

This indoor farmer wants to turn rural Kentucky into America's 'high-tech agriculture capital'

Jonathan Webb's farm doesn't look like much: tawny soil stretching to a line of trees, a trailer with a few makeshift desks. But if Mr. Webb gets his way, by mid-2020, the Morehead, Ky., property will house a 60-acre greenhouse—the first in a series of multi-acre, technology-augmented indoor farms meant to bring jobs to Appalachia and fresh-picked tomatoes to surrounding states.

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Jonathan Webb

Image: AppHarvest

Mr. Webb's vision is to turn economically distressed eastern Kentucky into the high-tech agriculture capital of the country. He has no prior experience in farming, but he has managed to attract \$97 million in project financing and a list of noteworthy partners. Ultimately, he plans to spend \$1 billion to \$2 billion on greenhouses—even if it takes a decade or two.

His startup, AppHarvest, is one of a growing number of technology-focused agricultural companies seeking to solve the problems of the U.S. food system—among them opaque supply chains, labor shortages, food waste, health and safety issues, higher import costs and an [increasingly unpredictable climate](#)—by growing food indoors.

Compared with traditional farms, [indoor farms offset weather-related risks](#), reduce food waste, use drastically less water and [produce more consistent crops](#).

Read full, original article: [The Indoor Farmer Who Wants to Remake Appalachia's Agriculture](#)