



"GROWING THE FOOD OF THE FUTURE AT QUEEN'S UNIVERSITY"

A large, abstract graphic occupies the center of the page, showing a perspective view of a building's facade with many windows, rendered in light grey lines on a white background.

SPONSORSHIP PACKAGE

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ABOUT US

INTRODUCTION

Founded in Sep. 2019, QVFT is Canada's first student-led university vertical farming design team. Vertical farming is a hyper-efficient, sustainable food cultivation method which is projected to become a major contributor to global food production in the coming decades.

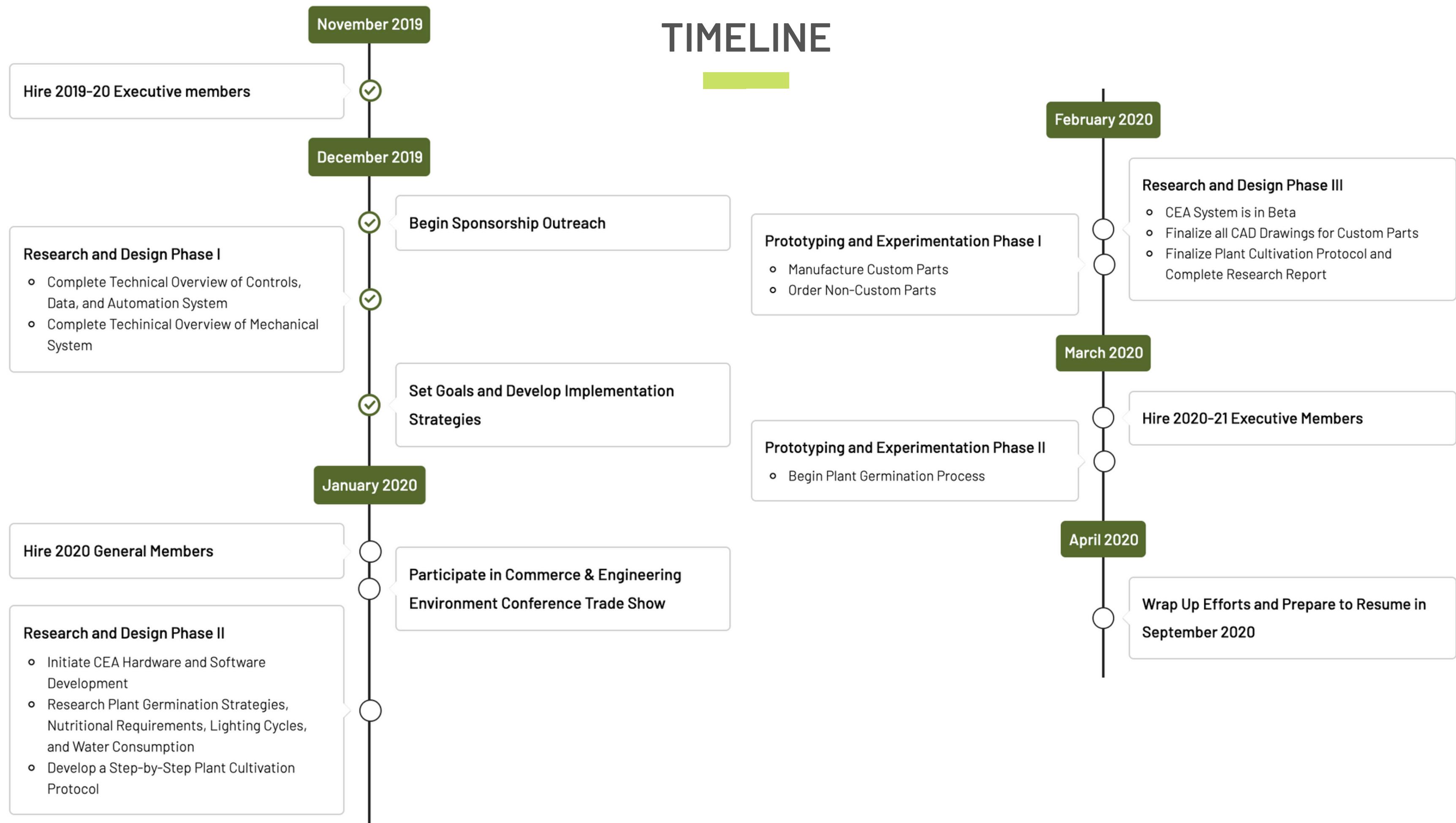
Our goal is to develop a functional, small scale vertical farm at Queen's University, inspired by the best current industry practices. We request your generous support for the Winter 2020 semester, every ounce of which goes directly towards reaching our next major milestone: building a functional prototype farm by April 2020.

