



**HOLYOKE**

## Heads up at Holyoke Community College

Claire McGale, manager of Holyoke Community College's Freight Farms urban agriculture program, holds two robust heads of sweet green crisp salanova from yesterday's harvest. HCC has been growing leafy greens inside the Freight Farms containers since October 2018. The project is a partnership with the city of Holyoke and MassDevelopment, who supplied the funding to purchase the two containers. Over the course of the morning, McGale and her co-workers harvested close to 70 pounds of lettuce from the two repurposed shipping containers on Race Street managed by Holyoke Community College behind the HCC MGM Culinary Arts Institute. Story on **Page A3**.

# Local lettuce to the rescue

## E. coli outbreak prompts recall

The Republican newsroom

Holyoke Community College's dining services threw out all its salad greens over the weekend in response to a national recall, but luckily there was a local supply to fill the gap.

The college's Freight Farms urban agriculture grows several varieties of lettuce using hydroponic technology in repurposed shipping containers on Race Street.

Freight Farms manager Claire McGale and her co-workers harvested nearly 70 pounds of lettuce yester-

day morning, the college said in a statement.

"We were going to harvest today anyway," McGale said, "but we're doing much more than we would have."

The lettuce was used in the salad bar in HCC's cafeteria, for grab-and-go packaged salads and for sandwich toppings.

U.S. health officials issued a warning on Friday about romaine lettuce grown in Salinas, California, urging Americans not to eat the leafy green if the label doesn't say where it was grown, the Associated Press reported.

The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention said

40 people were reported sick in 16 states after eating romaine from the region that was contaminated with E. coli. A similar outbreak happened just before Thanksgiving last year.

"We threw out all our product. We don't take any chances," said HCC dining services director Mark Pro-novost. "I don't know what other schools are doing, but reaching out to Freight Farms was easy for us."

The college's dining services are managed by Aramark, which has been buying Freight Farms lettuce since February — but never in as much volume.