Why Salads?

Context

Salads are a staple in most health-conscious diets. However, maintaining a supply of fresh greens can be a struggle. Unbeknownst to most consumers, how salad makes its way through the supply chain is far from fresh and safe. Salad greens hold the record for most wasted produce and are the leader in foodborne illness. The very processes intended to clean, remove, and prevent contamination (triple-washing) creates a cesspool of germs that then makes its way home to the consumer. This chain of events induces 10 million health cases annually and allows 1 billion pounds of salad to end up in the landfill each year in the US.

Growing at home is becoming a more and more desirable solution for many Americans due to rising food prices, food safety concerns, and heightened interest in eco-friendly living. However, current solutions for growing at home don't take into account that users' lack of gardening experience, the amount of space required, and aesthetic preferences. Furthermore, they do not guarantee a positive return-on-investment based on the amount of food produced, the effort, and upfront purchase price.

Research & Discovery

The feasibility of the Planter to have broad environment grow capabilities was desirable to ensure widespread geographic usability. We relied heavily on user data from UrbnEarth's first product, the UrbMat, and polled existing and potential customers who had signed up on a landing page. Through interviewing 112 potential customers that covered USDA hardiness zones with at least three growing seasons, we crafted a rubric with requirements that touched the following categories: brand, features, assembly, shipping, and manufacturability.