THE ROLE OF INDOOR SMART GARDENS IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF SMART AGRICULTURE IN URBAN AREAS

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ABSTRACT

The increasing global population and urbanization have led to a growing interest in urban farming to provide sustainable food production. Indoor smart gardens, a new form of urban farming, have emerged as an innovative and technology-based solution to urban agriculture. This paper explores the role of indoor smart gardens in modern urban farming and their potential impact on food production, environmental sustainability, and human health. Consequently, comparison was used of traditional outdoor farming vs. indoor smart gardening. Also, a comparative study was conducted using the case study of two leading brands of indoor smart gardens: Aerogarden and Click & Grow. The research's results show that smart gardens have significant potential to revolutionize urban farming practices and address the growing demand for food production in urban areas. Our review of the literature and case study showed that smart gardens can significantly increase food production, improve environmental sustainability, and enhance human health in urban areas.

Introduction

In the modern world, people have come to prioritize technology over nature. That's because advances in technology allow for more convenience and connectivity in our daily living. And while innovation in technology is vital for global progression, nature plays a crucial role in our overall health and happiness as humans. When you need a break from work, and some space to clear your mind, the first place you turn to is the outdoors. That's because being surrounded by nature allows for us to disconnect from

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the hustle and bustle of our busy lives, and reconnect with something calmer, more beautiful, and more peaceful than all that goes on in our urban jungles.

In general, the urban population is increasing, which implies several factors besides the preoccupation with the production of food, which can be enlivened by the participation of society's individuals and public agencies (Dal Moro et al., 2020). On the other hand, the world population is growing rapidly, and by 2050, it is estimated that 68% of the global population will be living in urban areas (UN, 2018). This trend has led to a significant increase in demand for food production in urban areas. Urban farming has emerged as a promising solution to address this demand and ensure food security in urban areas. However, traditional urban farming practices face several challenges, such as limited space, poor soil quality, and inadequate water supply.

Smart gardens have emerged as a new form of urban farming that leverages technology to address these challenges. Smart gardens use sensors, artificial intelligence, and automation to optimize plant growth and improve food production in urban areas. In this paper, we explore the role of smart gardens in modern urban farming and their potential impact on food production, environmental sustainability, and human health. Also, smart gardens have gained popularity in recent years due to their potential to revolutionize urban farming practices. Studies have shown that smart gardens can significantly increase food production in urban areas (Barbosa et al., 2020; Grewal et al., 2021). For example, a study conducted by Barbosa et al. (2020) showed that smart gardens can increase crop yield by up to 80% compared to traditional farming methods.

Smart gardens can also improve environmental sustainability in urban areas. Traditional farming practices often require large amounts of water and pesticides, which can have negative impacts on the environment. Smart gardens use sensors and automation to optimize water usage and reduce the need for pesticides (Koirala et al., 2021). This can significantly reduce the environmental impact of urban farming practices. Smart gardens can also have positive impacts on human health. Studies have shown that exposure to nature can have significant health benefits, such as reducing stress and improving mental health (Bowler et al., 2010). Smart gardens can provide urban residents with access to nature and green spaces, which can enhance their well-being.

Literature review

Modern society is becoming more informed and intelligent with the development of digital technology, in which humans, objects, and networks relate with each other (Woo, Suh, 2021). Indoor smart gardens have gained significant attention in recent years as a potential solution for sustainable food production in urban areas. This literature review aims to examine the role of indoor smart gardens in the development of smart agriculture in urban areas. Our agricultural system has a gigantic task ahead, by 2050 it will need to increase food production by about 70% in order to meet the needs of a global population of 9.7 billion people, 68% of whom are projected to live in urban areas (Cerro, 2022). Presently, 38% of the planet's unfrozen land is used for growing food, using 70% of our water consumption (Cerro, 2022). Numerous studies have shown that indoor smart gardens have the potential to increase food production in urban areas. For instance, (Despommier, 2010) notes that indoor farming can produce up to 20 times more crops per square foot than traditional outdoor farming. Additionally, (Graamans et al., 2018) conducted a study on vertical farming, which is a type of indoor smart garden, and found that it could reduce the land use and water consumption associated with traditional agriculture.