OUR MISSION

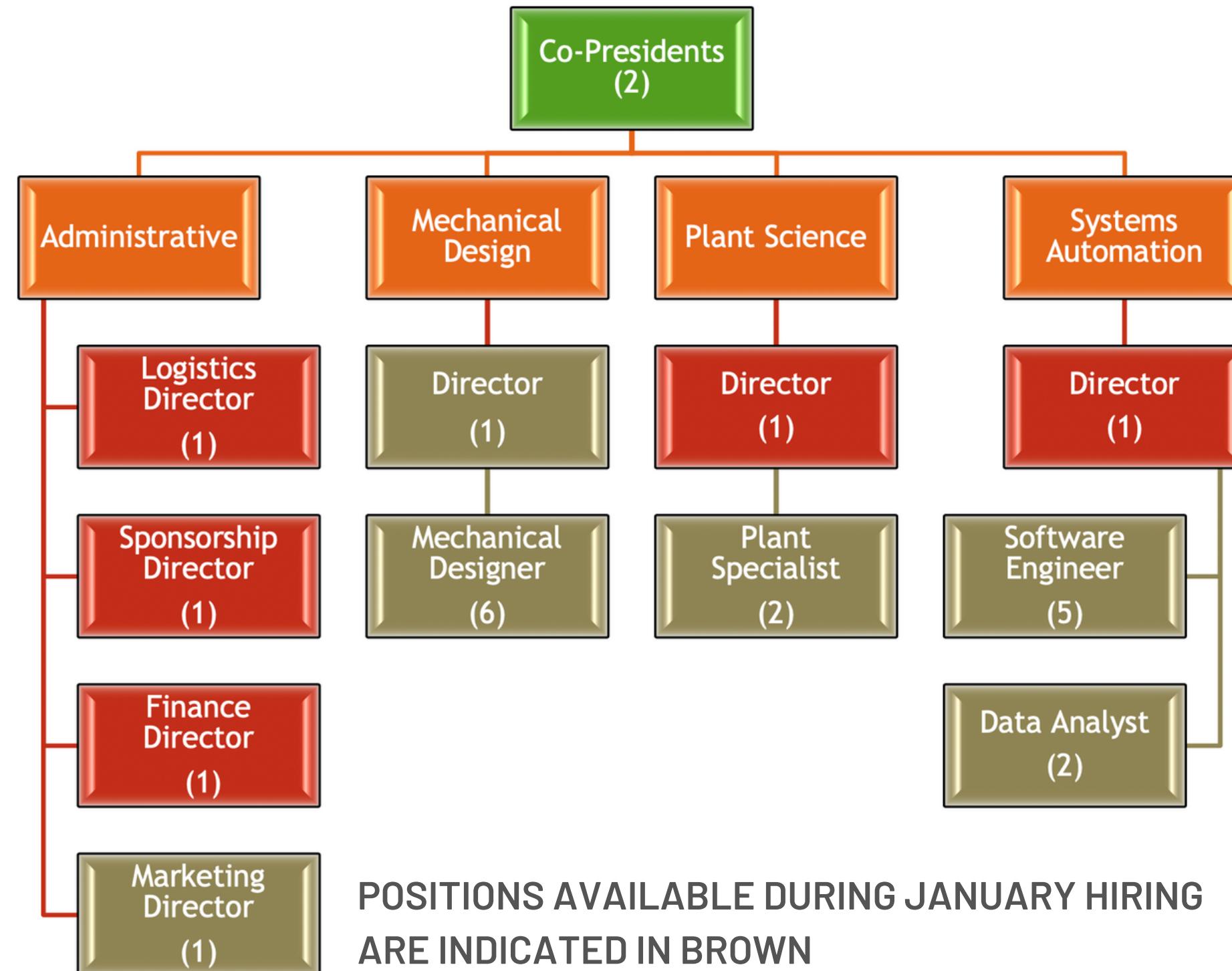
"The Queen's Vertical Farming Team's mission is to develop a functional, small scale vertical farm. Drawing inspiration from the best current commercial practices, our goal is to gain a foothold as an innovator in a rapidly expanding industry"



