



Second International Conference on
AGRICULTURE IN AN URBANIZING SOCIETY
Reconnecting Agriculture and Food Chains to Societal Needs
14 - 17 SEPTEMBER 2015 | ROME | ITALY

Call for Abstracts – Agriculture in an Urbanizing Society

In this document you'll find the call for abstracts for all 23 working groups of the September 2015 conference in Rome, Italy. On our website you can find the overview of working groups and working group texts as well.

Abstracts can be submitted through the conference system [EasyChair](#) until **31 March 2015**

Please visit our website for the abstract submitting procedure
<http://www.agricultureinurbanizingsociety.com/?cat=13>

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Working Group 1

Connecting local and global food systems and reducing footprint in food provisioning and use

The growing influence of global food value chains has raised concerns about the sustainability of food systems. Food production and consumption have large impacts on various sustainability issues such as climate change, water use, soil quality, biodiversity, etc. To take just one example, in an urbanizing society more and more food needs to be transported to urban centres. At the same time, urban areas are producing larger amounts of organic and sewage waste that need to be processed and transported away from cities. Until now the cycle of organic material and its constituent compounds like phosphorus and nitrogen is far from closed. The current urban food cycle is causing accumulation, environmental pollution, and depletion of resources such as phosphorus.

Growing out of such concerns, vibrant food movements have developed a radical critique of global food operations. These have influenced both consumers and policy makers, who then exert pressure on actors in the food chain to address this issue. One of the strategies to challenge Global Value Chains has been the relocalisation of food systems, opposing 'short' with 'long', 'local' to 'global', and 'different' to 'standard'. It is claimed, in fact, that local food systems reduce food miles, foster direct communication channels between consumers and producers, increase biological and cultural diversity, enlarge consumers freedom of choice, and re-balance the power of big players.

In response, many larger food businesses have started to address the sustainability issue seriously, investing in technologies, measurement tools, certification schemes, social reporting, and so forth, to improve their sustainability performance, and to conquer 'minds and hearts' of consumers.

At the same time, research has addressed the conceptual limits of relocalisation, raising the concern that localizing food markets may not yield greater efficiency in economic or energy terms. For example, is it more defensible to produce tomatoes in a nearby greenhouse heated with fossil fuels, or to import them from open fields in a warm climate? Is preserving and storing local products for off-season use more desirable than importing fresh products? Should "local" be defined in kilometres, or in terms of the social and commercial networks that are inherent to community-based food trade?

The working group will accept papers addressing these questions:

- *How is the sustainability performance of food systems evolving? What theories, measurements, and assessment tools are being developed to quantify their performance? Case studies quantifying the effects of sustainability performance are welcomed.*
- *To what extent are local or global food networks able to keep a high social innovation profile and contribute to sustainable consumption and production? What are the more promising experiences? What are the limits of their action? Are hybrid structures feasible that combine elements of local and global?*
- *Are there avenues for collaboration between food movements and global players in the pursuit of sustainable production and consumption? What are the barriers? What are the risks of collaboration?*
- *What role might community food networks play in the building of new food-system organizational patterns? Will the agriculture of the future be defined by corporate and institutional structures, or can it remain rooted in communities?*
- *What kind of instruments or information could help decision makers to make the best choices?*
- *How can policies accompany the efforts of actors in the food chains to improve their sustainability performance?*

Abstracts for this working group can be submitted to:

Easy Chair [AgUrb2015 submission page](#)

Convenors:

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Working Group 2

Short food supply chains (regional products; farmers' markets; collective farmers' marketing initiatives; alternative food networks; CSA)

"Our workshop will bring a particular focus on the Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) model and its relations to the other alternative food systems. Even if further research needs to be done to characterize the different CSA movements with more precision, there is a shared feeling among the various geographical branches to belong to the same larger, worldwide movement. The workshop is designed to explore the actors' efforts to consolidate the CSAs as a social movement through field practices (Participatory Guarantee Systems), institutions (charter writing processes, national and regional networks), informal adult education (European CSA Training Program, local educational activities in various countries) or through meetings.

One issue is the multiple meanings CSA have can have in a single country. For example, in the Hungarian CSA movement alone, with only 10 projects running in 2013, there is a distinction between "share ml" and "box scheme model"(1). Additionally, there are regional specificities: in the new EU member states it is a challenge to manage trust between consumers and producers who have prejudice about the community-based operations due to the enforced co-operatives of the socialist era. In Korea, and more widely in the Asian context, the 'box scheme model' is blossoming while the 'share model' is less successful. Let's explore the creativity and the diversity of the movement.

The second axis should be an investigation on the attempts to set boundaries that clearly separates CSA from a purely "business driven model". A common rule that is emerging from the existing Charters (France and the UK) is that CSA requires a strong commitment, since it relies heavily on the voluntary work of consumers and involvement in a solidarity-based not-for-profit rather than market-oriented interest. The case of the very detailed regulation passed in 2014 in the State of California, backed by local CSA farmers and a CSA network called "the community Alliance for Family Farmers, is very interesting (2). It shows that there is a strong feeling about the need to act in order to protect against "non farm-based aggregated box schemes" from calling themselves CSA. The ongoing debate on a very successful Internet platform-based box scheme in France, and the tensions with the CSA movement, are another sign of the same phenomenon.

In these non-CSA businesses, flexibility is presented as an asset, and compared with the rigidity of the traditional CSA model. Based on concrete local food movements' experiences studies in Asia, the Americas and Europe, we will try to answer the following questions.

- How can the current proliferation of CSA-like initiatives feed the whole movement (and not just the most flexible models), and be promoted in a way that acknowledges the complementarity of the various alternative food systems?
- How can we accommodate social, ecological, and economic vitality in the local food movement?
- Do we want a local food 'movement' or local food 'systems'?

(1) Zoltan Dezsény, *Emergence of Community Supported Agriculture in Hungary: A Case Study of Sustainable Rural Enterprises*, Davis: University of California Davis (Master's Thesis), 2013, pp. 62-63.

(2) California State Assembly, "Article 6: Community supported agriculture", Assembly Bill no. 224, Chapter 404, paragraph 47060, 28 September 2013.

Abstracts for this working group can be submitted to:

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Working Group 3

Economic impact at the farm level

Multifunctional agriculture is seen today as a new model of farming and of agricultural business, able to capture the changes in contemporary society and meet the needs and the demand of consumers, citizens and taxpayers. Farmers search for new sources of income, in order to diversify their production and lower the risk factors, often shifting their inputs towards non-agricultural goods and services. At the same time, they may adopt strategies to remunerate non-productive functions, also through access to public policies that are more and more oriented to support social and environmental functions.

The aim of this working group is to investigate the ways farms adapt to changes in the direction of multifunctionality, diversifying their activities and income sources towards the production of new goods and services and also of public goods.