Indoor smart gardens can also improve environmental sustainability in urban areas. (Huang et al., 2020) argue that indoor farming can reduce the environmental impact of agriculture by reducing pesticide and herbicide use, minimizing water use, and reducing carbon emissions associated with transportation. Moreover, (Ohyama et al., 2019) found that indoor farming can recycle nutrients and water, leading to a closed-loop system that is highly sustainable. Also, indoor smart gardens have the potential to enhance human health in urban areas. (Lee et al., 2019) argue that indoor farming can improve food security and access to fresh, healthy produce in urban areas. Furthermore, (Soga et al., 2016) found that urban green spaces, including indoor gardens, can improve mental health by providing a sense of calm and relaxation.

Several technological advancements have played a significant role in the development of indoor smart gardens. For example, (Lu et al., 2021) note that the integration of artificial intelligence and machine learning in smart agriculture has improved the precision and efficiency of indoor farming. Furthermore, (Wu et al., 2019) suggest that the use of light-emitting diodes (LEDs) in indoor smart gardens can improve crop growth and yield while reducing energy consumption.

In addition to the environmental and health benefits of indoor smart gardens, they can also provide economic benefits for urban areas. (Koga et al., 2020) argue that indoor farming can create jobs and generate revenue in urban areas, while also reducing the need for importing food from rural areas. Moreover, (Tong et al., 2021) suggest that smart agriculture can lead to the development of new technologies and industries, providing further economic opportunities for urban areas. However, indoor smart gardens also face several challenges. (Jiang et al., 2019) note that high initial investment costs and technological complexity can make it difficult for small-scale farmers to adopt smart agriculture practices. Additionally, (Sanyé-Mengual et al., 2020) suggest that indoor smart gardens may face regulatory barriers related to zoning and land use, which can limit their widespread adoption in urban areas.

The technology development is paving way for the automation to be made to the existing machines leading to the new technology called Internet of Things (Kuppusamy, 2016). But, smart agriculture is not only a technology to ease the human life, but it has rather become a necessity or even a compulsion to cope with rapidly increasing food demand of the world population, which is multiplying itself every second (Bhuvaneswari et al., 2021). Indoor smart gardens have significant potential to contribute to the development of smart agriculture in urban areas, with benefits including increased food production, improved environmental sustainability, enhanced human health, and economic opportunities. While challenges such as high initial investment costs and regulatory barriers remain, ongoing technological developments and collaborations among stakeholders can help to overcome these challenges and realize the full potential of indoor smart gardens in urban agriculture.

This literature review demonstrates that indoor smart gardens have significant potential to contribute to the development of smart agriculture in urban areas. By increasing food production, improving environmental sustainability, and enhancing human health, indoor smart gardens can play a crucial role in creating more sustainable and livable urban environments.

Materials and methods

To investigate the role of indoor smart garden in modern urban farming, a mixed-methods research design was employed. The research methodology comprised of two main components: a comparative study of two leading brands of indoor smart gardens and a literature review. Also, comparison was used of traditional outdoor farming vs. indoor smart gardening. To conduct the comparative study, two leading brands of indoor smart gardens, namely Aerogarden and Click & Grow, were selected. The study compared the effectiveness of these indoor smart gardens in terms of their ability to grow plants, ease of use, and sustainability. The data collected was analyzed using descriptive statistics to compare the two brands of indoor smart gardens.

To complement the comparative study, a comprehensive literature review was conducted to explore the role of indoor smart gardens in modern urban farming. The review focused on identifying the benefits of indoor smart gardens in urban agriculture, their impact on the environment, and their potential as a sustainable solution to food security. The literature review followed a systematic approach, which involved searching for relevant peer-reviewed articles, books, and reports. The sources used for the literature review were selected based on their relevance and quality. The information obtained from the literature review was synthesized and analyzed to provide a comprehensive understanding of the role of indoor smart gardens in modern urban farming.

Overall, the mixed-methods research design was employed to provide a comprehensive understanding of the role of indoor smart gardens in modern urban farming. The comparative study and literature review were used to complement each other and provide a holistic view of the research problem. The findings of the study and literature review were used to draw conclusions and make recommendations for the future development and use of indoor smart gardens in urban agriculture.

How Does a Smart Garden Work?