TIMELINE



ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE



CURRENT MEMBERS



PATRICK SINGAL

President | Mechanical Engineering



DAVID ALTROWS

Co-President | Mechanical Engineering



ROSS HILL

Sys. Automation Director | Computing



LIAM STRACHAN

Sponsorship Director | Economics



MICHAEL MILLS

Logistics Director | Engineering Physics



LUKE EMBLEM

Finance Director | Economics



ZWETLANA RAJESH

Plant Science Director | Health Studies



ABDUL ELAH RIZAN

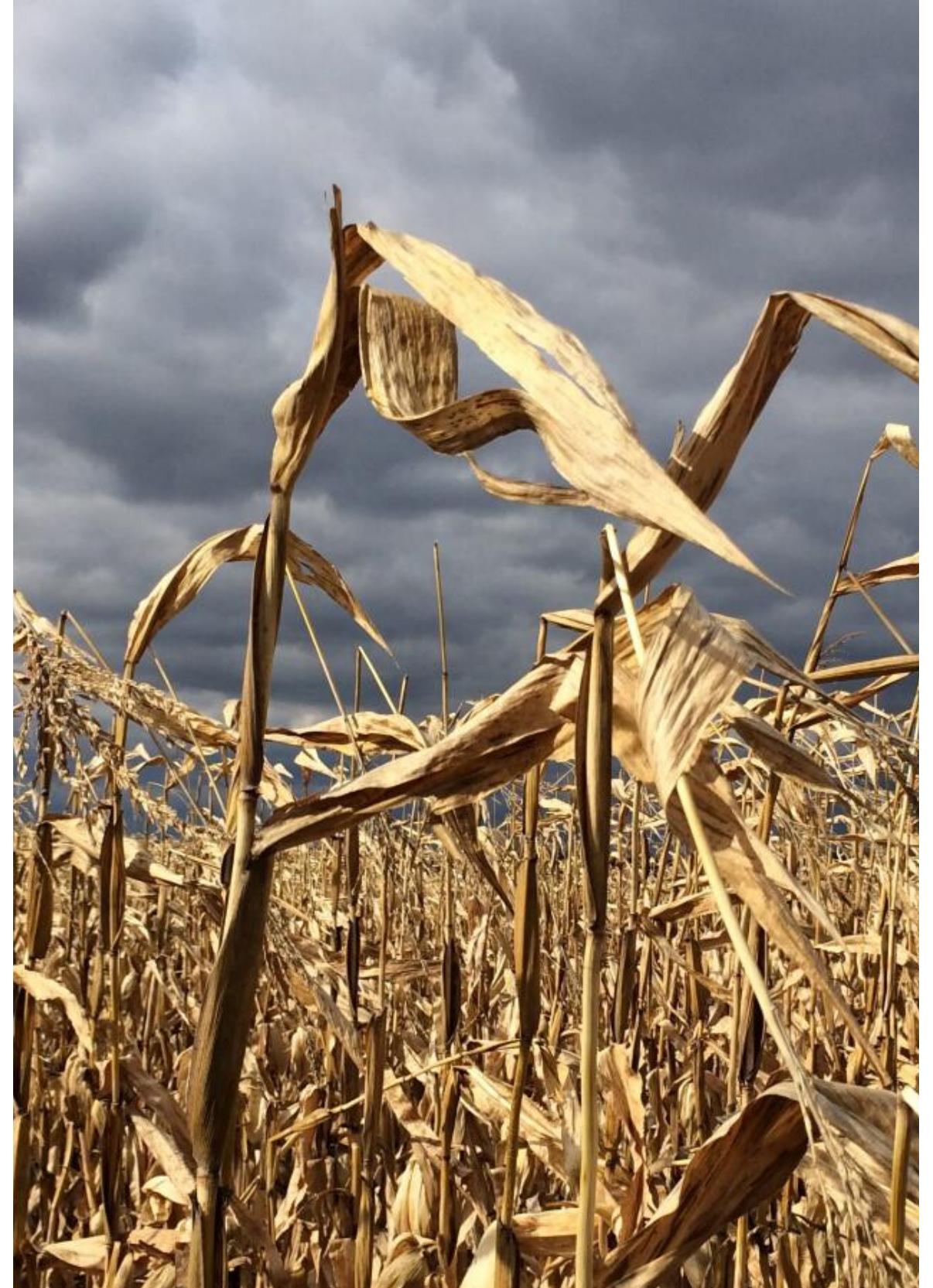
Software Engineer | Mechanical Eng.

