

AEROFARMS

## INDOOR FARM PLANT CLOSING IN RINGGOLD



REGISTER & BEE, FILE  
Virginia Secretary of Agriculture and Forestry Matt Lohr gives a Virginia state flag to former AeroFarms CEO and co-founder David Rosenberg, left, and AeroFarms Chief Marketing Officer Marc Oshima, right, during a ribbon-cutting ceremony for AeroFarms at Cane Creek Centre industrial park on Sept. 12, 2022.

### 173 workers given an eight-day notice that operation would shutter

**CHARLES WILBORN**  
Danville Register & Bee

An indoor vertical farming operation — with its largest facility in the world located in Ringgold — will shutter its doors on Friday, giving some 173 employees only eight days to find out they would be jobless.

In a Thursday letter to Danville Mayor Alonzo Jones, Carlos Nunez, vice president of human resources for AeroFarms, cited the company's largest investor pulling financial backing as the reason to close the plant.

The letter describes the move because of the “investor’s unannounced restructuring and change in priorities.”

“Since receiving this notice from the investor, the Companies have been diligently attempting to negotiate an extension with the investor or to secure other funding from their other current

investors, potential new investors, and financial institutions,” Nunez wrote in the letter.

“Companies” refers to New AeroFarms Inc. and AeroFarms Danville Farming Company LLC.

The facility in Ringgold has 48 plant-growing towers that are four-and-half stories high in the 138,670-square-foot building. The idea behind the indoor vertical farm involves a process that grows crops in stacks at a rate company officials report is 390 times more productive than field-grown plants. Doing so uses no soil, sunlight or chemicals.

The company filed for bankruptcy in 2023. The company exited bankruptcy Sept. 14, 2023.

In August, AeroFarms announced it had refinanced its debt to support the Danville operation and raised equity financing.

“Our vision is to provide local food

production of nutritious microgreens to regions around the world, while preserving natural resources,” Molly Montgomery, the executive chair and CEO of AeroFarms, said in a statement.

“We have recently demonstrated that vertical farming can indeed be sustainable, profitable, and produce fresh greens at scale,” she continued. “I would like to extend my gratitude to our financial partners who believe in our vision and have provided financing to support our operation in Danville and commencement of pre-construction activities for expansion to a second farm.”

The August statement revealed the equity coming from existing investors including Grosvenor Food & AgTech, Ingka Investments, Cibus Capital, ACEG and others.

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### DANVILLE PUBLIC SCHOOLS

## With rebirth of old campus, students find a new home

**CHARLES WILBORN**  
Danville Register & Bee

A few hours before Galileo Magnet High School students joined hundreds of others from the community to celebrate their new home on Monday, they did something they couldn’t do in their old space.

They gathered together inside.

The seemingly simple act wasn’t possible in the old school that once served as a Sears department store.

“To be able to do those types of things brings the student body together,” Danville Public Schools Superintendent Angela Hairston told the Register & Bee prior to the opening ceremony.

Danville Public Schools marked the historic rebirth of the John M. Langston Campus — now home to Galileo, Innov8 STEM Academy and the central office — with a Monday celebration and dual ribbon slicing.

Marking the opening of a third new or renovated facility this year, Monday morning was a “surreal” moment for Hairston.

“The collaboration with the community and schools to not only honor our history, but to have a state-of-the-art facility for students is just amazing and gratifying,” she told the newspaper.

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CHARLES WILBORN, REGISTER & BEE  
Galileo Magnet High School Principal Michelle Ramsey, left, and Danville Public Schools Superintendent Angela Hairston, right, celebrate after cutting the ribbon on the new facility on Monday afternoon.