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besides energy costs, growers can also save on pesticides:
Ventilated Latent Heat Converter can reduce disease pressure

Israeli firm Agam is cornering the high-tech greenhouse market in colder climates with its energy-saving VLHC machine, says the company's Marketing Manager, Chaim Edelman. Agam's Ventilated Latent Heat Converter works by extracting humid air from inside the greenhouse, and then converting water vapour into water and heat by blowing the air through a matrix of desiccant-filled elements in a compact cooling tower.



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During the process, vapour condensation naturally warms up the desiccant and the resulting heat is released by the unit into the greenhouse, as warm dry air.

Edelman states that since the company began selling the unit commercially in 2008, and in the last three years specifically, 145 machines have been sold to various countries worldwide including: Israel, Scandinavia, Benelux, Germany, Finland, the US, China and Japan.



Research conducted by Swedish Linköping University from 2012 to 2013 show that 60% energy savings can be made using the VLHC, with Edelman keen to point out it significantly reduces Botrytis and other mould, bacterial and fungal diseases - caused by too much humidity.

A study undertaken at Danish Kalanchoe, producer Knud Jepson A/S, in 2012 suggests that Agam's unit can play an important role in reducing Botrytis, specifically, meaning there is less need for pesticides. Edelman says that Botrytis and other fungal diseases won't return at all. "We filter all of the diseases out of the greenhouses."



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Return on investment (ROI) has taken between 1.5- three years, the ROI depends on the crop, and local energy costs. According to Edelman the generally pay back is between two to four years and a company's ROI is calculated during the consultancy and quotation process, he said.



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 CNY: 8.5232
 NZD: 1.6407
 ZAR: 14.9187

Euro foreign exchange reference rates
 Source: ECB

Keen to differentiate Agam from other similar technique, Edelman went on, "I don't want to speak badly of other machines because competition is good and there is room for everybody," but he points out the VHLC is one of the most cost effective machines in colder climates where energy is more expensive, because it operates using only 2.5 kW – a few times less than the units from manufacturers.

Chaim Edelman will happily admit that VHLC can't compete with units for business in warmer climates, but that is not where Agam's interests lie he says, stressing they are focused on the high-tech Venlo greenhouse market. "We cannot install our machine in wooden greenhouses or those without good insulation," he says.



"We are a high-end product for the highest level of greenhouses. We are focused on countries in Western Europe like The Netherlands, Scandinavia and Germany. Furthermore The United States, Japan and China are important areas." he added.

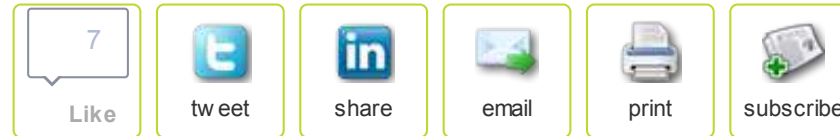
Agam's units are available through a network of leading horticultural suppliers. A complete overview can be found at [Agam's website](#).

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