

# Growing a HOPE Garden

(Continued from page 2)

purchasing nutritionally adequate foods. To be food insecure, households do not necessarily have to suffer from food insecurity at all times. USDA studies show that 11-14% of people in Dubois County suffer food insecurity.

Many factors contribute to food insecurity, including the distance households must travel to acquire nutritionally adequate food. "Maybe the closest place [households] have to get food is a convenience store," Jones gives as an example. "We all know what they sell there — Cokes, ice cream, pretzels, chips, pizza — not too many bananas, apples, certainly *no lettuce*."

At the HOPE garden, iceberg, Boston, romaine and other varieties of lettuce are grown throughout the winter on tall white towers known as hydroponic pods.

Technically, the towers at HOPE are *aeroponic*. Jones explains that in a hydroponic system, plants are either suspended in nutritional water or fed by a continuous stream. The roots of aeroponic plants, by contrast,

grow *in air*, intermittently receiving a treatment of nutritional water via stream or mist.

Pumps send nutrient-rich, pH-balanced water to the tops of the towers, where the water trickles down to contact root bunch by root bunch. The towers are designed so that water reaches each pod without being wasted in places where there are no plants.

"It's got a really nice flavor," Jones says, offering guests a leafy taste of lettuce. "The Bibb is just sweet as it can be."

The lettuce is munched, and Jones' words are met with nods of agreement:

"That's nice."

"Flavorful."

"That's really good."

All of the aeroponic towers may be fitted with cages, and a few are. Several tomato plants and at least one cucumber vine thrive beneath the lettuce canopy. "You can grow *anything* on these towers," tells Jones, "except for root vegetables." And with 44 pods per tower, Jones attests that the potential for yield is remarkable.

(Continued on page 8)



**Plush produce** — Mike Jones (right) explains the aeroponic towers at HOPE Garden to touring guests. Multiple varieties of lettuces, tomatoes and other plants thrive in the contemporary, water-based growing system. Lettuces are planted in rotation, so that harvest times vary throughout the winter. Higher lettuces grow fuller, as they're closer to the heat lamps. Other plants in various stages of cultivation share the light, and will soon be transplanted into the outdoor garden.

Guests from left: Aiden Young, Betsy Travelstead, Chuck Fraley and Bill Townsley.

**READY 'N  
ROLLING!**  
SALES EVENT

**0% FINANCING\***  
**CASH BACK AND MORE!**

**ACT NOW! OFFER ENDS JUNE 30, 2018.**

Stop by today or learn more at [nhoffers.com](http://nhoffers.com)



**Blesch Bros.**  
**Equipment Company**

407 E. Kentucky, Holland, IN 47541

**(812) 536-3486**

[www.BLESCHBROS.com](http://www.BLESCHBROS.com)



\*For commercial use. Offer subject to CNH Industrial Capital America LLC credit approval. See your New Holland dealer for details and eligibility requirements. Depending on model, a down payment may be required. Offer good through June 30, 2018, at participating New Holland dealers in the United States. Offer subject to change. Taxes, freight, set-up, delivery, additional options or attachments not included in price. © 2018 CNH Industrial America LLC. All rights reserved. CNH Industrial Capital and New Holland Agriculture are trademarks registered in the United States and many other countries, owned by or licensed to CNH Industrial N.V., its subsidiaries or affiliates.