Multifunctional agriculture has been traditionally associated to the characteristics of small family-run farms. However, evidence shows that also large and business-oriented farms are reorienting their production, introducing differentiated products and diversified activities and giving a commercial footprint to their ability to produce public goods. Even more, it is often the entrepreneurial skills, which are connected to the age of farmers, their education level and their connection to the markets, that makes the difference in the shifting to a multifunctional business.

The working group will focus especially on the business aspects of multifunctionality, such as product differentiation (quality products, organic farming), and diversification (agri-tourism, social farming, recreational activities), by looking at the economic and social implications related to the choice of farmers of "going multifunctional".

The main questions which will be addressed in this working group are as follows:

- *How can multifunctional agriculture contribute to societal challenges?*
- *What is the contribution of multifunctional agriculture to farm family income?*
- *Does multifunctional agriculture strengthen or weaken the economic resilience of the farm enterprise?*
- *Does multifunctional agriculture increase social responsibility of farmers as well as their reputation and visibility within local communities?*
- *What are the economic relations and interdependencies between primary production and other on-farm activities? Are they in competition or do they support each other in the overall farm business and income production?*
- *What are the effects of production cost and farm business of the choice of "going multifunctional"?*
- *To what extent multifunctional agriculture may change the identity and the entrepreneurial skills of farmers?*
- *Which is the role of public support in favouring the development of multifunctional agriculture?*

By addressing these questions the working group aims at exploring under what circumstances (internal and external factors) multifunctional agriculture may become a driver of social change and economic growth at the farm level. Proposals based on a micro, meso and macro founded analysis are welcome, but also papers that offer a comparative analysis of case studies, in different businesses or in different areas of the same country or different countries.

Abstracts for this working group can be submitted to:

Easy Chair [AgUrb2015 submission page](#)

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Working Group 4

New business models for multiple value creation

In recent years, numerous initiatives, businesses and movements have been arising working on multiple sustainability goals and explicitly creating social value for society. Increasingly social entrepreneurs emerge in the void that is created by the withdrawal of governmental institutions on for example social care or management of parks and nature. This trend is endorsed by the European Social Business Initiative, that has been initiated by Barnier. In new ways small companies and communities organize concerted activities and generate values. These structures can be described as a new trend in business ecosystems, a familiar concept in business studies. Within business ecosystems not only the economic value is of significance, but also values such as living environment, social cohesion, spirituality, authenticity and commitment. Traditional economic models for business development give insufficient information for support and improvement of these new initiatives, because they focus primarily on the individual performance of a business, that may take place in different networks. In this new trend however, networks have become sharing communities that include both enterprises and active community members. This puts a lot of theoretical and practical constraints on using business models, by advisors, policy makers and researchers who want to advise these new practices, sometimes creating misunderstanding rather than a good action perspective.

Goals of this working group is to present, discuss and reflect on a new generation of business models that address multiple forms of value creation in this new generation of business ecosystems. Invited papers should elaborate on some of the following elements:

- Problematisations of business models in the light of business ecosystem developments, e.g. highlighting social capital and local exchange trading systems
- What business models are better suited to address societal challenges?
- How to articulate and valorise social values?
- Presentation of best practices and grass root initiatives of multifunctional farms, urban farms and social enterprises combining profit and social impact.
- Incentives, interactions and consequences for the logic of family farms in relation to the emerging new business models.
- Theoretical foundation and understanding mechanisms of above mentioned initiatives, factors for success and failures.
- Ideas for integration of multiple values and value exchange in new business models.
- Approaches for co-creation and co-design of new products, services and exchanges addressing societal challenges.
- Critical points and opportunities for scaling of the new business model.
- What governance arrangements will stimulate the arise and scaling of new business models?

Abstracts for this working group can be submitted to:

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Working Group 5

Entrepreneurial skills and competences, knowledge and innovation systems and new learning arrangements

Rural entrepreneurship plays a key role in capturing innovation, maintaining and developing communities, providing job opportunities and moderating the relationship between farming, land-use, community and economic development. Whilst changes in the environment, ageing demographic and alternative demands on land use have in recent years placed stress on the rural entrepreneurial ecosystem, the accelerating rate of urbanization brings into question how rural businesses can be understood in an urbanizing world.

Urbanization is a phenomenon that encompasses the developed and developing contexts. Whilst these contexts have often been conceptualised within the separate fields of Rural Entrepreneurship in the developed world and International Development in the developing world, 'traditional' rural businesses are under pressure to change: with farm and non-farm rural entrepreneurs required to continuously update their skills and competencies in order to survive the challenge of, and provide for, an urbanizing society.

Brunton et al (2010) suggest that entrepreneurship research either ignores emerging economies or at best uses them as test-beds for theories established in mature economies, whilst theories for the developing world specifically tend to fall within the fringe of the International Business discipline.

The track is focused on original multi-disciplinary papers that explain the various phenomena that relate to urbanizing rural entrepreneurship and integrate these wider contexts. Papers may encompass either the developing and developed contexts, with those that address both particularly welcome. Papers may relate to ontology / epistemology, 'grand theory', or key areas in rural entrepreneurship such as:

1. Entrepreneurial skills and competencies
 - a. Farms and farmers
 - b. Non-farm business
 - c. Non-traditional rural sectors (Home-Based; Informal)
2. Change in knowledge and innovation systems
 - a. Dynamic entrepreneurial eco-systems / Regional Innovation Systems
 - b. An evolving Rural-Urban dichotomy
 - c. Institutional approaches (socially productive / destructive)
3. New learning arrangements
 - a. New Rural Paradigm(s)
 - b. 'Adaptive' forms of organisation
 - c. Technological delivery systems
4. Informal sector and illegal rural enterprise
5. Home-Based Business (incubators; industrial restructuring)
6. Environmental sustainability
7. Institutional frameworks and rural governance

We welcome papers from any methodology and strongly encourage collaboration between colleagues in developing and developed countries.

Papers will be considered for a special issue of the International Journal of Entrepreneurship and Innovation: <http://www.ippublishing.com/ije.htm>

Abstracts for this working group can be submitted to:

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Working Group 6

Transition approaches

Rurality, agriculture, and urbanization, are part of diverse realities around the world and within countries. One should differentiate specific situations, with different characteristics depending on territorial conditions and development standards, among others. The related concerns are in consequence different and diverse.

From a transition perspective, the conference theme is challenging in different ways:

First, it challenges scientists and practitioners to understand the changes on different scale levels (after Geels, 2002). Could transition theory enable us to analyse the changes from a multi-level perspective? What pressures the urbanisation and the developments in agriculture and food systems? What is going on at the institutional level? What is enabling or hindering the mainstream agriculture and food systems to anticipate urbanisation? Regarding local initiatives, what examples of niche-experiments can be identified that impact the prevalent regime? Case studies and conceptual reflections on past or ongoing developments could help us dealing with this challenge. We also invite contributions about transitions in the mainstream agriculture and food systems, to enable a better understanding of the relations with urbanisation, local food systems, multifunctional agriculture.

