

# Sprouting Gear Founder Warns of AI-Driven Water Crisis in New Report: 'The Silent War for Water'

*AI data centers are fueling a hidden water crisis, threatening U.S. agriculture. Sprouting Gear offers a solution with water-smart, hydroponic feed systems.*

RAMONA, CA, UNITED STATES, June 16, 2025 /EINPresswire.com/ -- As artificial intelligence continues to reshape the global economy, Sprouting Gear founder Paul Pluss has issued a stark warning: the rise of AI data centers may soon outcompete American agriculture for its most vital resource—water. McKinsey reports that U.S. data centre electricity

consumption is expected to grow from 224 TWh in 2025 to 606 TWh by 2030, comprising 11.7% of total U.S. electricity demand. A report highlighted by Clean Water Action and others states that “a single data center can consume up to 5 million gallons of water per day”.



A close look at Sprouting Gear’s barley fodder—showing root structure, shoot density, and the vibrant growth achieved in just 9 days.

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*Paul Pluss*

In a newly published report titled [“The Unintended Consequences of the AI Race on the Livestock Industry,”](#) Paul Pluss—a veteran rancher and agricultural researcher—outlines how the explosive growth of AI infrastructure is triggering a massive, underrecognized water crisis in rural America.

“The expansion of AI infrastructure isn’t just reshaping the tech economy—it’s quietly reshaping the future of water access,” said Pluss. “Ranchers aren’t competing with just drought anymore—they’re now competing with data centers for the same aquifers that keep their operations alive.”

Key Highlights from the report:

- U.S. cattle herd size has dropped by 34% since 1975, driven in part by soaring feed and water costs.
- Each new data center consumes up to 5 million gallons of water per day for server cooling. There are currently 5,426 data centers and 8,378 planned by 2030.
- Projected water use by U.S. data centers could soon exceed 15 trillion gallons annually, rivaling the entire livestock industry's water footprint.
- AI infrastructure is expanding faster than agricultural water policy can adapt, particularly in regions overlying depleted aquifers like the Ogallala.

The report argues that if unchecked, this trend could further shrink herd sizes, escalate feed prices, and push more family ranches out of business. Pluss urges policymakers, ranchers, and agtech innovators to take immediate action to adapt feed production methods and secure long-term water access.



Sprouting Gear's hydroponic fodder system grows nutrient-rich barley grass in vertical trays with minimal water and no soil.



Freshly harvested hydroponic barley fodder mats ready for livestock—dense with living roots and packed with moisture and nutrients.

### A Solution in Sight: Water-Smart Feeding

As a direct response to this emerging threat, [Sprouting Gear's hydroponic fodder system](#) enables ranchers to grow fresh, nutrient-rich barley fodder using 95% less water than traditional feed crops like alfalfa or corn silage. The system also reduces land use and carbon emissions, making it a full-spectrum solution to feedlot resilience.

"If data centers are the new factories, then water is the new steel," Pluss said. "And right now, agriculture is being left behind."

Sprouting Gear is now offering consultations and system demos for [ranchers looking to reduce their exposure to water volatility](#) and future-proof their operations.

About Paul Pluss:

Paul Pluss is the founder of Sprouting Gear Inc., a California-based agtech company developing sustainable feed solutions for large-scale cattle operations. With a decade of experience in livestock and agricultural innovation, Pluss is an outspoken advocate for smart adaptation in the face of environmental change.

To learn more about the technology or request a water savings projection for your operation, visit [www.SproutingGear.com](http://www.SproutingGear.com) or contact [Info@SproutingGear.com](mailto:Info@SproutingGear.com)

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