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$300K Grant Awarded for Food Safety in Lettuce

Dr. Sean Campbell

In late summer, researchers at the University of Arkansas announced they'd received a $300,000 grant from the U.S. Department of Agriculture's National Institute of Food and Agriculture (USDA-NIFA) to evaluate the efficacy of using soilless substrates as a critical point for controlling pests and pathogens during hydroponic lettuce production.

Lead researcher Kristen Gibson, director of the Arkansas Center for Food Safety and Arkansas Agricultural Experiment Station, noted that the research would be jointly investigating pathogens that are responsible for making people and plants sick, stating, "If we combine strategies where you're addressing plant pathogens at the same time as food safety, it works better."

Given the drastic increase in CEA-based production of leafy greens with the rise of industries like indoor farming, I'm highly encouraged to see how the team at Arkansas can help make the entire field safer. Stay tuned for future updates on the research.