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ALEXANDER OLESEN: INNOVATING URBAN AGRICULTURE WITH MICRO-FARMS

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Indoor farming can be a solution to encouraging people to integrate nature into their urban lives. As part of the Co-Living Series, we asked Alexander Olesen, founder of Babylon Micro-Farms, to explain how his project is making this experience more user-friendly and more sustainable.

When nature enters the household

Urban agriculture is currently a trending initiative in the Western World and considered as a potential solution to making cities more sustainable. The Micro-Farm is an automated indoor farming appliance that was designed in Charlottesville, Virginia (USA) by a recent graduate from the University of Virginia. It allows anyone to grow fresh leafy greens, herbs, flowers and vegetables at the push of a button. Through Babylon’s proprietary technology, it grows a wide variety of plants two times faster and uses up to 90% less water.

Access to hydroponics plant cultivation has been limited by three main problems: the cost of technology, growing expertise and space requirements.

Design is fundamental to adapting our cities for the future. In order to get people to engage and learn about innovations, we must embrace design as the first line of attack when introducing people to new ideas.
Making urban agriculture more accessible

Thanks to a high-level of automation and pre-seeded refill pods, the Micro-Farm creates an intuitive user experience simple enough for people of all ages to experiment with. All users have to do is scan in the pre-seeded refill pod and the technology takes care of the rest, it grows automatically from seed to harvest and sends alerts to users.

The automated growing platform is capable of powering a wide variety of urban farming operations. This could range from a small residential appliance, a larger installation such as an amenity at a housing development, or a full-scale commercial operation.

Designing technology and consumables to be adaptable and scalable all while simplifying the user experience is key. Seeing is believing and the creation of eye-catching structures is essential to garnering public support that will ultimately drive policymakers to introduce nature into cities.

Image source: Babylon Micro Farms

Watch the video here
BABYLON MICRO-FARMS

Babylon is an indoor farming specialist, combining cutting edge technology with innovative agricultural methods to empower a new generation of urban farmers. They have created a system that automates all of the complex aspects of plant cultivation.

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