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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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GROWING FOR GOOD AT GOODRICH ELEMENTARY

Goodrich Elementary utilizes innovative indoor hydroponic technology in the classroom to engage students in STEM and social causes.

WOODRIDGE, IL - Something exciting is growing in Mrs. Graff's sixth-grade classroom at Woodridge Elementary. Students are using the Flex Farm, innovative hydroponic technology, to grow fresh leafy greens year-round indoors. Students have already grown over twenty pounds of lettuce this school year.

Fork Farms began partnering with Woodridge District 68 in April 2019. There are currently four schools in the district with Flex Farms. Teachers are using the STEM curriculum provided by Fork Farms in partnership with FIRST Educational Resources. The curriculum lessons are designed to assist students in developing a deeper understanding and connection to hydroponic growing.

In Mrs. Graff's classroom, students conducted experiments with lettuce seeds planted in the Flex Farm. The experiments involved understanding the variables necessary to keep a plant alive (light, nutrients, space, water and air). Students were encouraged to test their hypothesis and record their findings. In addition to STEM learning in the classroom, Mrs. Graff wanted to incorporate lessons on civic engagement and social responsibility.

"Students brainstormed ideas on what we can do with the lettuce that is grown in our classroom. Together, they decided on donating it to a local food pantry to benefit people within our community," explained Mrs. Graff. "The food pantry is the West Suburban Food Pantry. The staff there have expressed how much the individuals receiving food enjoy the fresh produce. They are so happy to have things that aren't in season locally but can be grown indoors using the Flex Farm."

FORK FARMS



Alex Tyink, president of Fork Farms is excited about the positive outcomes at Woodridge Elementary. "It is amazing to see all the different ways students are engaged in the classroom because of the Flex Farm. Teachers everywhere are coming up with new, creative ways to incorporate key learnings through hands-on education" said Tyink. "Not only are students being exposed to STEM-based learning, but they are also learning how to be responsible stewards of their own bodies, our planet and communities. That is really special and inspiring."

On Thursday, October 10th, staff from the West Suburban Food Pantry will be visiting Woodridge Elementary students to share the positive impact their lettuce is having on the community.

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Fork Farms LLC is an agricultural technology company based in Appleton, Wisconsin. Our flagship product the Flex Farm is a highly efficient indoor hydroponic growing system that puts the power to grow fresh, affordable produce into the hands of our partners all across the nation. Fork Farms has been involved in hundreds of indoor farm installations throughout the United States with partnering schools, nonprofit organizations, families, corporate cafeterias and more. We believe in the power of good food, and we have made it our mission to unleash the power of food production for happier, healthier people.

Goodrich Elementary is an elementary school in the Woodridge School District 68. At Goodrich School, staff and students follow the common expectations to be safe, respectful and responsible. By doing so, we create an optimal environment where student learning can take place. Learning at Goodrich is frequently collaborative, where students support each others success in meeting the high standards set forth.