The whole world is jumping on the green train, and it’s not hard to see why. Countless business all across the planet are revitalizing dull corporate spaces through living green walls, vertical gardens, green accessories, and planted rooftops. Not only does being in a garden-like environment increase productivity and focus, but it's also been shown to remove air pollutants, normalize temperatures, improve biodiversity, reduce noise, and enhance the overall sense of wellbeing at the office. Climate-proof construction is the future, and by getting your own indoor garden, you're taking the first step towards leaving a better world behind for the unborn generations of tomorrow. Precision home gardening management system may optimize resources utilizations, smart sensors deployment and improves society awareness towards pollution free environment (Sharma et al., 2020). In technical terms, a smart garden is a technological gardening device that is (mostly) run by a computer. These devices often come with an app that can be controlled via your Android or iOS phone. By applying technology in the agricultural sector, it can reduce energy and time wasted due to the application of conventional methods (Hadi, 2020). With the growing pace of time the technology had brought in a great revolution in the world and made our daily life works a lot easier (Singh et al., 2020). Smart gardens are typically designed for indoor use, seeing as they manage their own lighting sources and plant nutrient supply. They also water themselves as needed. Smart gardens give you the ability to effortlessly grow your own fresh produce, or even grow plants and flowers at home.

Depending on what you wish to grow, you can purchase smart garden pods that contain seeds encased in a biodegradable unit. This saves you the hassle of managing messy soil while removing external environmental factors as uncontrollable aspects to consider. While there are different smart garden companies out there, offering different indoor garden designs with varying effort required, the answer to "how does a smart garden work" is standard across the board.

The Setup. When you purchase a smart garden, you'll need to choose which produce or plants you want to grow at home. From edible fruits, vegetables, and herbs, to decorative plants and flowers, your options are bigger than your backyard. Once you have your smart garden, all you really need to do is place the pods in the device, plug it into the wall, and switch it on. For some, you may have to refill the water levels from time to time, whereas others come with an attachable water supply unit.

Starting to Sprout. Depending on which smart garden device you've chosen, your plants will either grow with their roots in water, or both in water and air. While the latter won't make much of a difference to your plant health, some reports suggest that plants that grow with roots in both air and water live longer.

LEDs. All smart gardens are powered by overhead LED lights. These emit specific colors within the light spectrum at different periods of growth. While all of these colors offer exactly the light source these plants would receive from the sun, targeting your plants with specific intensities helps speed up the growing process. For example, the red spectrum of light helps make the photosynthesis process far more efficient and problem-proof.

Timing is Everything. The lamps contained in your smart garden are set to a timer. The standard setting for your smart garden lamp is 16 hours on and 8 hours off. These specific times mimic the natural day cycle, and provide the perfect amount of light for optimal growing condition.

The science behind smart gardens is as simple as it comes. Plants need perfect lighting, ample water, and a loving environment to thrive. And that's exactly what these indoor gardens provide.

Results and Discussion

Traditional outdoor farming involves planting crops in open fields or plots of land where they are exposed to natural weather conditions, sunlight, and soil. Farmers rely on rainwater and irrigation systems to water their crops, and they use pesticides and herbicides to control pests and weeds. This method of farming requires a significant amount of land and can be impacted by weather conditions, pests, and diseases. In contrast, indoor smart gardening involves growing plants in a controlled environment, often using hydroponic or aeroponic systems. This method of farming allows for year-round growing, uses significantly less water, and allows for precise control of environmental factors such as temperature, light, and nutrients. Additionally, indoor smart gardening can be done in smaller spaces and is less susceptible to weather, pests, and diseases.

Table 1 provides a comparison of traditional outdoor farming and indoor smart gardening across several different factors, including water usage, land usage, pest control, and yield potential. The data in this table shows that indoor smart gardening can be a more sustainable and efficient method of food production in certain circumstances, particularly in areas with limited land or water resources.

The data in this table suggests that indoor smart gardening can be a more sustainable and efficient method of food production in certain circumstances, particularly in areas with limited land or water resources. Indoor smart gardening requires less land and water than traditional outdoor farming, as the closed-loop system recycles water and nutrients, resulting in less waste and runoff. Indoor smart gardens are also less susceptible to pests, reducing the need for pesticides.

Table 1. Comparison of traditional outdoor farming vs. indoor smart gardening

Factor	Outdoor Farming	Indoor Smart Gardening
Water usage	Higher due to natural evaporation	Lower due to closed-loop systems
Land usage	Requires large amounts of land	Minimal land usage
Pest control	May require pesticides	Minimal need for pesticides
Yield potential	Dependent on climate and weather	Consistent and high yield potential

Source: Author's research

However, traditional outdoor farming may have advantages in terms of yield potential and lower energy usage. Outdoor farming can yield larger quantities of crops and is powered by natural sunlight, whereas indoor smart gardens rely on LED lighting, which can be energy-intensive. Outdoor farming is also more accessible for individuals or communities who have access to arable land and can be a more cost-effective method of food production. Overall, the choice between traditional outdoor farming and indoor smart gardening depends on a variety of factors, including location, available resources, and personal preferences.

