



## Reena, Growcer and COR Announce Ground-breaking Certification for Reena's Sustainability Initiative, GReena

**Thornhill, Sept 15, 2023** – Reena, in collaboration with Growcer, an Ottawa-based Hydroponic modular farm manufacturer, is thrilled to announce the receipt of the COR (Kashruth Council of Canada) certificate, marking a significant milestone for GReena, Reena's pioneering sustainability initiative. This certification signifies a ground-breaking achievement as it becomes the first of its kind in Canada.

This certification not only marks a triumph for Reena, Growcer and COR but also represents a leap forward in the sustainable and kosher agriculture industry. GReena's pioneering efforts in hydroponic farming and adherence to kosher standards have paved the way for a brighter, more sustainable future.

The COR certification is a testament to Reena's commitment to sustainability and innovation while staying grounded in Jewish values. This certification has been awarded to Reena, for leafy greens grown within a specially designed Hydroponic modular farm. Reena's clean room processes were modified from processes developed during the recent COVID pandemic, which protected supported individuals and staff from infection, thereby setting a new standard for a "bug free" growing environment.

The COR certification logo carries a specific message, "no checking required", for the leafy greens produced in the Reena Hydroponic modular farm. These will be sold directly to caterers, restaurants, and food packagers under COR supervision so consumers would know their food is in full compliance with the highest kosher standards supervised by COR and is being sold to them "bug free".

In a bid to make COR more accessible to consumers, this certification will be prominently featured on restaurant menus and packaged food products whenever Reena Hydroponic Leafy Greens are used. These packaged greens and food products will be available in the kosher produce section and prepared food sections of selected GTA supermarkets with Kosher sections, providing greater selection options for those seeking quality kosher options.

To ensure the ongoing Kashrut status of COR, continuous spot checks of Reena's Hydroponic Leafy Greens modular farm and procedures will be conducted. This proactive approach not only guarantees the product's integrity but also streamlines the process for COR-supervised caterers, restaurants, and food packagers, reducing time-to-market and operational costs. Ultimately, this



is expected to lead to cost savings for kosher consumers while simultaneously supporting Reena's mission to empower individuals in their care.

### **Background:**

This achievement is the culmination of an extensive collaborative journey that began in 2021.

The journey included significant milestones such as the redesign of the pre-built hydroponic modular farm and the introduction of new clean-room technology. These innovations, combined with Reena's clean room processes, developed during the COVID-19 pandemic for their supportive housing environment, resulted in four months of bug-free test results. These impressive outcomes have instilled confidence in COR, leading to the issuance of the ground-breaking "No Checking Required" COR certification for Hydroponic Leafy Greens.

### **Quotes:**

“Through our GReena initiatives, Reena is not only advancing our sustainability efforts but also staying true to our fundamental Jewish principles. Moreover, it serves as a powerful driver for Reena Employment services, offering valuable, paid employment opportunities to our supported individuals in the fields of produce and food packaging.”

**–Bryan Keshen, CEO, Reena**

“Our entire team is excited to collaborate with Reena on this ground-breaking initiative to transform what’s possible in a vertical farm. The flexibility and diligence of both teams culminated in an amazing achievement.”

**– Corey Ellis, CEO and co-founder, Growcer**

“Since July 2021, our collaborative partnership with Reena has been marked by professional growth, commitment and grit. It began when one of our COR supervisors identified areas of improvement about the outdoor cultivation of leafy greens at Reena Community Farm. In response, we provided Reena with valuable guidance to comprehensively address bug infestations and their implications on Kashrut. With determination and ingenuity, Reena embraced this knowledge and successfully pioneered a bug-free indoor hydroponic growing environment. After undergoing rigorous testing and multiple assessments, we are thrilled to announce the official certification of Reena's indoor hydroponic facility under COR, a testament to our joint commitment to delivering the highest standards of kosher excellence.”

**–Rabbi Tsvi Heber, Director, Community Kosher**



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**About Reena:** Reena promotes dignity, individuality, independence, personal growth and community inclusion for people with diverse abilities within a framework of Jewish culture and values. Reena was established in 1973 by parents of children with developmental disabilities as a practical alternative to institutions.

**About Growcer:** Growcer is a vertical farming company enabling anyone to grow fresh, hyper-local produce year-round using its hydroponic modular farms and proprietary technology. To date, customers have used 70+ Growcer farms to grow more than ten million servings of local, nutritious greens across Canada.

Corey Ellis, CEO and co-founder, Growcer - [corey@thegrowcer.ca](mailto:corey@thegrowcer.ca)

**About COR:** A not for profit, community organization, serving the community for over 70 year. Kosher certification trademark, COR, is used on over 120,000 products across the globe. The COR symbol is trusted by consumers the world over, reassuring them that their food is in full compliance with the highest kosher standards. To consumers, the COR logo stands for quality.