

Technology may allow veggies to be grown in space

By Mike Wall, Space.com

Astronauts flying to Mars or beyond may be able to grow their own veggies during the long trip using new technology tested in the Arizona desert.

During a two-week trial, NASA put a compact vegetable-growing unit through its paces as part of the agency's annual Research and Technology Studies demonstration, also known as Desert RATS. The unit, developed by the Wisconsin-based company Orbitec, grows salad-type crops using a minimum of space and energy.

"We're very excited about it," said Paul Zamprelli, business director for Orbitec. "It's another piece of the puzzle for long-duration missions, and for habitat missions on the moon and Mars."

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