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The Creativity of Growing

Jennifer Polanz



A plant's needs don't change: light, proper temperature, water, nutrients and air. And yet, there are so many ways to achieve growth amid a large spectrum of success that I think growing can only be described as an art form. Of course, there's science to it, but there's also nuance.

It's the creativity in the nuance and the potential for technology to achieve it that defines our cover story this month. Bowery Farming co-founder and CEO Irving Fain was looking for a way to grow more nutritious food for more people on a local level, rather than trucking it hundreds or thousands of miles.

He's no stranger to disrupting industries and creating successful startups, either. In researching him, I found out he was the driving force behind iHeartRadio, a digital streaming platform where you can listen to radio stations from across the country, as well as access music, news, podcasts and more. The platform has more than 128 million users and is now in other countries, as well. Prior to that, the radio stations (that were Clear Channel before rebranding) were on their own to stream content. Now they're aggregated and reach a much larger audience.

Why am I talking about streaming music? Because it shows a new approach to an established industry. What's more established than farming? Of course, nothing is going to be perfect right out of the gate and every new endeavor requires a learning curve. What's fascinating about Bowery is the proprietary technology it has to make that learning curve a whole lot faster.

If super high-tech vertical farm growing isn't your speed, there are other options in these pages. If you're looking for more details on the ins and outs of CEA production, we've got a new series on Frequently Asked Questions, written by some of the best CEA researchers in our industry.

And if you're really looking to just extend your growing seasons, possibly for a farmers market stand or Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) program, then high-tunnel growing might be your best bet. We've got more details on the benefits of hoophouses in [Guide to High Tunnel Production](#).

Now let's talk specific crops. Strawberries are seeing a big surge in popularity, both with consumers and CEA growers. If you grow strawberries, or are looking to do so, find out how to maximize your production. If basil is one of your crops, then check out the trials on downy mildew-resistant varieties from Maryland researchers.

And last, but certainly not least, we close out the supplement in a slightly different way. Our Cannabis Culture author Dr. Brian Corr has taken a new job outside the cannabis industry. We wish him well in his new endeavor and thank him for his years of dedication in writing for us! We're also replacing Brian with ... well, Brian. He wrote the brand-new chapter on cannabis in the recently released 19th edition of the Ball RedBook and we'll be excerpting culture information from that chapter at the end of the coming issues. So you can still read Brian's work for a little longer. **IG**