



# SOIL RETENTION

Plantable concrete systems®

Product Focus / Drivable Grass®  
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## **Drivable Grass® Reduces Dust, Mud in Unique, Sustainable Food Producing Greenhouse Owned by Viridis Aquaponics**

Drew Hopkins, the Founder of Viridis Aquaponics has a simple goal – to feed the world by building climate-controlled greenhouses that produce high yield crops of vegetables with zero waste in every geographical metropolis around the globe. In just one year, Viridis may reach that goal sooner than anyone imagined. Plans for similar greenhouses are already proposed throughout California, other areas in the U.S., and even Ireland.

The system successfully combines elements of both hydroponics and aquaculture, or what they call “aquaponics”. It utilizes waste from sturgeons, a fish known for its tolerance of temperature and salinity, to feed the plants. The fish swim in 500-gallon cylindrical tanks of water. Their waste is then broken down through a natural filtration system into nitrates that plants love. The nitrate-enriched water is then used to feed the entirely organic produce within a closed loop system. Compared to conventional crop production, aquaponics allows more food to grow per square foot and uses just five percent of the water typically needed in traditional irrigation. Additionally, there is zero runoff or pesticides used in this state-of-the-art greenhouse environment.

Viridis Aquaponics, which in Latin means, “to sprout, green, youthful and lively” is located on a five-acre farm in Watsonville, CA. The entire 320,000sf greenhouse is currently planted to produce 5,000 lbs. of tomatoes per week and up to 10,000 heads of lettuce. More than 100,000 plants are growing in one acre alone with production goals growing ever higher.

“When building the greenhouse, we did not want to use asphalt or concrete on the pathways and rows between the plants,” says Hopkins. “Each pathway is 440 ft. x 8 ft. It was important to keep dust and mud to a minimum so we could drive our harvesting carts down the pathways with ease while keeping our plants as clean as possible,” he explains. “We did our research and realized Drivable Grass® was the best solution for us.”

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“When Drew reached out to us, I was impressed with what he and his team were trying to accomplish,” says Julia Schmid-Jansson of Soil Retention. “We believe the aesthetic look of Drivable Grass® combined with its durability and functionality all add value to the greenhouse model he is creating that will eventually become a turnkey system. We wanted to help so we donated an entire truckload, or 4,080 sf. of Drivable Grass® to his project.”

According to Hopkins, “Installation was a breeze and the permeable nature of the design of the Drivable Grass® helps us to maintain an eco-friendly environment that we value,” he says. “It’s been terrific and I would recommend it to anyone who owns a greenhouse.”

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**At-A-Glance**

**Specifier** - Drew Hopkins – Owner, Viridis Aquaponics, Watsonville, CA [www.viridis.com](http://www.viridis.com)

**Sales Rep** - Danny Reynaga, CPESC, QSD National Inside Sales – Soil Retention

**Product** - Drivable Grass® – 4080 sf. donated