A second challenge : could the transition perspective advance initiatives in reconnecting agriculture and food chains to societal needs? This requires intervention strategies that are both conceptually sound and practically proven. Besides the transition domain, network theories and concepts could also be helpful to support initiatives to work on a successful (re)connection between actors from agriculture, food chain and society.

A third challenge: from an actors centered perspective we could ask Who decides for the rural development? And for the urbanizing areas? Why is it so? Which institutions are in charge of the policy decisions and implementations? How do they contribute to improve opportunities for development? Do local actors participate in the main decisions for rural and agricultural development? Let 's consider changes from: 1) a dichotomic urban-rural approach to a complementary, interdependent rural/urban, 2) rurality as subsidiary of urban biased decisions, to rural communities as acting agents of change development and decision makers of their own related concerns, and 3) from urban predominant policy targets to rural communities like strategic partners.

We especially invite contributions showing a connection between transition & innovation theory and the practical level of innovation initiatives and projects.

Contributions addressing the following questions are welcome:

- a. Which transition and innovation concepts and theories could enable a better understanding of the dynamics of agricultural, rural and urban transition processes on different levels of analysis?
- b. Can we understand the challenges for the mainstream agriculture and food systems from the perspective of urbanisation? What regime changes are necessary and which intervention strategies are effective or promising in changing the regime?
- c. What operational approaches and tools for policy, business and innovation initiatives reconnect agriculture, food systems and societal needs? Which processes will be needed to engage on long term commitments and short term imperatives? What capabilities are needed?

Both, conceptual and case-oriented contributions from different countries are called for.

Abstracts for this working group can be submitted to:

Easy Chair [AgUrb2015 submission page](#)

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Working Group 7

Regional branding and local agrifood systems: strategies, governance, and impacts

Regional branding initiatives are more and more spread as a mean for reconnecting agrifood products to places and, by this way, for creating value in rural areas. Regional branding encompasses several types of initiatives, ranging from very formal ones – such as geographical indications protected under EU quality policy schemes (PDOs and PGIs) – to umbrella strategies where links between products and place are very weak. Regional branding initiatives differ in many respects, in particular as regards degree of formalization, governance and institutional arrangements, role of farmers, existence of written rules and of control systems, geographical scale of the initiative (from very localized initiatives to big regions), strength of the connection with local resources.

Regional branding initiatives are expected to support the development of local agrifood systems and to exert positive impacts on rural development, both directly (income, employment) and indirectly (activation of other local economic activities like tourism). However so far little has been done to evaluate and compare the many types of impacts, which depend inter alia on the type and design of the regional brand, the level of use by firms, the collective initiatives aiming at linking producers and consumers. The few available studies show a scattered and uneven picture. For this reason this working group aims at sharing empirical evidences, thoughts and methodologies on the economic, social, agronomical and environmental effects of regional branding, with a special focus on the resilience of local agri-food production systems, multifunctional agriculture, and rural areas.

Contributions are welcome on the following topics:

- Critical issues in the setting process of regional brands, role of different initiators and of local public actors, governance issues
- Comparisons between different types of regional branding initiatives, also from a juridical point of view: protected GIs, collective geographical trademarks, umbrella hallmarks, other quality labels
- Institutional arrangements and public policies supporting regional branding dynamics and their integration with tourism
- Methodologies of evaluation of the effects at firm, supply-chain, and rural area level
- Economic effects of regional branding for firms, local supply chains and rural areas; social effects (employment, social cohesion, collective action, gender issues ...); socio-technical effects (local knowledge for food elaboration, recovering of the local recipes ...); environmental effects (support to multifunctional agriculture, management of specific local resources, agro-biodiversity preservation ...).
- Consumers' willingness-to-pay for products bearing regional brands
- Regional branding and short/alternative food supply chains
- Regional branding in HORECA circuits and in public food procurement systems

Abstracts for this working group can be submitted to:

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Working Group 8

Food systems and spatial planning. Towards a reconnection?

In physical planning the "transition" prospect toward a 'low carbon' society calls for a new 'relocalisation' of energy and matter flows, especially between urban and rural domain. In such a framework, the presence of a viable, rentable and 'nature based' proximity agriculture, strongly connected with the city, even in periurban areas, is emerging as a key issue in planning practices and design, even in coping with resilience as well as fairness matters. In this framework, research on food systems and short supply chains has become increasingly considerable in the urban and spatial planning literature. Further, it is worth highlighting that interest in local food is raising awareness among urban dwellers. It is becoming clear that planners and urban designers should begin to take into account questions about food self-reliance, farmland preservation and food distribution in conceiving morphological and functional patterns at the (bio) regional scale.

The aim of this working group is to analyze how food systems can be integrated in urban and spatial planning in a more efficient way. To this end, we propose some questions we would like to address:

- *Why 'local food' is hidden behind the city's boundaries? How could we improve local food systems and their efficiency? Can smart cities integrate the 'food vector' in urban and spatial planning? Can the city design a smart food system which integrates 'local food logistics networks', embracing consumers, producers, retailers and collection and distribution centres? Can the 'local food system' be as efficient as other logistic systems?*
- *How can we recover and design a connected agriecological structure at the regional and urban scale?; which innovative urban design methods can be developed accordingly to this goal in fostering short food supply chains (market places, logistics, housing, urban/rural interface design...)?*
- *Which agricultural good practices and territory design can be implemented as integrated tools for resilience, risk prevention, resources protection and food safety (groundwater protection, soil safety, water systems sustainable regeneration)?*
- *Which organizative and partnership tools for urban-rural joint policies and projects (e.g agricultural parks, river agreements, agri-landscape design...) could we apply, with the aim at preserving prime farmland and empowering farmers in participative planning processes and choices?*

These themes, among others, are increasingly worldwide tackled in many urban and regional experiences, showing the feasibility and importance of agriculture, and food delivering in fostering a new self-relying settlement and development process (e.g. Canada and the USA 'food policies' and 'food hubs', in Europe, 'Agricultural Parks' and 'agri-urban contracts').

From this perspective, we invite participants to propose jointly theoretical approaches and experiences to a new sustainable model of city-region, which includes the food vector in land/urban planning, understood as a fundamental part of the urban metabolism. In this regard, the debate will focus on new planning and design tools to enhance a local "foodshed" and on the efficiency of the flows of the 'local food logistics' from the farmland to the collection centres, and from them to the consumers.

