

Online Extras

Zoo-Ponics - The Verticrop Hydroponic System at Paignton Zoo

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Maximum Yield – USA Edition, January 2010

MAXIMUM YIELD
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Thousands of animals, including various mammals, reptiles and birds reside at the Paignton Zoo in Devon. Of that number, approximately 25+ animals enjoy a diet that includes leafy greens and herbs. The Verticrop Hydroponics system is currently trialing lettuce, small volumes of basil and other leafy greens. In the future a more diverse assortment of crops including fresh herbs, fruits and vegetables will be grown.

The 395 square foot greenhouse has the capacity to grow 11,200 lettuce heads compared to 4,332 in conventional growing systems.

Below are just a few of the animals that may benefit from the crops grown using the rotating Verticrop system:

Mammals

- Hamadryas Baboon
- Eastern Bongo
- Bactrian Camel
- Capybara
- African Elephant
- Asian Elephant
- Grey Gibbon
- Lar Gibbon
- Rothschild Giraffe
- Lowland Gorilla
- Western Grey Kangaroo
- Red Ruffed Lemur
- Sulawesi Crested Macaque
- Abyssinian Colobus Monkey
- Chilean Pudu
- Brazilian Tapir

Birds

- Southern Cassowary
- Diamond Dove

Reptiles

- Aldabra Giant Tortoise