WHY VERTICAL FARMING?

THE PROBLEM

A global trend of increasing concern is the diminishing supply of arable land per capita. Given climate change, urbanization, and soil degradation, the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) projects that by 2050, arable land per capita will fall to one third of the amount available in 1970. A 2018 report by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) raised further alarm, predicting that humanity will reach an environmental "point of no return" within the next two decades.

Given the existential threat of climate change, and the enormous toll taken by unsustainable agriculture on the environment, global food security in the coming decades will largely depend on our ability to adapt and overhaul existing cultivation practices.



THE SOLUTION

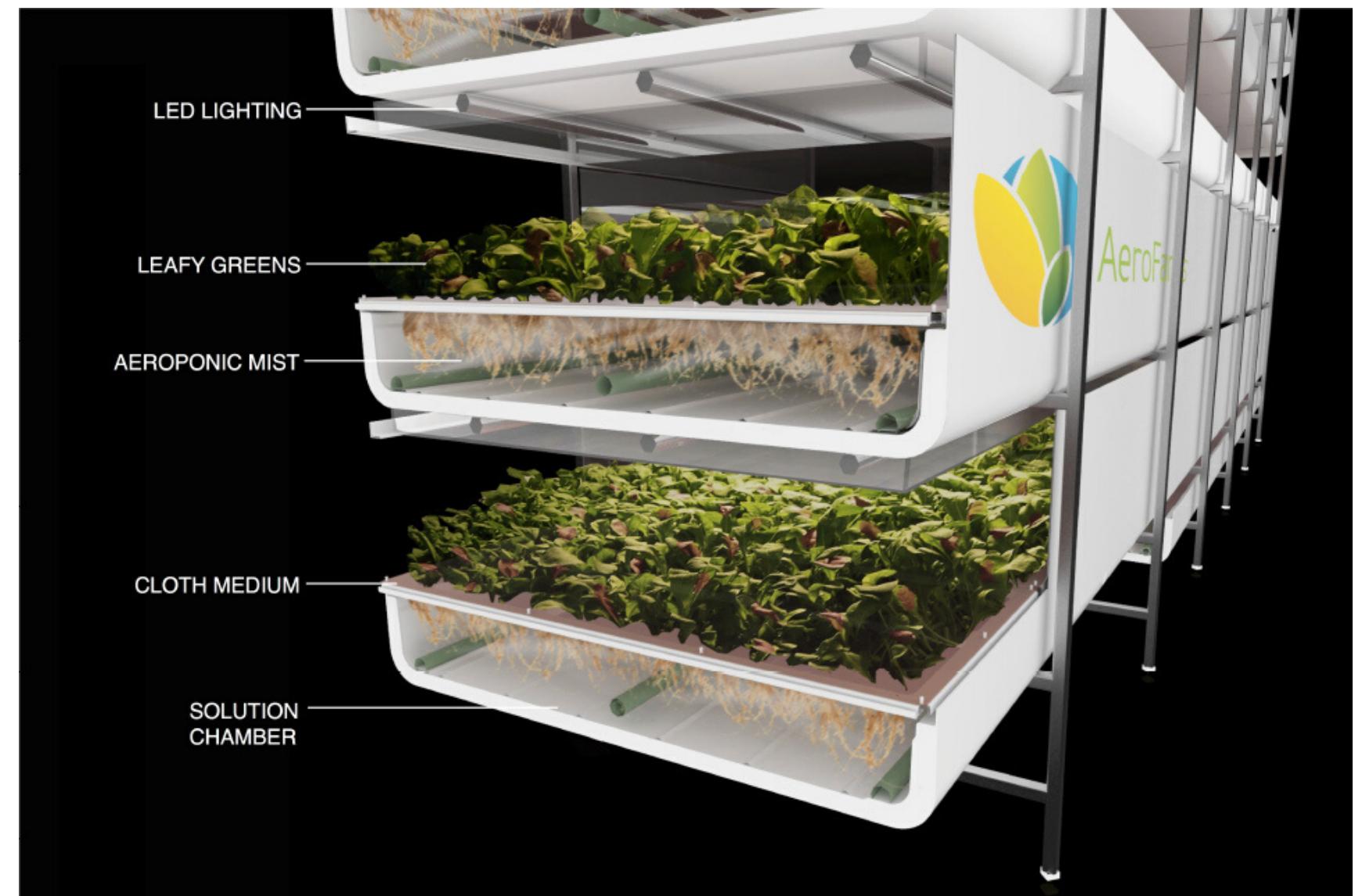
Vertical farming is a cultivation practice in which crops grow in an indoor, urban, climate-controlled facility. This approach is associated with dramatically reduced water consumption, slashed transportation costs, organic produce, massive improvements in per-acre land productivity, increased plant productivity, and the freedom to cultivate crops in any location, year-round. These benefits are made possible through controlled-environment agriculture (CEA), which allows for the artificial optimization of environmental inputs such as lighting, temperature, moisture, and nutritional availability.