Read more at <http://www.agricultureinanurbanizingsociety.com/?p=635#ZZoI7aWIPXfKHZj0.99>

Abstracts for this working group can be submitted to:

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Working Group 9

Land-use transformations

Around the world society is increasingly and rapidly affected by urbanization processes. Still, the largest part of the world's land is used for agricultural activities. Contrary to some decades ago, rural land use is now seldom influenced by agriculture only. Multiple drivers affect land use changes, including various forms of urbanization, which are constantly changing and follow different development trajectories. In order to understand and fully measure such changing trends, processes of intensification/extensification of productive activities can not be separated from processes of urbanization and also of marginalization. Causes for these processes are linked to food and nutrition security, climate change, natural resources limitations and exhaustion, social and demographic processes and changing societal values and expectations. Both local and global drivers are involved, including public policy interventions together with multiple actors with different interests in land use and management. In sum such intersecting dynamics of agricultural structural developments and various forms of urbanization lead to an increasingly complex differentiation of land use. Traditional disciplinary approaches within academia cannot adequately understand these changes, and therefore cross-disciplinary approaches are needed. Neither are the current, highly sectoral policy domains able to address the policy approaches needed to ensure sustainable development of land use.

The aim of this working group is to present and discuss current research into rural land use change across and within the global north and south, and to discuss current and future policy institutions associated with these changes.

This Working-Group will look at particular land use related questions including the following:

- . *what are the main trends in land-use transformations, in different geographical contexts?*
- . *what are main drivers of land use change, and how do they vary, if at all, with geographical context?*
- . *how is food and nutrition security affecting and being affected by land use changes?*
- . *how can the different societal expectations be combined for more sustainable land use?*
- . *how can the sustainable use of natural resources in urban, peri-urban and rural areas be strengthened?*
- . *how are current policy approaches guiding current land use changes and with what results?*
- . *how can the complexity in current land use change patterns be dealt with effectively by public policy at different levels?*

Abstracts for this working group can be submitted to:

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Working Group 10

Urban agriculture I. Urban agriculture and Urban Food Strategies: Processes, Planning, Policies and Potential to Reconnect Society and Food

Urban -regional- agriculture is highly valued by city dwellers as well as local authorities because it provides them with social, environmental and green amenities that directly contribute to the regional quality of life. The urban interest in the provenance of food also inspires entrepreneurs to develop innovative local food related business. Despite this growing interest, however, urban agriculture remains brittle, fragmented and without coherence. It still is a niche innovation; an innovation which is part of a burgeoning interest to integrate food in the urban fabric, i.e. to stimulate regional food systems. City authorities can take the lead in embedding urban agriculture in the urban daily life by facilitating local oriented food initiatives and business, creating networks of these local initiatives, linking national and local policies and developing a platform to share knowledge and experience. There are some successful examples around the world where authorities and the local food movement create room for a symbiotic development.

One option for a comprehensive approach to regional food systems are Urban Food Strategies (UFS) that have developed recently in leading cities across the world, like Toronto, New York and London. We refer to the term 'Urban Food Strategy' as a process consisting of how an urban region envisions change in its food system, and how it strives towards this change, in its policy, governance, planning and daily practice. Such UFS provide a new and innovative perspective on food: from regional (agricultural) development to urban policy, thus inspiring the current worldwide discussion on the future of our food system.

This working group aims at a better understanding of the functioning of these urban food strategies in terms of policy, governance, planning and daily practice. Likewise we welcome all types of papers which lead to a vibrant discussion on the potential of reconnecting society & food and urban & agriculture. Can we extract general lessons? This working group addresses the following questions:

- *Which elements do urban food strategies include?*
- *How do urban food strategies function? Which key processes and actors are at stake?*
- *How should the city govern between grass roots innovation (niches) and structural change?*
- *What is the actual impact of such strategies on how food is perceived in a city region?*
- *How could urban -and regional- agriculture be embedded in these urban food strategies?*
- *How to balance urban agriculture with other forms of land use like parks, playgrounds, real estate?*

Abstracts for this working group can be submitted to:

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Working Group 11

Urban agriculture II. Grass-root initiatives and community gardens

Over the past 200 years processes of industrialisation and urbanisation disconnected agricultural production from the locus of consumption, resulting in the dominant role of global food supply chains to feed the city. Over the past decade, urban agriculture (UA) has been a policy item in developing countries and provides the opportunity to integrate multiple functions in urban and peri-urban areas. In Europe, cities start to reconnect to their proximate support areas of food production and fresh water sources in combination with a role of urban and peri-urban landscape and nature for the quality of life of individuals and societies. In addition, the development of capital-intensive agriculture as part of the development of 'Smart Cities' (combinations of bioreactors, intensive horticulture, and aquaculture in combination with informational systems) in urban fabrics is credited a role in the optimization of resource efficiency with a high visual impact. In the context of the current economic and environmental crisis pragmatic changes however mainly depend on grassroots initiatives and community gardens, which include peri-urban forest gardens and agro-recreational landscapes. UA and urban and peri-urban agriculture and forestry (UPAF) respond to a more acute crisis in the financial system, and vacant plots of lands and abandoned buildings are seen as potential places for food production and social activity. This increasingly comes to the attention of private real estates and social housing companies. Consequently, UPAF will likely bring with it many changes to how society and policy makers think about the way food is sourced.

This Working group calls for contributions that identify, map and analyse the benefits of this large variety in organizational design, grassroots initiatives and community gardens in particular, and calls participants to share experiences that might not directly aim to but reflect effective and successful approaches for enhancing a sustainable reconnection of agricultural production and the locus of consumption. Contributions should be on urban and/or peri-urban dynamics. We welcome papers that bring evidence for the emergence of multi-functional, 'edible' landscapes in urban and peri-urban areas in the global North and global South, and interpret these dynamics in terms of contributing to sustainable, resilient urban development and/or the construction of strategic food reserves in densely populated areas. Papers can have a focus on food security through local, healthy food provisioning and/or the linkages between multifunctional agriculture and forestry (for example offering amenity, recycling, closing of water and nutrient cycles, potentially wildlife and biodiversity gains), food chains and local food systems for greater social justice and social inclusion. More in particular papers could address one or more of the following questions:

- *Which new initiatives are emerging in the global North and in the global South, and what is their impact?*
- *How do they scale-up? What are critical factors for success and failure?*
- *How can they be connected with and/ or strengthen (urban) food policies?*
- *What will happen to the characteristics of urban and peri-urban green space if cities have a greater sway over policy?*

Abstracts for this working group can be submitted to:

Easy Chair [AgUrb2015 submission page](#)

Convenors:

Lola Domínguez García	Universida de Vigo, Spain
Paul Swagemakers	Universida de Vigo, Spain
Esther Veen	PPO - Wageningen UR, The Netherlands
Talis Tischenkopf	University of Latvia, Latvia



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Working Group 12

Urban agriculture III: Effects of UA. Urban agriculture: a potential tool for local and global food security, economic, social and environmental resilience, and community health and wellness

Urban agriculture (UA), defined as the growing and consumption of food in and around cities, has been identified to have the potential to enhance individual and community health and wellness, increase local and global food security, strengthen city economies, reduce human impact on the environment, and promote a sense of community and self-determination. However, quantitative data supporting these claims are scarce. Community gardening has long been recognized to improve food security and dietary habits leading to increased vegetable intake and positive health outcomes. It has also been seen to promote social cohesion and a sense of community. More recently urban agriculture has been considered as a driver of local and global food security with a potential for meeting a significant portion of a city's vegetable and animal diet locally. Reports indicate that urban and periurban agriculture provides as much as 90 percent of leafy vegetables and 60 percent of milk sold in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania as well as 76 percent of vegetables in Shanghai and 85 percent in Beijing. In the United States, households met 40 percent of the nation's fresh vegetable demand during World War II. A recent scenario analysis has revealed that the City of Cleveland (Ohio, USA) has the capacity to achieve 22% to 100% self-reliance in fresh produce, honey, chicken, and shell eggs, preventing \$29M to \$115M in direct annual economic leakage. As a result, UA is also becoming a key land use in cities, such as for Chicago (USA) where up to 26.5ha are currently devoted to food production. While these data are encouraging, many claims of the benefits of urban agriculture still need to be substantiated.

