

2016 Delegate Profile

Name: Émilie Nollet

Personal Motto: “A good dose of calculated risk, respect and creativity will bring success to any challenge.”
Location: Montreal, Quebec
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My Company

Name: Écosystèmes Alimentaires Urbains
Founded: 2015
Website: www.eau-agriculture.com



Life as an Entrepreneur

The Trigger: Why did you become an entrepreneur? What prompted you to take that first step? How did you develop the concept for your business?

I became an entrepreneur out of a sense of responsibility. I developed a keen interest in food justice about five years ago and realized that the best way to affect change in this area was to become an entrepreneur. I met my business partner, Olivier Demers-Dubé, about three years ago and our business is a spin-off of his Master's thesis and my Ph.D. thesis.

Describe your greatest accomplishment/most rewarding moment of your career as an entrepreneur?

Aquaponics offer great opportunities when it comes to efficient and ecological food production. It can help communities worldwide take significant steps towards food security. Such positive and impactful technologies do not often come up in the business world. When my co-founder and I talk to people about upcoming projects we see other people realize the impact as they imagine a world where everyone has fair access to quality food. They are supportive of our company and hope for its success. It is very rewarding and humbling to be part of such a great adventure and have such support.

Please describe your next challenge or plans for your business or for yourself as an entrepreneur:

ÉAU will have its first demonstration of the aquaponic greenhouse at a famous farmers' market in Montreal from May until October 2016. Shortly thereafter, we will start building a commercial aquaponic vertical farm in a food desert in Montréal and work for food security in one of Montreal's most disadvantaged neighbourhoods.

My challenges as an entrepreneur are similar to those experienced by all young entrepreneurs: There are a great many things to learn every day and one has to be humble, accept the fact that mistakes happen and that the most important thing is to learn from them – and learn quickly – in order to make the right professional decisions.

