



Prisoners will be able to learn about indoor farming first-hand | Photo source [Petr Magera on Unsplash](#)

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PROGRAMME TRAINS PRISONERS TO BE HI-TECH FARMERS

 FOOD & DRINK

As well as growing food for prisons, the programme connects people with jobs

Spotted: Social justice organisation Impact Justice has recently introduced its newest initiative: Growing Justice. The programme connects incarcerated and formerly incarcerated individuals seeking fairly paid secure work, with the cutting-edge technology of vertical farming.

Working with vertical farming experts—Skout Strategy and Agritecture—Impact Justice is designing and building two new farms – one located in a women’s prison in central California, and the other at the organisation’s Oakland headquarters. Each farm is modular, built in a shipping container, and hydroponically grows a variety of greens for use in the prison kitchen.

Farm employees will learn about all aspects of indoor farming, from the conditions needed to grow a range of foodstuffs, to the technological and mechanical processes that run the systems. The education that employees receive is rigorous and designed to provide the necessary knowledge and expertise for a career in the industry, including the foundations for starting their own business. The food being grown should also help to improve the overall healthfulness of prison menus, as well as provide incarcerated individuals with a direct connection to nature they would otherwise be unable to access.

Springwise has spotted many vertical farm facilities run by [AI](#) and at various stages of [automation](#). Because of this, people new to the industry learn just as much about technology as they do about farming, which in the long run, could provide improved resilience in future employment.

Written By: Keely Khoury

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Email: press@impactjustice.org

Website: impactjustice.org/innovation/growing-justice

Contact: impactjustice.org/contact-us

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Takeaway:

Valued at more than \$4 billion (around €3.98 billion) in 2020, the global vertical farming [market size](#) is predicted to grow to more than \$31 billion (around €30.81 billion) by 2030. With the Growing Justice campaign, there is a sizeable opportunity for significantly underrepresented communities to contribute to the growth of a changing industry and take advantage of new jobs and careers in sustainable food production.