We seek papers quantifying impacts of urban agriculture on all three pillars of sustainability: social (access to food, social cohesion, participation, health and wellness, etc.), ecological (GHG emission reduction, biodiversity, heat islands, waste recycling, storm water containment, etc.) and economic (number of jobs, income, innovation, place making, resource leakage prevention, etc.). Topics may include but are not limited to:

- * What role can modern urban agriculture, including building-integrated agriculture and vertical farming, play in reducing pressure on land and enhancing local and global food security?*
- * What is the extent of resource recovery from urban waste streams to meet the nutrient, water, and energy demands of growing urban agriculture?*
- * What are the quantifiable ecological benefits of urban agriculture? Does UA really reduce greenhouse gas emissions and/or increase biodiversity compared to the provision of food via conventional agriculture?*
- * What trade-offs are associated with urban agriculture? Detailed LCA analysis but also societal cost-benefit analysis studies or any other systematic approach to measure the impact of urban agriculture are welcome; impacts can be measurable or speculative.*
- * Economic and ecological benefits or social cohesion can be tackled by urban agriculture projects but also by other projects. We welcome studies that provide guidance for policy makers to inform a choice between different policy arrangements to reach the various goals attributed to urban agriculture projects. Also which theoretical concepts help to explain the effectiveness of urban agriculture projects, in comparison to other approaches to solve societal problems?*
- * It is often argued that if people grow their own food, they (and their children) also have more healthy eating habits and adopt a healthier life style in general. We welcome research to support these claims and we also want to see urban agriculture compared with more conventional public education programs aimed at healthy eating habits.*
- * How does the move to systematically monitor and evaluate the impacts of urban agriculture affect its character and operation, as a bottom-up self-organising urban activity? Which regime actors define what measures to quantify the impacts of urban agriculture and how does this further professionalise or actually impair urban agriculture's potential to bring about a more sustainable urban food provisioning?*

Abstracts for this working group can be submitted to:

Easy Chair [AgUrb2015 submission page](#)

Convenors:

Parwinder Grewal	University of Tennessee, Knoxville, TN, USA
Jan Willem van der Schans	Agricultural Economics Institute, Wageningen UR, NL
Moya Kneafsey	Centre for Agroecology and Food Security, Coventry University, UK
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Working Group 13

Care Farming/Social Farming in more resilient societies

The concept of multifunctional agriculture has new implications in the provision of social services, in rural, peri-urban and urban areas. Social/care farming (SCF) is an innovative approach to nature-based activities and services organised at farm level and is increasingly becoming mainstream. The reorganisation of economic processes on a global scale requires re-orienting of local systems and territories to respond to local needs. It includes the mobilisation of local non-specialised resources – such as agriculture – for new purposes, particularly social ones. Different models of SCF initiatives are spreading rapidly across the world as a means of enhancing quality of life in terms of therapeutic, education, rehabilitation or social inclusion goals. SCF initiatives are differently labelled, respond to a variety of needs and demands from a wide variety of users (people with diverse disabilities, children, young people, elders, offenders, refugees, people from trafficking, disempowered) for different purposes (care, education, training, civil services, social protection, employment support, poverty reduction, women's empowerment) and actors (such as farmers, the third sector, health and social sectors, service-users and their families and local communities). Globally, there are no standardised definitions of SCF and also traditional community-based practices could be read in the perspective of SFC.

At farm level, SCF has profound implications for farm activities, attitudes, marketing and organizational approaches inside and between actors. At public level, SCF raise questions of subsidiarity, innovative procedures, competencies, policies and attitudes and in the perspective of social inclusion, a generative welfare, social justice and community-based organisation.

In spite of the rapid uptake of SCF, there are still many aspects of the concept requiring clarification. The SCF concept breaks the cultural, sectorial and disciplinary barriers. Its evolution and affirmation is part of a process of transition that is demanding in terms of knowledge brokerage, dynamics and methods to use in facilitating local initiatives. This opens a trans-disciplinary debate and, consequently, to the use of a wide range of theoretical and methodological tools. Further progress should provide scientific evidence of SCFs comparative effectiveness, the impact at farm level and the reorganisation of an economic environment with an emphasis on reputation and responsibility, the definition of specific marketing/labelling initiatives and social innovation policies. Greater understanding of wider impacts on the organisation of local networks where the co-production of economic and social values design new ways of producing and building society in a more civic direction is required.

Progressing our understanding of the complexity of SCFs is vitally important. Criteria should be defined in order to classify social farming practices and take the lesson learnt from previous experiences. It is essential to delineate its priorities to enhance a good coordination between science and practice in the context of transition management and social innovation. Finally, synergies and collective learning should be found with other research fields – such as conservation – promoting multifunctional agriculture. This working group will welcome contributions from many diverse perspectives including the health/social care domains, sociological and economic research, policy analysis, or sustainability science with the contribution from researchers/academics as well as practitioners, in accordance with a process of knowledge brokerage.

Abstracts for this working group can be submitted to:

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Sociology of Climate Change and Sustainable Development research group Dept. of Social Analysis, University Carlos III, & Social-Ecological Systems Lab, Universidad Autónoma de Madrid

Academic Unit of Public Health, Leeds Institute of Health Sciences, The University of Leeds



Working Group 14

Rural tourism (agri-tourism) and changing urban demands

Since some decades ago, rural tourism and related activities have been considered important tools to promote and/or to foster local development, particularly in peripheral rural regions. Although the transformations in the role, meaning and place of agriculture have induced major changes in the socioeconomic fabrics of many rural areas, the consequences of these changes are particularly profound in marginal rural contexts. In these regions the loss of their productive character has strongly contributed to the emergence of new roles and functions. It is a multifunctional rural, and mostly a consumable one, that emerges from this set of transformations. Within the multifunctional nature of agriculture in many peripheral rural areas, tourism and leisure activities, together with environmental protection, appear to be key elements.

