



CONTACT INFORMATION: Our office is open to visitors by appointment only. Please call or email from 8:00 a.m. – 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday.



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John Morrill
Director

Featured Story: Future Acres Urban Farming

Green Business Partner Members are businesses that have taken initial steps to adopt practices, programs, and/or policies to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, including energy management and reduction; water conservation; waste management and reduction; transportation; sustainable procurement; and employee engagement.

[Future Acres Urban Farming](https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/environment-energy-coordination/green-business/featured-story-future-acres) is a sustainable urban farm located in Burke, Virginia. They became a member of Green Business Partners in August of 2023. We have enjoyed getting to know them and their work in Fairfax County.



In this interview, Owner Dave Littere shares information and insights about his business that helps to reduce food waste in the county. You can see more of what they are doing on their website, futureacresfarm.com.

What is Future Acres Urban Farming and why did you start this business?

Future Acres Urban Farming is a small urban farm operating in Fairfax County. We specialize in indoor vegetable production, food waste diversion, and organics upcycling. We started exploring vertical farming due to the health benefits we saw and how easily accessible good food can be, and the business has grown into a full-scale urban farming environment.

How did you get interested in urban farming and how long have you been doing it?

I have been interested in urban farming since college, where I majored in biology and took a few ecology courses. I became very interested in sustainable agricultural practices after college when I learned about some of the traditional agricultural practices that are seen as detrimental to ecology, soil health, and food quality.

What market do you serve and who are your customers?

With our microgreens, we serve residents of Fairfax County through our delivery routes and at farmers markets. We also provide microgreens to restaurants who focus on Farm to Table approaches and eating local. For our food waste collection and recycling, we serve residents by collecting at the 10 Fairfax County farmers markets along with our residential routes across the county.

What do you see as growth areas for Future Acres Urban Farming and sustainable urban agriculture in general?

Future Acres is positioned nicely to expand the organics recycling operations in Fairfax County. As composting becomes more popular among the public and more recognized as a valuable system to help prevent negative climate and environmental impacts, we will be in a position to recycle that food waste on site (or close to origin) as compared to hauling it out of the county. We will also soon be introducing indoor hydroponic farming to many sites across the county.

Earlier this year Future Acres Urban Farming participated in a GMU MBA course (Environmentally Sustainable Operations, taught by Professor Bellos, director of MBA programs) to serve as a case study. What did you learn from this experience and how did it benefit your business?

The course and graduate students helped me develop the planning stage of our pilot facility. We are pioneering a new system of organics recycling in Fairfax County by using a vertically integrated insect farming approach. The insects are rapidly produced and consume large volumes of food waste under controlled conditions. After their feeding, food waste is reduced up to 90%, with a 20% conversion to insect protein and 20% conversion to frass, a valuable soil amendment. The MBA students were able to help me identify important research and systems needed to roll out a pilot facility.



How can businesses in Fairfax County benefit from your business or from any lessons learned from your experiences – whether as a start-up micro-business or through the services you provide?

Building a network has been the most pivotal experience for me. No matter what industry, it seems like the more like-minded people you surround yourself with, the more support you have. As you build your network, stay open to different perspectives but remember to keep your goals in mind.

Why did you join the Green Business Partners program?

After explaining what we do currently and what we hope to expand into to a Fairfax County Supervisor and to the Fairfax Economic Development Authority, they both recommended that I look into joining this program. After I read up on the Green Business Partners Program, I took it as an opportunity to be in a unified group looking to make a difference.

Is there anything else you would like to highlight to GBP Members and Leaders?

I would invite everyone interested in checking out our organics recycling “lab” to visit our website and check our social media where I will be posting dates where we will be traveling, showcasing the system. I promise it will be a unique experience!

Learn More

Visit [Future Acres Urban Farming](https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/environment-energy-coordination/green-business/featured-story-future-acres) for more information.



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