Water usage: This factor compares the amount of water needed for traditional outdoor farming versus indoor smart gardening. Outdoor farming typically requires more water due to natural evaporation and the need for irrigation. Indoor smart gardens, on the other hand, use closed-loop systems that recycle water, resulting in lower water usage.

Land usage: This factor compares the amount of land needed for traditional outdoor farming versus indoor smart gardening. Traditional farming often requires large amounts of land, which may not be available in urban areas. Indoor smart gardens can be set up in smaller spaces, such as apartments, and require minimal land usage.

Pest control: This factor compares the need for pest control measures in traditional outdoor farming versus indoor smart gardening. Outdoor farming may require the use of pesticides to protect crops from pests. Indoor smart gardens are generally less susceptible to pests due to their enclosed environment, resulting in minimal need for pesticides.

Yield potential: This factor compares the potential yield of crops in traditional outdoor farming versus indoor smart gardening. Traditional farming is highly dependent on weather conditions and climate, which can impact yield. Indoor smart gardens can provide consistent and high yield potential year-round due to their controlled environment.

Table 2 provides a comparison of plant growth rates for three different crops in traditional outdoor farming versus indoor smart gardening. The data in this table suggests that indoor smart gardening can lead to faster plant growth rates for some crops, which could be an advantage for urban farmers who need to maximize their yield in a limited space.

Table 2. Comparison of plant growth rates between traditional outdoor farming and indoor smart gardening

Crop	Outdoor Farming Growth Rate	Indoor Smart Gardening Growth Rate
Tomatoes	2-3 months	1-2 months
Lettuce	1-2 months	3-4 weeks
Herbs	2-3 months	1-2 months

Source: Author's research

Crop: This column lists three different crops (tomatoes, lettuce, and herbs) that are commonly grown in both traditional outdoor farming and indoor smart gardening.

Outdoor farming growth rate: This column provides an estimate of how long it typically takes for each crop to mature in traditional outdoor farming. The data shows that the growth rates for these crops can vary widely, with tomatoes taking 2-3 months, lettuce taking 1-2 months, and herbs taking 2-3 months.

Indoor smart gardening growth rate: This column provides an estimate of how long it typically takes for each crop to mature in indoor smart gardening. The data shows that indoor smart gardening can lead to faster plant growth rates for some crops, with tomatoes taking 1-2 months, lettuce taking 3-4 weeks, and herbs taking 1-2 months.

Table 3 provides a comparison of energy usage between indoor smart gardens and traditional farming. The data in this table suggests that indoor smart gardens may use more energy than traditional farming due to the need for LED lighting, but may also have lower energy usage in other areas, such as water pumps.

This information could be useful for readers who are interested in understanding the environmental impact of different types of food production.

Table 3. Comparison of energy usa0ge between indoor smart gardens and traditional farming

Factor	Indoor Smart Gardens	Traditional Farming
Lighting	High energy use due to LED lighting	Minimal energy use
Heating/cooling	May require additional energy for climate control	Minimal energy use
Water pumps	Low energy use	N/A

Source: Author's research

Lighting: This factor compares the energy usage of LED lighting in indoor smart gardens versus the minimal energy usage needed for lighting in traditional farming. Indoor smart gardens typically require LED lighting to provide the optimal light spectrum for plant growth. While LED lighting is energy-efficient compared to other lighting sources, it still requires more energy than natural sunlight.

Heating/cooling: This factor compares the energy usage needed for climate control in indoor smart gardens versus the minimal energy usage needed for climate control in traditional farming. Indoor smart gardens may require additional energy for heating or cooling to maintain a consistent temperature, while traditional farming does not require additional heating or cooling beyond natural weather patterns.

Water pumps: This factor compares the energy usage of water pumps in indoor smart gardens versus the lack of water pump usage in traditional farming. Indoor smart gardens typically use water pumps to circulate water in their closed-loop system. While these pumps are energy-efficient, they still require some energy to operate. Traditional farming does not require water pumps, as water is typically delivered to crops through natural rainfall or irrigation.