Although rural tourism is not a consensual concept, and it includes many forms of tourism (e.g. agri-tourism, village tourism, nature and eco-tourism) a common (and very broad) definition suggests that it should include all the tourism activities developed in a rural area, motivated and sustained by all the features of rurality and inducing connections between the social and economic contexts. Therefore, rural tourism should stand on local activities and characteristics (e.g. agriculture, landscape, natural resources), promoting connections and interactions between them and, as such, contributing to sustainable local development in generally disadvantaged contexts. However, most of the empirical evidence produced up to now has shown that the connections between tourism and the broader rural contexts are often faint by a diversity of reasons, ranging from the small-scale of tourism enterprises, to the vulnerability of local contexts, as well as from the absence of efficient networking to the marketing strategies used.

Specifically, contributions should address the following topics:

- *the connections and interactions between rural tourism and local economic, social and cultural activities*
- *the new institutional arrangements that are successful in promoting rural tourism and sustainable development*
- *the new marketing & communication concepts that are emerging (role of social media) in relation to changing urban demands and changing urban customer groups*
- *the contributions of rural tourism to sustainable rural development, particularly in peripheral regions*
- *the role of tourism for the development of innovative (rural) products*
- *the diverse demands, consumptions, expectations and 'gazes' of tourists regarding rural tourism destinations*
- *the transformations of rural and local identities as consequence of rural tourism*
- *the changes in rural tourism demands, consumptions, offers, products and contributions to local development in the current context of economic crisis.*

Abstract proposals are invited that offer both empirical and conceptual perspectives on the above mentioned topics.

Abstracts for this working group can be submitted to:

Easy Chair [AgUrb2015 submission page](#)

Convenors:

Elisabete Figueiredo
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Dept. of Social, Political and Territorial Sciences, University of Aveiro, Portugal
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Working Group 15

Local arrangements for agricultural ecosystem services: connecting urban populations to their peri-urban landscapes through the ecosystem services of agriculture

Growing and sprawling cities, peri-urbanisation, as well as urban shrinkage, impact significantly on the landscapes fringing our cities and result in changing socio-economic demographics and changing relationships between traditional farmers and the incoming non-farming community. These fringe landscapes become increasingly fragmented by residential and industrial developments within what essentially becomes a transition zone with economic, social and cultural ties back to the city. At the same time, city dwellers become increasingly dependent on the ecosystem services of their peri-urban and rural hinterlands as sources of clean air and drinking water, and space for leisure and experiencing nature. The delivery of such services is threatened by urbanization, land abandonment, climate change and intensification of agriculture.

This working group is interested in the public/ common pool part of rural and peri-urban ecosystem services in the light of changing urban-rural relations. Topics such as food and fibres are dealt with in other working groups: we focus on services that are harder to buy and sell, such as biodiversity, landscape amenity, landscape functioning, natural pest reduction, pollination, soil protection, erosion control, water quality, water resources and cultural identity, and especially the role of agriculture in their supply.

Because of mechanisms of market failure for such ecosystem services from agriculture, arrangements have been developed for public or collective payments. Examples are the Agri-Environment Schemes (AES) that are part of the Common Agricultural Policy in Europe, and Payment for Ecosystem Services schemes (PES). These schemes are mostly financed from public funds and developed and managed at national or provincial levels. This working group welcomes contributions about national AES or PES, but favours presentations about local and regional initiatives that express urban-rural relations. Such local and regional initiatives may have developed their own AES or PES, or they may have developed arrangements with the aid of national schemes.

In addition, contributions are welcomed that describe alternative arrangements – other than payment – that ensure delivery of ecosystem services from agriculture. In general, we are looking for forms of landscape governance, collective action, collaborative landscape design and joint management, that result in effective delivery of agricultural ecosystem services in urban and peri-urban regions. We especially welcome examples from developing countries, such as peri-urban agroforestry initiatives.

During the working group sessions, we want to share results, thoughts and insights related to the following questions:

- *What are the relationships between ecosystem services from peri-urban agriculture with urbanization, food security and climate change?*
- *How is the delivery of public good and common pool types of peri-urban agricultural ecosystem services organized and financed?*
- *What is the meaning of ecosystem services from peri-urban agriculture in urban-rural relations, and how does this lead to innovative arrangements?*
- *How are ecosystem services linked to other farm diversification activities such as rural tourism and alternative food networks?*

Depending on the quality and innovativeness of the contributions, we may consider compiling a special issue or a book.

Abstracts for this working group can be submitted to:

Easy Chair [AgUrb2015 submission page](#)

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Darryl Low Choy
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Working Group 16

Gender aspects of multifunctional agriculture

The agricultural sector is the most dominant source of employment, livelihood and income for people living in developing countries both directly and indirectly. Both women and men shape the way agricultural production and trade are practiced. FAO's estimates show that women represent a substantial share of the total agricultural labour force, of which two-thirds are either individual food producers or agricultural workers. And, women play a major role in local and cross-border trade. However, in many places tasks are clearly divided across gender lines and decision-making is often dominated by males, whereas a large part of the work burden is upon the women. Therefore, decisions are mostly based on economic considerations rather than labour-intensity or stability.

Despite all the economic opportunities associated with increased globalization and international trade, the benefits for women in the developing world are often lower. They are for example unable to compete in overseas markets or widen their production units and many are exploited. Even though globalization triggers migration and pulls out the male labour out of farming, the trend of feminization of agriculture increases the work burden but often does not increase their room to maneuver and freedom in decision-making. As the traditional 'nurturers' of families, women involved in agricultural activities tend to be strongest in regard to social attributes such as health and cultural considerations but are often disadvantaged, when it comes to access to markets, marketing of commodities, knowledge on innovations or employment opportunities, which all determine access to food. The informal nature of their operations not only limits government revenue but also constrains income growth by limiting access to formal credit and exposes them to economic and social exploitation. These and other social-institutional constraints faced by women tend to make them more vulnerable than men.

Evidence shows that resources controlled by women are more likely to be used to improve family food consumption and welfare, reduce child malnutrition, and increase the overall family wellbeing. It is therefore necessary to have a thorough analysis of how agricultural policy, strategy and planning can be improved to positively impact food security, nutritional status, income, and equality and hence economic development from a gender perspective. This Working Group will look into the ways women shape agricultural systems differently than men. Women's strengths and constraints will be illuminated in regard to the economic, social and environmental attributes of agricultural production and trade systems. The group will combine discussions of genderfocused approaches (empowerment of women) and gender-integrative approaches (representation of gender issues) in development strategies and invites presenters to showcase examples from diverse places across the globe. The main and final objective is to develop a vision for gender-sensitive agriculture, which might include relevant aspects of production, sustainable practices and trade. Such assessment is crucial to the successful development of any programme or policy concerned with increasing the benefits from agricultural production and trade in the Global South.

