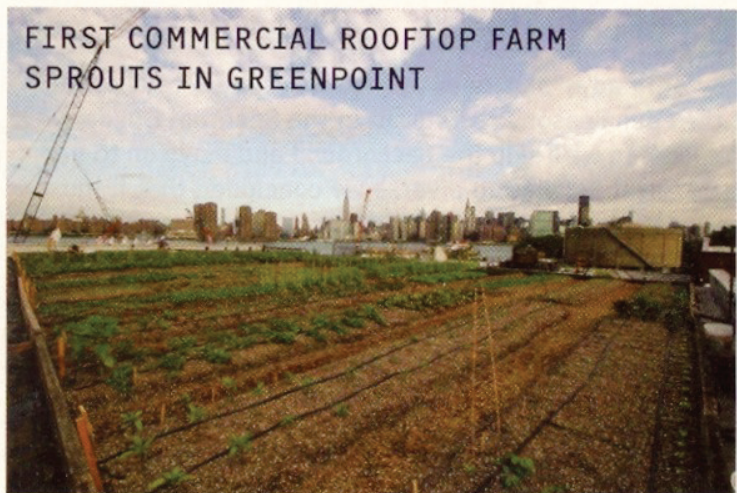


FIRST COMMERCIAL ROOFTOP FARM
 SPROUTS IN GREENPOINT



LISA GOODE

A RADISH GROWS IN BROOKLYN

On a rooftop in Greenpoint, Brooklyn, farmers Ben Flanner and Annie Novak are harvesting lettuces, radishes, and broccoli rabe, which will appear on plates at nearby restaurants. Over the rows of crops, the East River and the Manhattan skyline fill the horizon. Their 6,000-square-foot project was planted this spring and is believed to be the first commercial rooftop farm in the city.

The rooftop was the result of matchmaking by Lisa and Chris Goode, owners with Amy Trachtman of Goode Green, a green roof installation and consulting firm. They helped coordinate between the building's owner, Tony Argento, and the farmers to create the

expansively cultivated space. For Lisa Goode, the project combines the benefits of green roofs (storm water retention, building insulation, and heat island mitigation) with the more immediately understandable and gratifying results of raising vegetables. "When you hand someone a tomato, they get it immediately," she said. If all goes well this summer, the farm may grow onto other roofs owned by Argento, with the hope of supporting the farmers full-time.

The partners at Goode Green used reclaimed lumber edging to save money and were able to keep costs down to around \$10 per square foot, well below the

more typical \$15 to \$25 per square foot for basic green roofs. "It's important for us to show that green roofs can be affordable," she said.

While the roof's agricultural and economic story is novel, its location in one of the city's most polluted areas is also significant for those involved. Just to the north of the site, near Newtown Creek, stands a large sludge collector tank, a highly visible symbol of the area's longtime status as a dumping ground for some of the city's unwanted byproducts. More importantly for Goode, the sludge collector, along with Newtown Creek's recently upgraded water pollution control plant, underscore the importance of effective storm water management. She hopes the city will further incentivize green roof development with additional tax breaks or deductions in water and sewer bills.

For his part, Flanner hopes the rooftop can evoke the area's agrarian past. "Greenpoint was a farming community. Then there came the industry and the oil spill, so there's a lot of contamination," he said. "Right now, it's a great neighborhood for pioneering ideas. I can't think of a better spot in the country for a rooftop farm."

ALAN G. BRAKE