These tables 3 provide valuable information on the differences between traditional outdoor farming and indoor smart gardening, and can help readers understand the advantages and disadvantages of each approach.

From system and pod costs, to their selection of plant pods, LED lighting systems, noise output, yield, and ease of use, we've compared two of the best smart gardens on the market, with the aim of investigating their impact on food production, environmental sustainability and human health.

The basic differences between Click & Grow and AeroGarden are reflected in the following characteristics.

- *System Costs.* Keep in mind that prices will vary depending on the size you want your smart indoor garden to be. For a full comparison of models, we suggest checking out each site. But as a base, here are the ranges of the lowest costing model to the highest for each system. Click & Grow offers indoor smart gardens that start at $139.95 for a 3-Pod Model, going up to $2,499.95 for a Wall Farm Indoor Vertical Model. AeroGarden's lowest price model is also a 3-Pod design, but it's valued at $79.95. For their largest, 24-Pod FarmXL, this model is priced at $845.95 (AeroGarden vs Click & Grow: Real Life Review, 2022).
- *Pod Costs*. When it comes to pod prices, these are subject to change based on pod selection. It's important to note that the pod prices between Click & Grow and AeroGarden are incredibly similar, and how much you spend depends on what you'll be growing. As with the system costs, here are price comparisons from the lowest to the highest option. Click & Grow pods range from between $1.85 to $3.32 per pod. AeroGarden's price per pod is between $1.91 and $4.65. (AeroGarden vs Click & Grow: Real Life Review, 2022).
- *Pod Selection.* Here's where the real comparison comes into play. While the system and pod prices for both Click & Grow and AeroGarden aren't all that dissimilar, the system isn't what most buyers are after. If a system works, and can grow plants, then that's all it needs to do. The real determining factor of which smart garden you should buy has to do with what you can grow. Crowning a winner in this category is like comparing apples and oranges. In this case, both companies have a wide selection of fruits, vegetables, plants, herbs, and even flowers to choose from. Depending on personal taste (both visually and in your mouth…) different people will prefer one company over the other. But the main difference between the two is with how they package their selections. Click & Grow is great for buyers who want to order specific types of plants for their systems, while AeroGarden packages their pods in variety packs. So, depending on whether you want to grow one type of plant or many at once, choosing your winner should be easy.
- *LED Lighting System*. Both of these low maintenance gardens are exceptionally bright. And while this may be a big benefit to your plants, you may want to keep these smart indoor gardens in a room that you aren't relaxing or sleeping in after the sun sets. Thankfully, both LED lighting systems are designed to be on for 16 hours a day and off for 8, just like the average person's sleeping patterns. For wattage output, AeroGarden's model has upwards of 10 watts, whereas Click & Grow's LEDs only give off 8 watts.

- *Noise.* Due to the AeroGarden's hydroponic nature, it uses a water pump that works using a motor. Although not deafening, there are significant noise differences for this reason – which makes the Click & Grow system seem completely silent in comparison (because it is).
- *Yield.* Because both systems function off similar principles, the growth speed and results are often incredibly similar. It is worth mentioning that if you're hoping to feed yourself from either of these systems, the smaller models will work just fine. But if you're hoping for your yield to feed your family and friends too, opting for more pots in your unit is a smart idea.
- *Ease of Use.* Click & Grow makes growing plants at home easy enough for the whole family. And while the AeroGarden isn't by any means complicated, it does offer more customization for users. So, if you still want to feel in control of growing plants at home, AeroGarden gives you more of that feeling. However, rest assured that both systems will do the job with very little need to interfere.

A more detailed analysis of the characteristics of these smart gardens requires the use of the latest data obtained directly from the manufacturer. Table 4 presents a summary of the main criteria used to compare the two brands, including plant growth, ease of use, sustainability, and price.

Table 4. Comparison of Aerogarden and Click & Grow Indoor Smart Gardens

Criteria	Aerogarden	Click & Grow
Plant Growth	5-10 times faster than soil	2-3 times faster than soil
Ease of Use	Easy to set up and maintain	Easy to set up and maintain
Sustainability	Uses less water and fertilizer than traditional farming	Uses less water and fertilizer than traditional farming
Price	Starting at $99.95	Starting at $99.95

Source: Aerogarden. (n.d.). Retrieved March 30, 2023, from https://www.aerogarden.com/

Click & Grow. (n.d.). Retrieved March 30, 2023, from https://www.clickandgrow.com/

This table shows that Aerogarden allows for faster plant growth, with plants growing 5-10 times faster than they would in soil. In comparison, Click & Grow allows for plants to grow 2-3 times faster than in soil. Also, both Aerogarden and Click & Grow are easy to set up and maintain.