Abstracts for this working group can be submitted to:

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Policy Expert, International Institute of Tropical Agriculture-Uganda Office

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Working Group 17

Civic agriculture for an urbanizing society: production models, consumption practices and forms of governance

After the pioneering work of Tom Lyson in 2000, the qualifier of 'civic' for agriculture and food networks has become more widely used in the literature on rural studies. Nonetheless a univocal and clear definition of what makes agriculture and food networks 'civic' is still lacking.

Civic agriculture is often associated to positive externalities: economic and social development, inclusion and food democracy, rural development, agrarian justice and ecological citizenship. It also associated to the diffusion of agro-ecological practices and short supply chains: community supported agriculture, farmers' markets, Solidarity Purchasing Groups are usually considered forms of civic agriculture. Still the essence of 'civic' values are collective values, so that civic agriculture is essentially an agriculture that bases its production and distribution system on the respect of collective goods or commons.

What does imply to say that, in the economic process of food production and distribution and in different contexts, civic agriculture must take into account land, natural resources and food as commons? How a civic agriculture centered on the 'economy of the commons' may respond to new demands and challenges emerging from an urbanizing society? What in that respect is the role played by farmers and other producers, consumers and other actors in the food network?

To look at civic agriculture from the perspective of the 'common good' implies new production models, new consumption practices, new forms of governance. This Working Group encourages papers that analyze from a theoretical and empirical perspective the emergence of forms of civic agriculture in the North and South of the planet, the role they can have in developed and less developed countries and regions, the systemic changes they are bringing at level of productions, exchange, consumption and governance, taking into account the concepts of multifunctionality and co-production, food justice and ecological citizenship, horizontal subsidiarity and new forms of coordination between the state, the market and civil society organizations.

Abstracts for this working group can be submitted to:

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Working Group 18

Society Oriented Farming – working on the balance between market and societal demands

Entrepreneurship in agriculture is changing: Not only do farmers have to be technically capable in their production processes but they also have to be aware of the global markets demands, the (local) societal demands and legislation and environmental changes in an increasingly urbanizing world. In order to achieve business sustainability farmers need to be aware of these external pressures and adapt and develop innovative production strategies so that that all kind of stakeholders: consumer organizations, environmental groups, neighbours, regional and national governments, retail etc. are satisfied with the way these farmers produce. In the Netherlands for example, some regional governments already have legislation restricting farms in their development when they do not interact with society. Incorporating the interaction with society can be done in various ways depending the main farm strategy. This interaction of farms with society we call Society Oriented Farming which contains a wide range of different strategies and farming systems ranging from locally oriented farming systems (like civic agriculture) and more globally oriented agriculture.

Three main strategies can be distinguished in how farmers develop their farms (Fig. 1). In all strategies they have to anticipate on changes in the urbanizing world around their farm although the intensity and way of dealing with society differs between the strategies.

Goals of this working group is to present, discuss and reflect on the concept of society oriented farming and on cases of different farm strategies adapting the concept of society oriented farming.

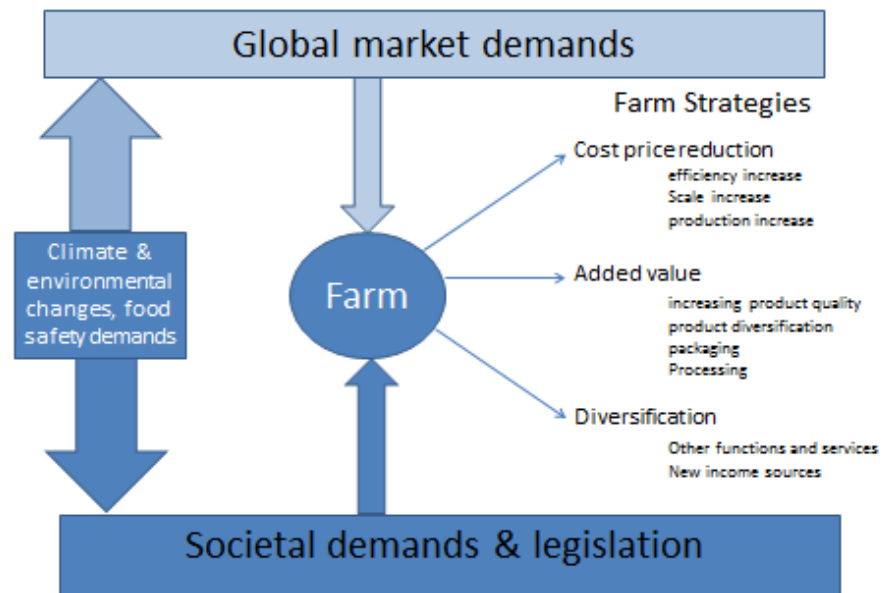


Fig. 1: Different farming strategies in relation to the positioning of the farm in the field between global market demands, climate change and societal demands.

Contributions addressing the following questions are welcome:

- What are the drivers behind society oriented farming?
- How do farmers with different farm strategies co-develop their farm with society?
- How can farmers with different strategies learn from each other
- How can social innovation be stimulated in the agro-food system?

Abstracts for this working group can be submitted to:

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Convenors:

Daniël de Jong
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Working Group 19

Food Security: Meanings, Practices and Policies

Food insecurity is increasingly “bimodal”, encompassing issues of quantity and quality, under- and over-consumption, in developed and developing countries alike. At a time when most of the world’s population lives in cities, food security has also assumed a strong urban dimension, raising new issues of physical and financial access to food. Finally, the recent emergence of a “New Food Equation”, marked by food price hikes, dwindling natural resources, land grabbing activities, social unrest, and the effects of climate change, is bringing onto the global food security agenda a range of often interrelated sustainability concerns.

This working group aims to enhance understanding of this new global geography of food security and of the local responses to it.

It will focus in particular on three questions: What innovative solutions have been devised to increase access to healthy food for the most vulnerable people? How can access to healthy food be balanced across different geographical scales? What type of policies and governance mechanisms are needed to reduce gaps in food access for the poorest?

We will welcome contributions on theory, practices and policies associated with food security in both developed and developing countries. From a theoretical perspective, we encourage analyses of the changing meanings of “food security” and the need for a refined research agenda that integrates a focus on food production (agriculture) with a consideration of increasingly complex issues of access to healthy food. From a policy and practice standpoint, we welcome empirical analyses of initiatives devised to combat food insecurity at the urban and regional level – where barriers to access become more tangible.

In this working group, priority will be given to contributions proposed around the following themes:

- Constructing food security: contested meanings, innovative practices and key actors
- Food security and the reconfiguration of the spatial, socio-economic and environmental linkages between urban and rural areas
- Increasing access to healthy food across different scales
- The city challenge: urban strategies for food security
- Inclusiveness and reflexivity in food security governance

Abstracts for this working group can be submitted to:

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Working Group 20

Revolutionary solutions for local food systems

In recent years practices carrying social and economic innovation through agriculture and food production have grown rapidly, both in numbers and in terms of quality and attention paid by the society. Even more modern economic sectors (like informatics or tourism) are looking with interest to these potential innovative change coming from the primary sector.

