

The international marketing magazine for fresh produce buyers in Europe



By Liam
Callaghan

Wednesday 18th November 2020, 8:55 GMT

Tipping point for vertical farming

The opening day of Smart Horticulture Asia delved into the latest developments in the vertical farming sector

Harrij Schmeitz, chairman of Smart Horticulture Asia, opened the first day of the Asia Fruit Logistica ON hall forum with the proposition that vertical farming as the potential not just change but completely disrupt the way fresh produce is consumed.

Vertical farming was the theme that ran through the five presentations that brought together expertise from all around the world on the opening day of [one of three online Hall Forum events](#) running at this week's Asia Fruit Logistica ON.

Exemplifying the possible change this sector could bring the fresh produce industry was Ard van de Kreeke, chief executive of Netherlands-based Growx.

Van de Kreeke detailed the start-up's unique, fully-automated operations and discussed the wider industry and his view that vertical farming is at a "tipping point".

Originally starting in 2016, Growx has launched Chef's Farm, which produces microgreens for high-end restaurants

and developed fully automated vertical farming technology that can be used for salads and microgreens.

Van de Kreeke said food security and safety, local production, lack of space and water were among the number of challenges vertical farming needed to answer and Growx addressed these challenges through nine key aspects.

These were circular production, delivering clean and healthy products, using data and automation, increasing water and energy efficiency, lowering costs, reducing farm footprint and food waste.

For the wider vertical farming sector van de Kreeke was optimistic about the progress it is making. Once resigned to expensive experiments he said vertical farming was on the edge of becoming a consistently viable solution.

"We are at a tipping point in this industry. Investment and cost price have dropped dramatically, artificial intelligence and robotics are ready and energy efficiency has made big steps," said van de Kreeke.

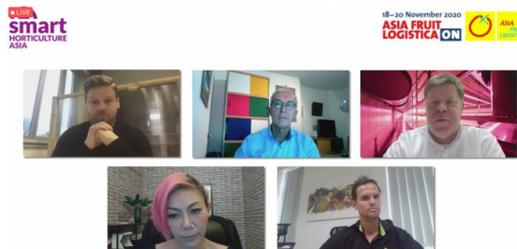
"The biggest problem has always been the economics, but really where we are now we can compete with normal markets, we are not only looking at high end markets."

Following van de Kreeke was Grace Lim of Urban Farming Partners Singapore who shared the company's plans for a vertical farm in Singapore and what made the city-state an ideal incubator for the sector.

"The consortium behind UFPS comprises of a group of experts in food production, food processing, logistics, urban planning, engineering and construction," explained Lim.

"We have a shared vision of bringing food sustainability and security to mega-cities and our strategy is to provide total solutions for urban farms close to urban areas."

Lim said the Singapore government's commitment to increase local food production by 2030 lent itself to vertical farming as did the prospect of government funding.



<http://www.fruitnet.com/americafruit/article/1474/parts-of-san-diego-quarantined-as-psyllid-count-mounts>

© Copyright Market Intelligence Ltd - Fruitnet.com 2014. The copyright on this article and all content published on Market Intelligence Ltd - Fruitnet.com is held by Market Intelligence Ltd - Fruitnet.com Limited, a joint venture between Market Intelligence Limited and Dr Rolf M Wolf Media GmbH. All rights reserved. Neither this article nor any part of it may be reproduced, stored or transmitted in any form, including print-outs, screen grabs and information retrieval systems, without the prior permission of the copyright owners.

FRUITNET.COM

“Singapore is a unique opportunity because it only has 2 per cent arable land and food security is a pressing issue with 92 per cent produce imported.”

Looking north Friso Klok, chain and area manager South-East Asia of Rijk Zwaan Vietnam shared how Rijk Zwaan was supporting vertical farming through breeding and how NFT (Nutrient Film Technique) production of leafy greens in the highlands and lowlands of Malaysia and Vietnam was delivering positive outcomes.

Also sharing their distinctive farming concepts were Daniel Kats, vice president of Corporate Sales of Infarm and Jasper den Besten, partner of Precede Singapore.

Infarm is a rapidly expanding indoor farming company that has developed vertical farming technology that can be deployed in stores and Kats discussed the innovative marketing opportunities that accompanied this approach.

Precede is a small-scale vertical farm in Singapore that specialises in growing a mix of produce for a high-end market, an approach that brings its own advantages and challenges as explained by den Besten.

The Smart Horticulture Asia sessions are available on demand to all registered Asia Fruit Logistica ON visitors and exhibitors. Simply click the content tab on the AFL ON platform.

The Smart Horticulture Asia programme continues

on Thursday (19 November) from 1:00pm Singapore/China time.

Asia Fruit Logistica ON takes place online on 18-20 November.

Visit Asiafruit Congress ON

– asiafruitcongress.com

Visit Asia Fruit Logistica ON

– asiafruitlogistica.com

Enjoyed this free article from Eurofruit Magazine and its team of editors? Don't miss out on even more in-depth analysis, plus all the latest news from the fresh produce business. Subscribe now to [Eurofruit Magazine](#).