

The Journey of Lettuce through MAPS Hydroponics System

MAPS MMHS Food Service



The Hydroponics System is Here

Our Hydroponics system arrived the week of October 27- 31st, It was built and put in the MMHS kitchen October 31st!

Along with the System, We also got
Rockwool and Seeds to start planting!

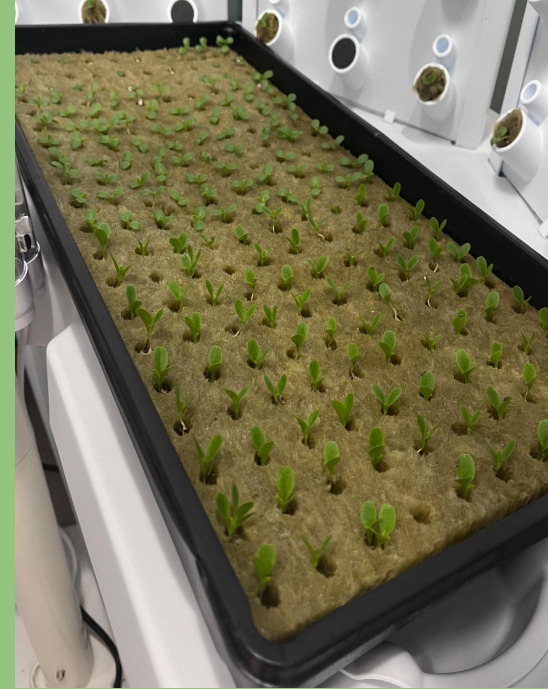


Planting the Seeds

Before the plants could go into the hydroponics, They had to start their life in rockwool.

Rockwool is spun basalt rock fibers, used as a growing medium for plants, where it provides support for roots while holding water and air.

We planted the seeds November 3rd. Keeping them contained to their “nursery” and giving them plenty of light and nutrient rich water. They sprouted and were ready to be placed in the hydroponics system by November 10th.




Growing into Mature Plants

Throughout the next few weeks we left our plants alone. Allowing them to grow to mature plants in the hydroponics system. They had nutrient rich water cycling through the system 24 hours a day. As well as 18 hours of light provided by the light bar that is encircled by the system.

These conditions were tracked on a data log by our food service director using tools that calculated the PH and ppm (parts per million) of the water and monitoring the light timer.

FLEX FARM

Data Log



Overall Flex Farm

Last Water Refresh Date 11/3

Last Deep Clean

Current Grow Cycle

Date Planted

Crop Varieties

Target PPM 900

Target pH 6.0

Date	PPM	pH	Adjustments
11/3/25	847	6.5	Ø - Started Plants in Nursery
11/10/25	818	8.5	Added 2 TBSP of PH down Plants Planted today
11/14/25	847	6.5	Ø
11/19/25	884	8.5	Added 2 tsp of PH down
11/26/25	717	6.5-7.0	Added 1 TSP of ea. nutrient to raise PPM
12/4/25	789	8.5	Harvested most plants - Added 2 tsp PH down, 1 TSP nutrients add 1/2

Reminders for Flex Farm Growers

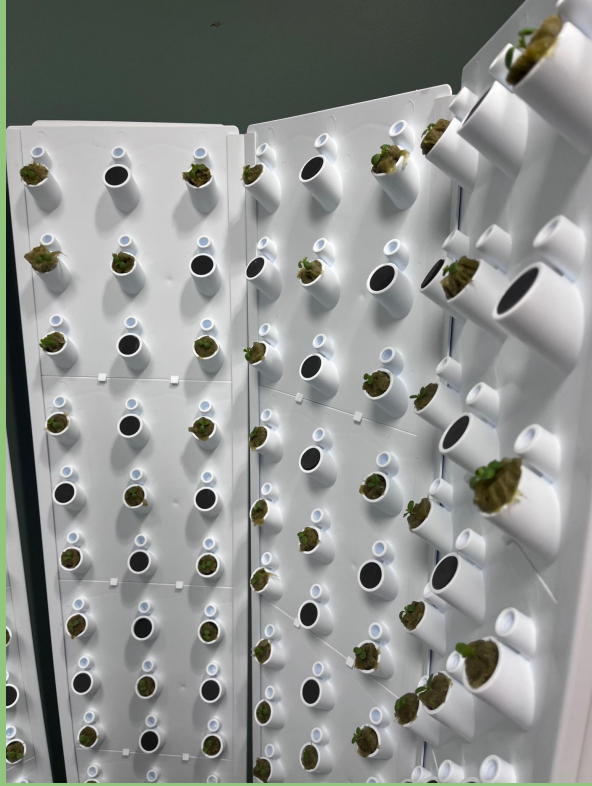
Keep water tanks half full at all times.

Recommended pH for most leafy green varieties is 6.

Remember ideal ratio for nutrient

Have questions or concerns about growing in the Flex Farm? Reference the Grow Guide or Send Us a Message.
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Growing into Mature Plants



Time to Harvest

After four weeks our plants were ready to harvest. You know it's time to harvest when you can't see any of the white walling of the system.

Harvesting the plants is quite simple, All you do is carefully pull the plant, roots, and rockwool out of the plant space. Once its removed, the lettuce bulb is detached from the rockwool and their roots, placed in a container to be washed and prepped for our salad bars.



Harvested Lettuce



Our Yield

We have now come full circle, Something that started as a seed planted in rockwool has now grown and matured into something we can eat and are excited to feed to the students at MAPS MMHS.

Soon to come: Basil, It was planted with our lettuce but takes a little longer to mature, we will harvest before winter break!

We hope to soon be able to plant other things like strawberries, cucumbers and peppers too!



If you have any questions about the hydroponic system or the plants we are growing. Or are interested in the hydroponics process and want to be apart of it.

Contact our food service director, Haleigh Savage via email
Hsavage@manistee.org or phone (231)-398-3695

