NYC rooftop farms

New York is a city notoriously short on space, but also one whose residents are big on innovation. In the Big Apple, the latest trend is rooftop farming. Individuals and restaurants are beginning to grow some of their own food in the only space available to them – their roofs. While the practice is currently an environmental rather than a financial trend, some companies hope it can become a money-making business model, providing a cheaper alternative to store-bought produce, especially in low-income neighbourhood where fresh vegetables are expensive and scarce.

1 Read the text and comment.

Rooftop Gardening is a Growing Trend in New York City

Amber Crismangle and her boyfriend Luis Castill love New York but they also love farming and, thanks to a new trend called rooftop farming, they can experience both. What started as an interest in sustainability has become a rooftop oasis, complete with tomatoes, cucumbers, carrots and herbs. Mint is one of the easiest things to grow. After reading books and talking to other growers, the couple learned how to make soil grow plants, capture rainwater and trap urban heat. Instead of saying. “Oh, one day we’re gonna go buy a farm”, they said: “Let’s start now and let’s start growing and let’s start learning” so that they made mistakes when they still had the supermarket down the street.
“Also with so many people on the planet, people have to live in cities. We can’t all go out and have 100 acres. I think there are ways that cities can be green and sustainable, and grow a lot of their own food.”



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Roberta's pizzeria is a thriving example. In an effort to beautify their unattractive parking lot, the restaurant bought two old railway cars and planted a variety of vegetables on top of them, turning their lot into a garden and seating area. Gwen Chance is the garden manager.
"We supplement the menu in there with some food from our garden and people love it when we can say this salad came from out back, and this basil was grown outside".
Chance's operation does not provide enough food for the restaurant. She says they plan to purchase a bigger rooftop space that will.
A company called Bright Farm System is banking on that: it provides rooftop farms to schools, non-profits and corporations. Director Benjamin Lindley says, once they are built, rooftop farms can provide cheaper produce. Currently many fruits and vegetables come from thousands of kilometres away. "Transportation distance is a problem: it's a problem from the environment, it's a problem for the farmer, and it's a problem for the consumer, because your vegetable is still perishable and by the time the vegetable reaches us, here in in New York, it's heading towards the end of its shelf-life".
The company is working on at least four rooftop farms throughout the city, which it says will be up and running early next year.



2 **Go online and find some examples of vertical farming in Italy. Write a short report.**

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