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Ang Mo Kio 'rooftop carpark farm' to grow four tonnes of vegetables monthly



At the height of production, the 1,800 sq m rooftop farm aims to grow up to four tonnes of veggies a month. ST PHOTO: NG SOR LUAN

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SINGAPORE - Vegetable planting at the new Citiponics Farm @ Ang Mo Kio began only last month, but within weeks, it should be producing enough leafy greens to feed 1,600 people a month.

At the height of production, the 1,800 sq m rooftop farm - situated on a HDB multi-storey car park at Block 700 Ang Mo Kio Avenue 6 - aims to grow up to four tonnes of veggies a month.

The company uses an "Aqua Organic System", in which a constant stream of water and nutrients is pumped through a network of pipes. It does not use pesticides or produce waste, and aims to save space and energy.

The pipes have holes cut into them, creating pockets which are then filled with tiny clay pebbles. Seeds are placed among the pebbles, which become the growing medium for the plants.

The farm can currently grow up to 25 different types of vegetables, such as nai bai (dwarf bok choy), kai lan (also known as Chinese broccoli or Chinese kale) and cai xin (a green leafy vegetable similar to kai lan).

"This is the first time we are piloting commercial urban farming on a HDB multi-storey carpark, and another example of how our government agencies like AVA and HDB have exercised regulatory flexibility to support the agri-tech industry," said Senior Minister of State for Trade and Industry Koh Poh Koon on Monday (Jan 4). Dr Koh also announced the main advancements to be made in the agriculture industry this year.

"Planting started in February 2019, with the first harvest expected in April 2019. So residents can soon look forward to fresh vegetables that are produced by community, in the community, for the community."



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Citiponics will hire locals - including elderly residents from the AWWA Senior Community Home - to work on the farm.

Among those keen to get green fingers is 81-year-old AWWA resident Madam Yow Chai Kwai, who said: "I like this environment very much - it is clean, and the vegetables we grow are nice and tasty.

"I hope that Singapore will have more of these farms, so that the elderly in other areas of Singapore can have the experience of working on the farm."

The farm will also look to provide students with internship and volunteering opportunities, to hone their urban farming skills and cultivate interest in green technology.

Produce from the farm will be sold to FairPrice, which will sell it at its nearby store at the Ang Mo Kio Hub.

"Given the proximity of the farm to the HDB area, we can minimise the foot miles and carbon footprint used for transporting vegetables," said Mr Teo Hwa Kok, chairman of Citiponics, which has another rooftop farm in Kang Ching Road.

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