

# GARFIELD PRODUCE COMPANY

## THE ORGANIZATION

Garfield Produce Company is an indoor, vertical hydroponic vegetable farm that creates sustainable local employment and generates wealth in disinvested neighborhoods through the production and sale of high quality fresh produce year-round.

## THE CHALLENGE

East Garfield Park is one of Chicago's most economically challenged neighborhoods battered by the loss of manufacturing, retail, jobs, and population. Unemployment is currently at 19 percent, nearly half of area residents are children under 18 or persons over 65, an estimated 43 percent of families live below the poverty line, and more than 21 percent of adults do not have a high school degree. Additionally, the community is one of seven Chicago neighborhoods that are home to a majority of the formerly-incarcerated men and women who have great difficulty in securing employment.

## THE SOLUTION

Garfield Produce provides local residents, particularly those who have been previously incarcerated, with high quality jobs that promise a future. Garfield Produce employees learn the intricacies of the growing process and the skills of packaging and selling products in the marketplace. Employees receive competitive wages along with life skill supports to aid them on their paths to financial and social self-sufficiency.

## LOAN AMOUNT AND EXPECTED IMPACT

Garfield Produce will use the \$500,000 loan to expand its operations and build a broader base for its products among the city's restaurants and retailers, resulting in the organization's ability to hire and train more employees.



*"This investment will do a great deal to create job opportunities for East Garfield Park residents, who like me saw few prospects in our neighborhood. As a formerly incarcerated young man, I am grateful for the support of Benefit Chicago."*

*- Darius Jones,  
V.P. and General Manager*

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