Islanders Ltd Greenhouse Expansion Plan

Service

The proposed plan is to expand Islanders Ltd. hydroponic growing power by building a one-hectare size greenhouse for the sole purpose of growing lettuce. The greenhouse will be built in Summerville PEI and due to the short shelf life of lettuce, will provide a service of production and delivery of locally grown lettuce.

Target Market

A preliminary market evaluation determined that ethnically diverse urban areas such as Halifax have the highest premium on hydroponic lettuce as consumers are educated on the benefits and are wealthy enough to pay extra for them. Restaurants have also been identified as a large buyer as most chefs prefer the fresher hydroponic lettuce over traditional field grown as it reduces wasted and prep time. Lastly elder care homes that provide food services for residents are a definite possible purchaser as hydroponic lettuce is often sought after by seniors due to its health benefits.

Benefits of the Service

Hydroponic lettuce is non-allergenic, pesticide free, herbicide free and fully digestible. In addition to the numerous health-benefits, the growing time of hydroponics is significantly shorter than traditional produce, can be grown year-round, and have been proven to have yields 20-30% higher than conventionally grown vegetables. If properly handled, hydroponic vegetables can arrive at grocery stores in pristine form and as a result can often be sold for a higher price.

Positioning Relative to Competitors

There are currently 3 hydroponic producers of lettuce in the Maritimes all of which are focusing on specialty lettuce and not on iceberg or romaine, the two highest selling types of lettuce in the surrounding provinces. This gap in the market presents a good opportunity to provide local fresh high demand produce year-round. The company currently has a very good reputation and provides quality service.

Management Team

Islanders Ltd owners Theresa and Margaret Greene are both seasoned farmers with over 35 years of combined experience in traditional farming and now 12 years in the hydroponic business. They are enthusiastic and driven women who love their job. One potential weakness in the team is that Margaret has been handling the financial side of the business for over 35 years and will soon be taking on a reduced work load or possibly retiring. It is recommended that the team hire someone for Margaret to mentor who would eventually take over her role as the business’s accountant.