WHAT WE DO

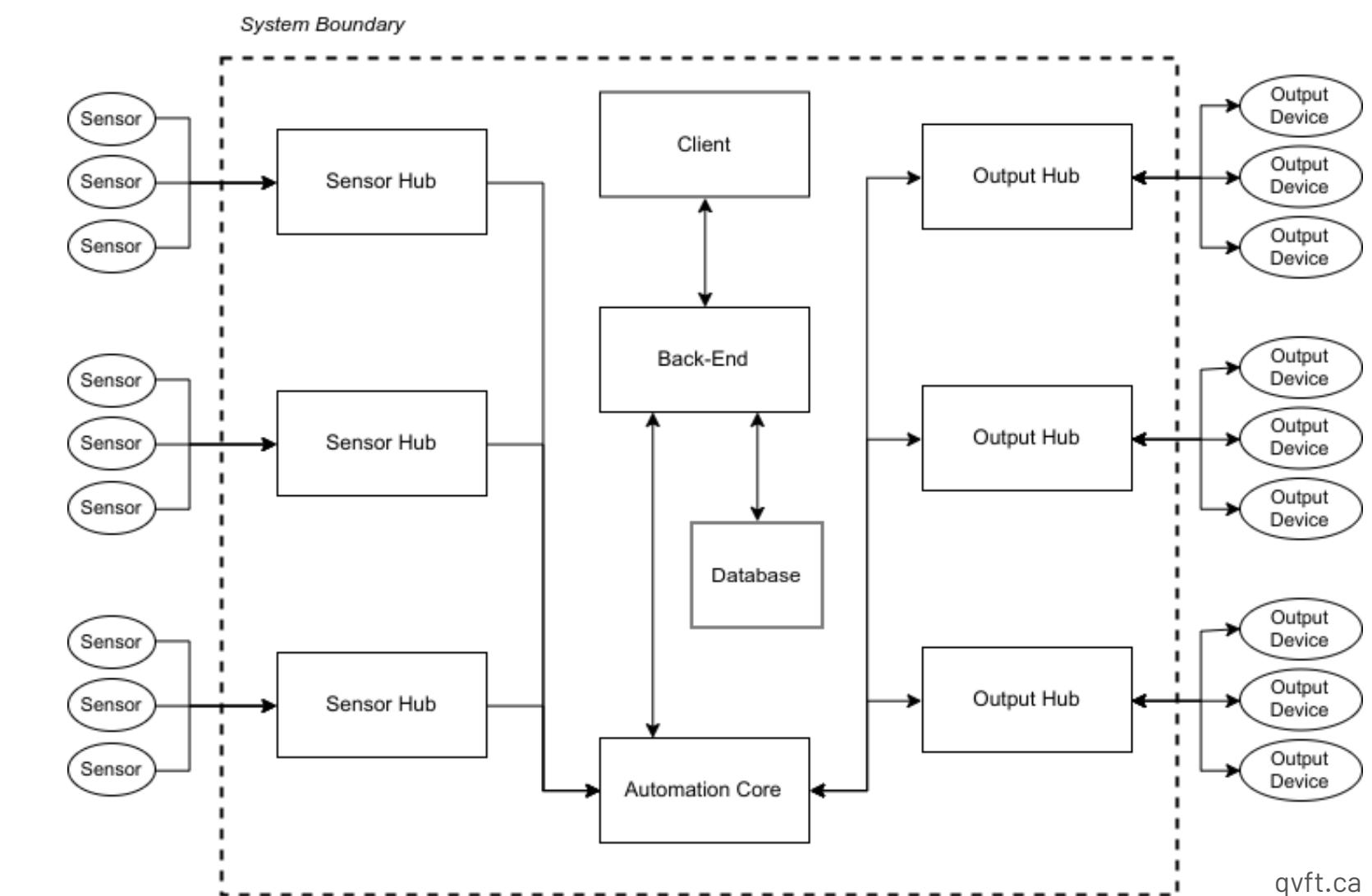
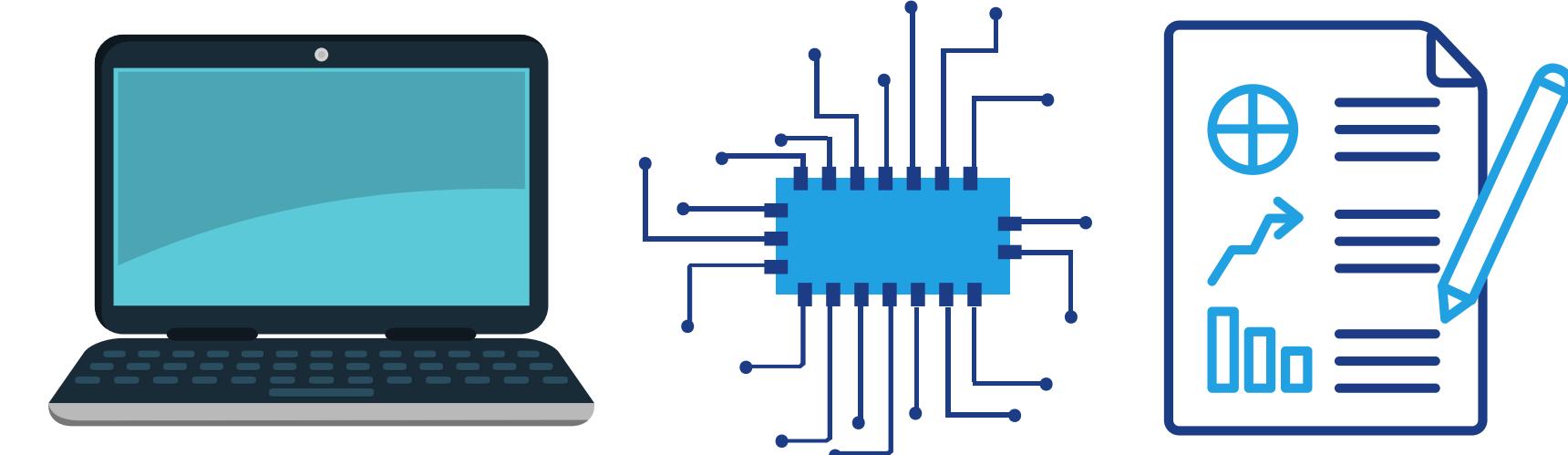
AEROPONICS

QVFT employs an aeroponic cultivation method, in which nutrients are dissolved in water (fertigation) and misted directly onto roots via spray nozzles. Our design is based on that developed by AeroFarms (see right), listed as one of the "Top 100 Inventions of 2019" by *Time*. Crops rest on a thin, porous substrate, through which their roots dangle in a basin below. Requiring no soil, this approach allows the grower near-complete control over the specific nutrient mix a plant receives. Aeroponics are a key component of controlled-environment agriculture.



