



March 29, 2013

Growing Up



There is absolutely no match when it comes to eating locally-sourced fresh ingredients. Luckily we are living in a culinary age of farm-to-table dining and farmer's market driven menus that inspire all of us to eat well. Organically raised meat, poultry and fish are an essential part of the dining scene but many people might take local vegetables for granted. These days, your average consumer will most likely favor produce at Whole Foods over more popular supermarket chains but the one thing they won't realize is that the freshness is not always guaranteed. Once removed from its soil, plants do not stay fresh for long, so eating them in a timely matter makes all the difference.

[Alegria Farms in Laguna Beach](#) not only grows fresh produce but is creating a revolution in farming. Alegria is a new commercial hydroponic vertical farm employing over 170 towers growing over 10,000 plants in less than 1/4 acre. Imagine walking into the backyard of your neighbor's house and seeing a full-fledged farm producing food for an entire region in a space no bigger than your local basketball court. Vertical farming is visually stunning when you first set eyes on it but the real treat is how it all works. Alegria doesn't use soil, they use coconut fiber which eliminates the need for pesticides.

Alegria uses the EnviroIngenuity Home Garden hydroponic system. The EnviroIngenuity® Home Garden hydroponic system uses no soil, 90 percent less water, 70 percent less land and 50 percent less fertilizer than traditional organic farming. EnviroIngenuity® hydroponic commercial and home garden systems produce clean, natural food much faster than traditional farming and allow plants to grow faster, bigger and stronger, thus the plants are naturally more pest resistant.

There is no better culinary feeling than eating ingredients straight from their natural habitat. I love almost every vegetable and eaten plenty of them but tasting them in this environment lends

for an experience like none other. Cilantro, parsley and mint have never tasted so fresh and vibrant. Arugula is a personal favorite of mine but I felt like I've been missing out on its intended flavor after I chewed on a piece of Alegria grown arugula. The spice note that exuded from this plant was extraordinary and I instantly became ashamed for eating a lesser version my entire life.

Alegria is using an absolutely new concept but it's a technique that begs to be replicated throughout the world.

[**http://lawonders.net/2013/03/29/growing-up/#respond**](http://lawonders.net/2013/03/29/growing-up/#respond)