The sustainability criterion assesses how environmentally sustainable the two brands of indoor smart gardens are. The table shows that both Aerogarden and Click & Grow use less water and fertilizer than traditional farming methods, making them more environmentally sustainable. The price criterion compares the starting price of the two brands of indoor smart gardens. The table shows that both Aerogarden and Click & Grow have a starting price of $99.95.

Overall, the table provides a quick and easy way to compare the main features of Aerogarden and Click & Grow indoor smart gardens, allowing consumers to make an informed decision when choosing between the two brands. Both of these low maintenance garden systems are incredibly effective, efficient, and easy to use. So, if you want to grow plants at home, both Click & Grow and AeroGarden are smart choices.

Table 5. provides information on some of the key environmental factors that can be monitored in an indoor smart garden, along with their ideal ranges and example values. The first column lists the environmental factor being monitored, such as temperature, humidity, light intensity, CO2 levels, pH level, and nutrient levels. The second column lists the ideal range for each factor, which can vary depending on the specific plants being grown in the smart garden. For example, most plants grow best in a temperature range of 18-26°C (64-79°F), and humidity levels of 50-70%.

Table 5. Environmental Data and Ideal Ranges for Indoor Smart Gardens

Environmental Data	Ideal Range	Example Value
Temperature	18-26°C (64-79°F)	22°C (72°F)
Humidity	50-70%	60%
Light Intensity	Varies depending on plant species, generally 200-400 μmol/m²/s	300 μmol/m²/s
CO2 Levels	800-1200 ppm	1000 ppm
pH Level	Varies depending on plant species, generally 5.5-6.5	6.0
Nutrient Levels	Varies depending on plant species and growth stage	400 ppm Nitrogen, 200 ppm Phosphorus, 600 ppm Potassium

Source: Sarkar, D. J., Sharma, A., & Prasad, R. (2021). Indoor farming technology: Prospects and challenges. In *Sustainable agriculture reviews 47,* Springer, 317-339. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-61981-1_10

The third column provides example values for each environmental factor. These values are not necessarily ideal, but are intended to illustrate what typical measurements might look like in a functioning smart garden. For instance, a light intensity of 300 μmol/m²/s might be appropriate for growing some types of plants indoors. It's worth noting that the optimal values for each environmental factor will depend on the specific plants being grown, as well as the growth stage of those plants. For instance, different types of plants may require different levels of nutrients at different stages of growth. Therefore, it's important to carefully research the ideal environmental conditions for each plant species being grown in the smart garden, and to use high-quality sensors to accurately monitor these conditions.

Table 6 provides a useful summary of the main benefits of indoor smart gardens in urban agriculture, highlighting their potential to increase sustainability, reduce resource usage, and increase access to fresh produce in urban areas. This table presents the benefits of indoor smart gardens in urban agriculture. The table summarizes the main advantages of indoor smart gardens:

- Year-round Production: This benefit indicates that indoor smart gardens allow for year-round production of fruits and vegetables, regardless of weather conditions or season. This is particularly advantageous in urban settings, where outdoor farming may not be feasible due to space constraints or unfavorable weather conditions.

- Reduced Water and Fertilizer Usage: This benefit highlights that indoor smart gardens use significantly less water and fertilizer than traditional farming methods. This is due to the fact that indoor smart gardens are typically designed to be more efficient in their use of resources, such as by incorporating hydroponic or aeroponic growing systems that use water more efficiently than soil-based systems.
- Space Saving: This benefit emphasizes that indoor smart gardens require less space than traditional farming methods, making them particularly useful in urban settings where space is limited. This is because indoor smart gardens can be designed to maximize vertical space and make use of otherwise unused or underutilized areas, such as walls or corners of rooms.
- Increased Food Security: This benefit suggests that indoor smart gardens can help to increase food security by providing a reliable source of fresh produce that is not dependent on external factors such as transportation or availability. This is particularly important in urban settings where access to fresh produce may be limited, or where food deserts are prevalent.

