

Vertically Growing Strawberries in Stacked Pots

Vertical-growing strawberries in the past few years have become popular with large commercial hydroponic growing operations such as [Plenty](#), [Oishii](#), Bushel Boy Farms. At Scenic Valley we have developed a Vertical Growing Strawberry in Stacked Pots (VGSP) system for a soil substrate. The resulting produce, organically grown, high quality, and notably sweet, is perfectly suited to the many small “U-pick” berry farms throughout the United States.

Scenic Valley began research for the VGSP in 2016, and subsequently obtained a USDA SBIR-Phase 1 grant in 2017. We have been continuously improving our prototype through research, development and testing. The unique advantages of the VGSP for small and medium-sized farms include: 1) an extended harvest season (April 1 into December), 2) larger yield than found in field-growing operations, 3) easy maintenance and harvesting, 4) higher quality berries compared to hydroponic produce, 4) the advantages of USDA Certified organically-grown produce, 5) smaller footprint than found in field-growing operations, 6) greater immunity to spotted wing drosophila and other destructive insects/critters, 7) cost-effective installation and maintenance.

Scenic Valley intends to use the Phase II grant to: (1) Improve yield to 1.5 pounds per plant and (2) develop a metal racking racking system.

Scenic Valley’s Farm and another farm are presently testing the prototype; two additional farms will test the prototype as part of the Phase 2 project—and many other farms have shown interest in the VGSP system. A large US greenhouse manufacturer will help with the manufacturing and invest in the commercialization.