CONTROLLED-ENVIRONMENT AGRICULTURE

QVFT's CEA system, currently being developed by the Systems Automation team, is essentially a software-controlled network of sensors. Our proposed system (see right) aims to control, monitor, and maximize farming yield by comparing realtime environmental data to preset environmental targets, and adjusting the internal growing environment accordingly. The CEA will serve as the central control hub for the lighting, irrigation, fertigation, ventilation, and climate control systems. Further information is available in "CEA System Requirements", accessible through our website.



qvft.ca

CROP SELECTION

As vertical farming is a cost-intensive cultivation method, current industry practices focus on small, premium crops that have short growth cycles and high automation potential. Examples include leafy greens such as baby lettuce, spinach, and kale, which have a brief growth cycle of roughly 50–65 days. QVFT will focus exclusively on the cultivation of leafy greens, as the commercial farming systems from which we draw inspiration are designed specifically for such purposes. Starting in February 2020, we will cultivate a small batch of baby lettuce as a litmus test for our prototype. This will provide feedback regarding the efficacy of our system and identify areas of improvement for when we scale our model in the following school year.



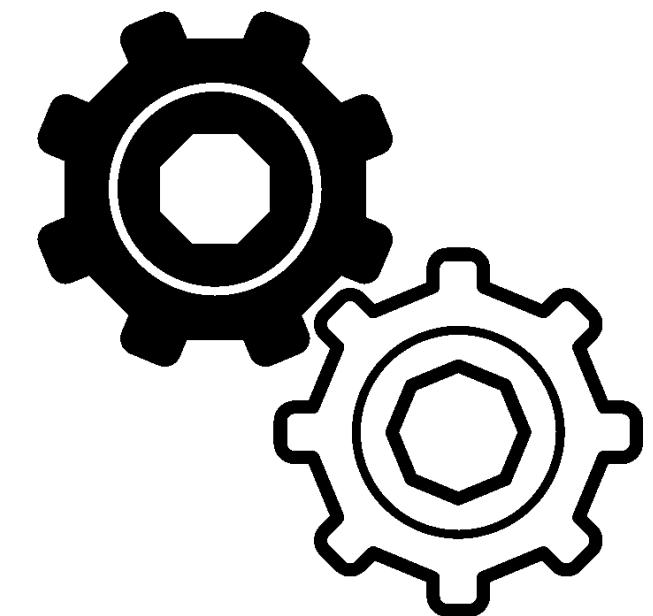
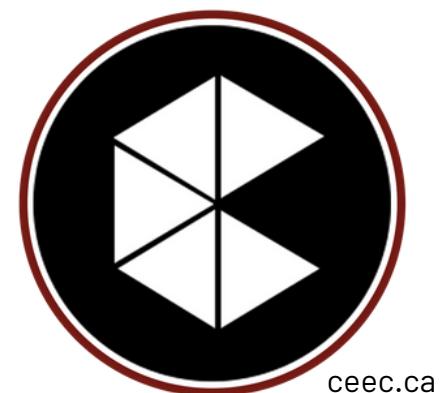
PROMOTIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

SHORT TERM

Between January and April 2020, QVFT will host several educational tasters and deliver presentations at sustainability-related school events. We are currently scheduled to participate in the Commerce & Engineering Environmental Conference (CEEC) trade show, which runs from Jan. 30th to Feb. 1st. Our first taster will also be held in January, and will consist of a mixed seminar and Q&A format. These events allow us to promote our sponsors, increase general awareness of vertical farming, and introduce ourselves to like-minded students who may be interested in joining us.

LONG TERM

QVFT's long term goal (3-4 years) is to create a national vertical farming design competition, available to student teams on university campuses across Canada. This competition will encourage other schools to develop vertical farming teams of their own and will provide a venue for students to compete and compare results in a range of categories. The results will be judged by industry professionals, with opportunities to share best practices and network within the industry. This goal will be pursued only after QVFT has reached sufficient maturity.



CONTACT US



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