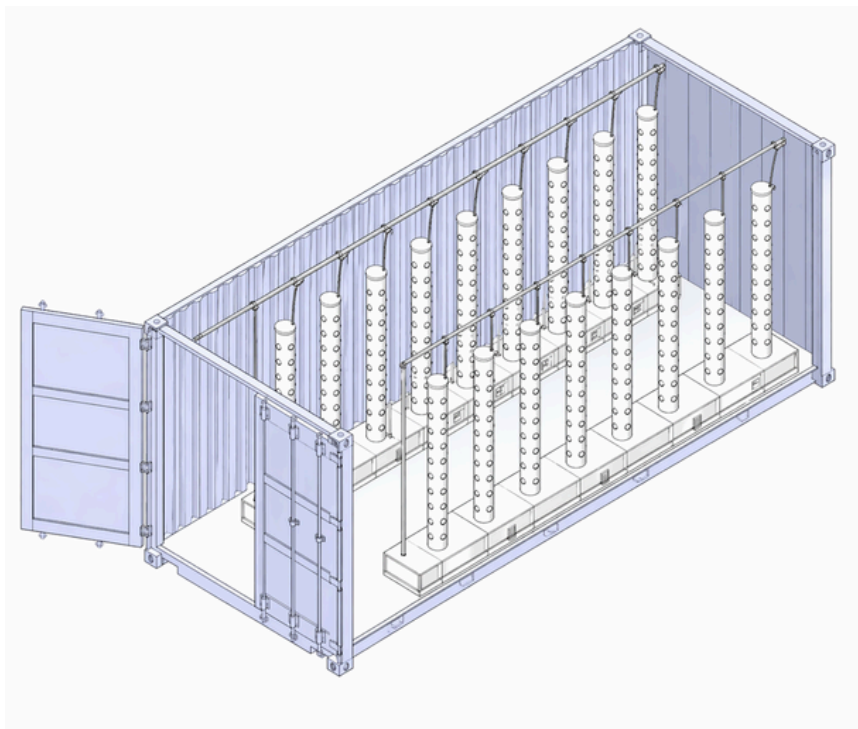
The container environment is designed to regulate key conditions such as light, temperature, and humidity. By controlling these variables, the system creates an optimal growing environment that supports year-round production regardless of external weather conditions.

The growing process begins with seed placement in specialized pods, followed by a monitored growth phase under LED lighting systems. During this stage, plants receive precise amounts of nutrients and water to ensure healthy and uniform development.

As the plants mature, they are continuously monitored for quality, consistency, and readiness for harvest. This controlled process reduces variability and ensures that all produce meets a high standard.

Once harvested, the produce is distributed directly to partners, including campus and local organizations. This direct distribution model maximizes freshness, reduces waste, and strengthens the connection between production and consumption.

Overall, the system combines sustainability, efficiency, and innovation to create a reliable and scalable model for modern food production.



# Product Portfolio and Community Partnerships

Our production focuses on high-quality, fast-growing crops such as microgreens, leafy greens, and herbs. These products are ideal for hydroponic systems and are in high demand for both culinary and health-focused uses.

We aim to serve a range of partners, including campus dining services, local restaurants, and community organizations. By providing fresh, locally grown produce, we create value for our partners while building a reliable and consistent supply system.



# Sustainability and Community Impact



## Environmental Sustainability

Our hydroponic system uses significantly less water and reduces waste, while eliminating long-distance transportation and lowering environmental impact.



## Local Food Production

We grow fresh produce locally, improving quality and reducing reliance on external supply chains.



## Community Engagement

We collaborate with campus and local partners to bring fresh food into the community and support local initiatives.



## Student Development

Students gain hands-on experience in operations, sustainability, and real-world problem solving.



## Scalable Innovation

Our container model is designed to expand, offering a scalable solution for sustainable food production.

# Support & Donations

## Promotion

We Grow Aces is an evolving initiative with strong potential for growth, impact, and long-term sustainability. Continued support plays a critical role in allowing the program to expand its capabilities, increase production, and strengthen its contribution to both the university and the local community.

Financial contributions directly support key operational needs, including seeds, growing materials, nutrient systems, and equipment required to maintain and optimize the hydroponic container. Funding also enables improvements in infrastructure, allowing the system to operate more efficiently and scale over time.



Beyond financial support, We Grow Aces actively seeks strategic partnerships with local restaurants, businesses, and community organizations. These partnerships create opportunities for consistent product distribution, collaborative projects, and innovative ways to integrate locally grown produce into the market. Working with partners also helps validate and refine the model, ensuring it remains both practical and scalable. Supporters of We Grow Aces are not only contributing to a single project, but are helping build a forward-thinking model for sustainable food production. As the program grows, there are opportunities for recognition, sponsorship visibility, and involvement in future expansion efforts.

Every investment, partnership, and contribution plays a direct role in advancing this initiative. By supporting We Grow Aces, you are helping create a system that combines sustainability, education, and real-world impact—positioning it as a meaningful step toward the future of local food production.

# Contact & Team

## **Executive Leadership**

Neva Verbik

Javad Dehghan

We Grow Aces is led by a dedicated team of students working across operations, strategy, and development to bring this project to life.

For partnerships, support opportunities, or additional information, please reach out to:

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# Project Development Timeline

The development of We Grow Aces began at the start of the Spring 2026 semester with the initial concept of creating a sustainable, container-based farming system that could operate efficiently within a university setting. Early efforts focused on research and exploration, including studying hydroponic growing methods, analyzing similar models such as container farms, and identifying how this concept could be adapted to meet both educational and community needs. This phase also involved defining the purpose of the project and aligning it with sustainability, innovation, and real-world application.

As the semester progressed, the project moved into a structured planning and design phase. During this stage, the team focused on building the operational framework of the program, including system design, workflow planning, and role allocation. Key decisions were made regarding what crops to grow, how the hydroponic system would function, and how the container environment would be managed.

In addition, outreach efforts began to identify potential partners, including campus dining services and local businesses, ensuring that the project would have real-world application beyond the classroom. In the final phase of development, the project transitioned into execution and preparation for launch. This included ordering seeds and materials, coordinating container setup, and refining operational processes to ensure consistency and quality. The team also worked on aligning all components of the project, from production to distribution, while preparing for the final presentation. This timeline reflects a progression from concept to implementation, demonstrating not only planning and research but also the ability to bring an idea into a functional and impactful system.

# Future Growth and Expansion Strategy

We Grow Aces is designed with long-term growth and scalability in mind, extending far beyond its initial implementation as a single container-based system. While the current phase focuses on establishing a successful and efficient operation, the broader vision is to expand the model into a network that can serve a wider range of partners and communities. This approach allows the system to remain flexible and adaptable while maintaining its core focus on sustainability and local production. Future expansion plans include increasing production capacity, allowing for a greater variety and volume of crops. This growth would support stronger partnerships with local restaurants, markets, and organizations, creating a more consistent and reliable supply of fresh produce. As relationships develop, there is also potential to collaborate on new initiatives, such as community-based programs or events that promote local food systems and sustainability.

In addition to expansion, the program aims to continuously improve operational efficiency through innovation and technology. This may include optimizing growing conditions, refining production cycles, and integrating data-driven decision-making to enhance output and quality. Over time, We Grow Aces has the potential to become a replicable model that can be implemented in other universities or communities, contributing to a more sustainable and localized approach to food production on a larger scale.



Built by students.  
Supported by  
community. Designed  
for impact.

Thank you for being part of the We Grow Aces journey.

Acknowledgments  
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(Co-Founder & CEO of ANU)



University of Evansville - ChangeLab Program

 @WeGrowAces

