

## Contact Information

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## PRODUCE PURPOSE, EMPLOYER OF SPECIAL NEEDS HYDROPONIC FARMERS, SIGNS CONTRACT WITH WILLIAM PEACE UNIVERSITY

### For Immediate Release

Raleigh, NC; April 28th, 2023 - Produce Purpose Inc., a nonprofit, has entered into contract with William Peace University to install a hydroponic farming operation on its campus. "Produce Purpose was founded with five goals in mind: to provide purposeful employment to those with special needs, to produce pesticide-free, non-GMO crops hydroponically with a minimal carbon footprint, to encourage healthy eating habits on campus, to promote inclusivity within campus life, and to provide immersive learning opportunities to higher education," says Matthew Harvey, Produce Purpose's Executive Director. "WPU has distinguished itself as one of the leading academic institutions in the Research Triangle region. Its commitment to innovation and fostering a social conscience within its students makes it the ideal partner for this exciting initiative."

To grow its produce, Produce Purpose is also partnering with Freight Farms, a best-of-breed hydroponic technology company based in Boston, MA. A state-of-the-art, self-contained, fully automated hydroponic farm is projected to harvest its first crop this fall on the campus of William Peace University. "We feel incredibly excited and fortunate to be working with Matthew Harvey and the rest of the Produce Purpose Team. Their mission perfectly illustrates the value of container farming for university campuses, and this initiative will have a positive impact on the Raleigh community for years to come. We can't wait to get their Greenery S up and running!" Says David Turina, Senior Account Executive with Freight Farms.

Immersive learning is a distinguishing element of William Peace University's academic approach. WPU is committed to fostering within its students the ability to apply academic scholarship to real world problems and solutions. "The faculty at WPU focus on how they are teaching in addition to what they are teaching and build experiential, hands-on learning experiences into their courses," said Vice President for Academic Affairs Lynda Szymanski. "We are excited to partner with Produce Purpose to explore opportunities for faculty and students to engage with the on-campus hydroponic farm." Possible academic applications from housing Produce Purpose's hydroponic container farm on campus span a broad spectrum of disciplines, including Plant Biology, Computer Science, Special Education, Mechanical Engineering and Physics.

[Produce Purpose](#) is a 501(c)3 nonprofit founded in Raleigh, NC. Its goals are to mitigate the stubbornly high rate of unemployment amongst those with special needs, offer sustainably grown produce to counteract the current arable land shortage and encourage healthy eating in young people.

[William Peace University](#) is a regionally-ranked, award-winning institution in downtown Raleigh, NC. An impressive 96% of its graduates are employed or in graduate school within one year of Commencement. Founded in 1857 and boasting approximately 750 full-time students, WPU has been ranked 29th of Best Colleges in Regional Colleges South by [U.S. News and World Report](#).

Founded in 2012, [Freight Farms](#) debuted the first vertical hydroponic farm built inside an intermodal shipping container with the mission of democratizing and decentralizing the local production of fresh, healthy food. Since its inception, Freight Farms has refined its product offering to arrive at the Greenery™ S container farm. With global customers ranging from small business farmers to the corporate, hospitality, retail, education, and nonprofit sectors, Freight Farmers make up the largest network of connected farms in the world. AgTech Breakthrough named Freight Farms the 2022 "IoT Monitoring Solution of the Year" for its farmhand® IoT automation software.

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