



Growing the Future of Food

Agritech startup sets up vertical farm in Tuen Mun, Hong Kong to bring freshness and build food resilience for the city.

Many would agree that developing a sustainable food system is important for our next generation. While this encompasses a wide scope of practices, sustainable agriculture is at the forefront of maintaining a green-conscious ecosystem. Singapore agritech company Sustenir is passionate about finding a new and improved way to grow crops locally, with an aim to build a resilient future with high tech agriculture.

Smart urban farming

Sustenir specialises in growing non-native varieties, such as kale and ice plant, locally and all-year round. Its Controlled Environment Agriculture (CEA) can maintain all growing conditions of the produce, including water, lights and air. Its in-house AI, the SARA (Sustenir Agriculture Real-time Assistant) system enables the team to generate insights and make data-driven decisions, closely monitoring the produce growing process.

"The produce we grow is 100 percent clean without exposure to dirt and rain; no pesticides or chemicals needed to preserve it through the import process, and it is consistently nutritious and tastier," Jack Moy, General Manager of Sustenir said. "At present, Hong Kong imports almost 98 percent of its produce. With our farm

located just 60 minutes from the city centre, our produce is harvested fresh daily and we are able to bring ultimate freshness to customers here."

Rising awareness leads to more conscious consumption

Moy added that there is a growing awareness of Hong Kong consumers towards making conscious and ethical choices. "Food sustainability is getting more attention as consumers have become more concerned about the origins of their food," said Moy, "at the same time, many actively look for brands that have initiatives that protect the environment, so it's a very positive step in the right direction."

Sustenir's products are currently available in over 80 outlets across Hong Kong. Moy remarked, "our goals are to ensure that we make sustainability convenient to our consumers, making sure we have a wide enough distribution for both retail and out-of-home consumption."

With 98 percent of staff who are local, its Hong Kong team is dedicated to farming operations and building customer relations. Looking forward, Sustenir is looking to groom the next generation of high-tech urban farmers with an aim to build food resilience for the city.

A straightforward setup process that favours startup

Moy agrees that setting up business in the city is very straightforward. "The conduct of business in Hong Kong has always been professional from all parties, including the local team that we have brought on board. This has been a boon for us as we build our business fundamentals."

He also offered some tips for companies who would like to come to Hong Kong: "It is important to understand the entire ecosystem, from suppliers to customers and consumer insights. This frees up resources to focus on growing the business quickly in a cost-competitive environment."

"InvestHK has supported us immeasurably in expanding our network, from relevant government bodies to potential suppliers, customers and investors. This has enabled us to get up to full operations in a faster than expected pace," he concluded.

Sustenir

- Founded in 2015 and headquartered in Singapore
- Expanded to Hong Kong in 2019 with a 25,000 square-foot Controlled Environment Agriculture farming facility in Tuen Mun
- Sustenir's farming method uses 95 percent less water than traditional farming and energy consumption stays lower than industry standard

 susteniragriculture.com

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Jack Moy
 General Manager, Sustenir