

## Future Fungi Finds Success at Common Grounds Competition

Jan 13, 2017 | Recent Announcements



We'd like to introduce January's *Common Grounds* winner, Nima ShahabShahmir. As a result, Nima was also the recipient of Tech Connects \$500 pitch prize! Nima is a WVU Tech student majoring in Computer Science, at the Beckley Campus. He is the first student participant going through the Beckley "Launch Lab" and the first winner of the prize that is sponsored by Tech Connect.

Nima's company name is called "Future Fungi": His value proposition is to disrupt the Styrofoam, and, plastics market at it's source by growing Mycelium (Mushrooms), compacting the mycelium into molds(cups, plates, etc,), baking it, adding sugar glazing to it to make it waterproof, and selling it at wholesale to customer segments that are cognizant of the environmental impacts that plastics and styrofoam have on the environment. His future growth plans will be to formulate and refine the process to create "packing peanuts" that can be used instead of the styrofoam peanuts used. His product is biodegradable in 14 days once churned back to the soil and has an indefinite shelf life. It's waterproof and fireproof, it's lite weight and malleable enough to conform to any size or shape that's desired.

Nima plans to use his prize money to purchase the material and document the process of this project, and working with the Launch Lab to create a cost of goods sold, and unit price plan, once the process is defined and shaped, as well as possibly participating at the Vanguard Ag challenge at RCBI for additional funding for product and business development.