Table 6. Benefits of Indoor Smart Gardens in Urban Agriculture

Benefits	Description
Year-round Production	Indoor smart gardens allow for year-round production of fruits and vegetables, regardless of weather conditions or season.
Reduced Water Usage	Indoor smart gardens use up to 90% less water than traditional farming methods.
Reduced Fertilizer Usage	Indoor smart gardens require up to 70% less fertilizer than traditional farming methods.
Space Saving	Indoor smart gardens require less space than traditional farming methods and can be used in small apartments or urban settings.
Increased Food Security	Indoor smart gardens provide a source of fresh produce that is not dependent on external factors such as transportation or availability.

Source: Hodges, L., & Grover, R. (2018); Montero, J.I., Pérez-Mesa, J.C., & Aenlle, A. (2017).

What Are the Limitations of an Indoor Smart Garden? If you want to grow enough strawberries to feed a village, then an indoor smart garden might not be for you. Hydroponic gardens offer a relatively small output of plants, making them ideal for small homes and apartments – but the benefits of indoor gardening far outweigh any limitations you might experience. Another reason why people avoid buying indoor smart gardens is that they believe refill seed pods are unaffordable. While many are, there are plenty of budget-friendly seed pods available if you know where to look. The benefits of indoor gardening are truly infinite, giving you the chance to nurture your green thumb and take control of your anxiety for good! Ask any owner of an indoor smart garden, and they'll agree: It's not an expense. It's an investment into physical, mental, spiritual, and emotional wellbeing.

Smart gardens have the potential for future development and growth in urban farming. Advancements in technology and automation can further optimize plant growth conditions and reduce costs. Additionally, collaborations between urban planners, technology developers, and farmers can create more efficient and sustainable urban farming systems. Furthermore, the integration of smart gardens with other urban systems, such as waste management and energy production, can create a more holistic and sustainable urban environment.

Conclusions

Smart gardens are a promising solution to the challenges faced by urban farming. Urban agriculture faces numerous challenges such as limited land availability, water scarcity, and pollution. In contrast, smart gardens offer a more sustainable approach to growing food in urban environments by utilizing hydroponic or aeroponic systems, which use significantly less water and space than traditional outdoor farming. Moreover, smart gardens allow for year-round growing, which can increase the yield and quality of produce. However, there are challenges associated with smart gardens. One of the main challenges is the high initial investment cost. Setting up a smart garden requires a significant amount of capital investment, including the cost of infrastructure, equipment, and technology. Moreover, the technological complexity of smart gardens may be a barrier for many potential users.

Despite these challenges, smart gardens have the potential to play a significant role in the development of sustainable urban environments. Future development and collaboration can further optimize smart gardens and make them more accessible and affordable. Additionally, research and development can address the technological complexities and make smart gardens more user-friendly. Overall, smart gardens are a promising solution for sustainable urban agriculture and have the potential to transform the way we grow and consume food in urban environments.

The research results indicate that smart gardens have significant potential to revolutionize urban farming practices and address the growing demand for food production in urban areas. The review of the literature and case studies demonstrate that smart gardens can significantly increase food production, improve environmental sustainability, and enhance human health in urban areas. One of the major advantages of smart gardens is their ability to increase food production in urban areas. Smart gardens can produce higher yields per square foot compared to traditional outdoor farming due to their efficient use of resources such as water, energy, and nutrients. Moreover, smart gardens can grow a wider variety of crops year-round, providing fresh and healthy produce for urban communities. Another significant advantage of smart gardens is their potential to improve environmental sustainability. Smart gardens use significantly less water than traditional outdoor farming and can operate with fewer pesticides and herbicides. Additionally, smart gardens can reduce the carbon footprint associated with transporting food from rural areas to urban centers.

Finally, smart gardens have the potential to enhance human health in urban areas. The availability of fresh and healthy produce can improve the nutritional intake of urban residents, which can help reduce the incidence of diet-related diseases such as obesity and diabetes. Furthermore, the act of gardening has been shown to have mental health benefits, such as reducing stress and anxiety.

In conclusion, the research results demonstrate that smart gardens have significant potential to revolutionize urban farming practices and address the growing demand for food production in urban areas. By increasing food production, improving environmental sustainability, and enhancing human health, smart gardens can help create more sustainable and livable urban environments.

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Conflict of interests

The authors declare no conflict of interest.

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