



## ABOUT THE GROWHAUS

Despite a rising awareness of the importance of healthy eating and local food, communities throughout the country lack access to fresh foods necessary for a healthy diet. The GrowHaus is an urban agriculture and food justice non-profit in one such community: Denver's Elyria-Swansea neighborhood. Our mission is to **increase the accessibility and affordability of fresh, healthy food in North Denver while showcasing locally-adapted techniques for sustainable indoor food production.** We aim to fulfill this mission through three integrated components: an indoor farm, ongoing educational programming, and a local market.



The GrowHaus is based in a 20,000 square foot greenhouse on 47th and York that was purchased by the company Performance Properties in September of 2009. We are currently leasing the space from Performance Properties, which is in the process of legally protecting the site as a center for agriculture and education. In our first year of operation, we have set up our 501(c)3 and board of directors, developed a strategic plan, assessed our capital needs, logged thousands of volunteer hours, forged many strategic partnerships, and begun growing food and teaching about food justice. With this foundation in place, we are now well-positioned to grow our seedling of a project into a robust and healthy non-profit over the next two years.

## OUR VISION

The GrowHaus will contain two separate growing operations: one to generate earned income and jobs, and one for education and food security. In the **Hydrofarm**, we will be raising lettuce and asian greens using hydroponics, a technique for growing plants in nutrient-enriched water to attain a large and fast yield. These plants will be sold to grocery chains, restaurants and at farmer's markets, generating enough revenue for at least two jobs. We are partnering with GroGreen, a successful local grower of hydroponic tomatoes and salad greens, to help us build out our system and find customers. We have secured \$47,000 in financing to build the first phase of the Hydroponics Farm, and are seeking an additional \$25,000 to perform additional necessary renovations.



**Growasis Farm**, meanwhile, is our public demonstration farm that comprises 8,000 square feet at the south end of the GrowHaus. Once it is fully built, Growasis will include: aquaponics (raising fish and plants together in an efficient recirculating system); free year-round plots for community members; research plots for experimenting with new species and growing techniques; a lecture area with teaching kitchen; and in-house soil production using worm composting. We are currently testing many of the above techniques in a small heated portion of the greenhouse while finalizing the design for the built-out farm. We have applied for approximately \$200,000 in grants to fund the installation of energy-efficient roof panels, cutting-edge heating and cooling systems, and new growing beds.

A key component of the Growasis model is ongoing **educational programming** for students of all ages. We have already hosted dozens of workshops on food justice, composting, nutrition and other topics for participants ranging from local elementary school students to corporate employees. We also planned and led Seed to Seed, an 8-week teen summer course with an original curriculum that we will be hosting every year.



The final component of our vision involves distributing healthy food through a small local market in the front of our space. The nearest full-service grocery store to Elyria-Swansea is 2.8 miles away, making the neighborhood the largest “food desert” in Denver’s city limits. Once it opens its doors, the **GrowHaus Market** will provide fresh, healthy ingredients to community members at an affordable rate, emphasizing local and organically-grown staple foods as well as specialty ingredients frequently used by neighborhood residents. We will be selling produce on a small scale from the market in 2011, and are currently seeking outside investment to complete the full build-out.

## OUR VALUES

- **Environmental Sustainability.** The GrowHaus is guided in large part by permaculture, a design philosophy that draws from a deep understanding of healthy ecosystems. We aim to grow an abundance of food year-round while minimizing our consumption of off-site water, energy and soil, and by making extensive use of reused and recycled materials.
- **Social Sustainability.** Healthy food, and the knowledge of how to grow and cook it, is a right, not a privilege. The GrowHaus strives to empower our community to meet its own needs while generating jobs for local residents, especially youth.
- **Economic Sustainability.** Although the GrowHaus is structured as a non-profit, we are aggressively pursuing several sources of earned income, including restaurant and market sales, facility tours, workshops and educational programming, and space rental. As part of this strategy, we have developed a 3-year financial model that aims to generate half of our revenue in-house by 2012.



## WHAT'S NEXT

Through the end of 2010 and beginning of 2011, we will be engaged in the following activities:

- starting renovations on our indoor farms
- hiring an Executive Director and support staff
- refining our strategic plan and raising the necessary capital
- forging relationships with restaurants, grocery stores, and local markets
- hosting several indoor garden plots for community members
- continuing to lead workshops and volunteer days



## CONTACT US

We'd love to hear how you'd like to be involved! Find us online at [www.thegrowhaus.com](http://www.thegrowhaus.com), [www.facebook.com/thegrowhaus](http://www.facebook.com/thegrowhaus), and [www.twitter.com/growhaus](http://www.twitter.com/growhaus).

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