These practices find the way for identifying and implementing solutions that, besides being economically sustainable, contribute to the social and environmental improvement of the community.

These initiatives are "revolutionary solutions", carrying real social innovation in a lot of fields, like: education to new generations on nutrition and environment (school gardens, pedagogical practices,...); environmental safeguard (biodiversity, landscape, energy, resources managing, actions against food waste, revolutionary ways for accessing/distributing food, rearrangement and closure of local cycles); governance, with modern and participated experiences (food planning, common goods management, urban-rural solutions,...); social justice paths (food access, social farming, critical consumption, poverty reduction,...); urban planning (community gardens, farmers' markets,...).

These practices are related to food production, based on both rural and urban communities' wide needs and requirements. Often involves a large number and kind of stakeholders, each with a different expertise and role as farmers, third sector, institutions, users, consumers, different forms of active citizenship. Local food systems as well as individual practices and their impacts on the development of territories, may be analyzed by using a wide range of theoretical and methodological tools, from very different points of view, and with the contribution of various sciences and expertises, within a multidisciplinary debate, able to involve the society. Scientific debate on local food systems tried to highlight the social impacts of traditional or innovative food system organization on communities, even starting from existing practices.

However there is a strong feeling that, even for a strong dynamic of change taking place at present, in the fields there is a lot more innovation than normally encoded and debated.

We have now the need to bring out the practices that proved to be effective carriers of solutions, in order to better understand them also from different scientific view points. In this perspective, the aim of this working group is to give voice to the leading actors of the change, the ones working in the field, by selecting that practices that may deeply change the way food and farming practices are designed, organized and managed. Those carrying innovation from the point of view of markets, relations with society, environmental impact, flexible and local food choice; so to give models transferable in other contexts.

Aim of this working group is also to introduce practices in a context of international research, able to analyze and valorise them by making practices instantly more visible and easier to understand, so to facilitate their transfer in a logic of partnership between field innovators and scientists.

Specifically, contributions should address the following topics:

- Who is the starter/engine of the innovation;
- What the needs that stimulated the born and evolution of the innovation;
- What kind of "revolutionary solution" you want to describe? (description of the practice);
- Main areas of innovation: environment, culture, education, governance, social justice, urban planning, transition, ...;
- What kind of impact (qualitative and quantitative) the innovation has on the territory/society?;
- When did you introduced the innovation?/In which phase it's now (project, start up, maturity, consolidated)?;
- Strengths;
- Critical points;
- Estimated investment required (economic, human resources, time ...);
- Replicability

Will be accepted abstract illustrating a revolutionary/innovative best practice in at least one of the above mentioned areas (environment, social justice, culture, transition,...). Proposed abstracts will participate at the AiCARE Revolutionary Solution – Social Innovation for Agriculture of the future Award. Will be accepted contributions from different disciplines (economic and sociological research, policy analysis,...) and from a wide range of subjects: researchers/academics, technical and professionals, organizations, agencies/institutions in a framework of multidisciplinary and knowledge exchange.

Abstracts for this working group can be submitted to:

Easy Chair [AgUrb2015 submission page](#)

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Angela Galasso, AiCARE Italian Agency for Responsible and Ethical Countryside and Agriculture, Italy
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Working Group 21

Urban forestry, Green infrastructure

Cities are ecosystems: they are open and dynamic systems that utilize, transform and release material and energy. Cities develop and adapt as they interact with human beings and with other ecosystems. Therefore, they must be managed and protected like any other ecosystem. This need, and for the inclusion of community rights in territorial and landscape policies has resulted in the concept of "green infrastructure", i.e. an interconnected network of green spaces that conserves natural ecosystem values and functions and provides associated benefits to human populations.

In Europe, a multi-scale planning approach is emerging, ranging from local community level to regional, national and international platforms. The European Green Belt, the Pan-European Ecological Network and the European Green Infrastructure Strategy, launched in 2013, are good examples of an integrated series of directives, tools and actions oriented to implement multiple planning strategies and national/local actions on green infrastructure, especially urban forests. The European Green Infrastructure Strategy states that green infrastructure serves the interests of both people and nature. This definition completely reverses the urban-centric vision of the 20th century, by assuming that human activities and cities are hosted in nature and not the opposite.

The implications of this emerging vision are crucial in scientific and policy terms, and for all the disciplines dealing with the elements of green infrastructure, particularly for urban and periurban forestry, agroforestry and agriculture.

Urban agriculture is already recognized by citizens and local authorities as a strategic approach to combine a mosaic of green spaces in and around cities, contributing to the stabilization of migrant societies from rural areas, establishing natural ecosystems in cities and providing highly competitive markets close to consumers. The existing stakeholder platforms around this discipline offer a basis through which to incorporate trees, agroforestry and forests, which are critical elements of green infrastructure, in integrated land use, enabling urban and peri-urban forestry to make a direct economic contribution in terms of jobs and income generation, as well as institutional savings.

There is still a need, however, to discuss means and modalities for breaking the barriers between the different disciplines and ensure that there is full integration between the different elements that compose the green infrastructure of cities and in the interconnected urban-rural socio-ecosystem. Any framework for action should encompass both planning and management levels and aim to identify viable actions that can be adopted and implemented by the different stakeholders in the public and private sector.

Abstracts for this working group can be submitted to:

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Second International Conference on
AGRICULTURE IN AN URBANIZING SOCIETY

Reconnecting Agriculture and Food Chains to Societal Needs

14 - 17 SEPTEMBER 2015 | ROME | ITALY

Working Group 22

Food System Transitions: Cities and the Strategic Management of Food Practices

Socio-technical systems like food are composed of and shaped by the everyday practices that are performed in specific places. Transitioning large-scale systems involves changing the practices that constitute and reproduce them. This is true of the food system, which is enacted by the repetitive performances of everyday food activities (e.g., shopping, cooking, discarding) in communities.

Cities are uniquely positioned to change food practices, and by doing so transition socio-technical regimes like food to sustainability. Cities are tightly bundled agglomerations of everyday practices, and are the stages on which healthier and more sustainable practices are performed, repeatedly, until they become normal, everyday activities. Municipal policies, programs, and infrastructure influence practices, while activists, spiritual leaders, media, teachers and other urban thought leaders shape our understanding of practices. By strategically influencing food practices, cities can potentially advance public health, improve the environment and economy, and ultimately transform the food system.

This working group explores the potential for cities to advance transitions through the strategic management of everyday food practices, arguing that a social practice framework is a more productive lens to examine the urban levers of food system change than transition theories that emphasize the disruptive potential of semi-protected niches. We will investigate the extent to which theories of social practice shed light on how changes in food practices transform the food system, the role of cities in fostering transformation through the support of sustainable food practices, and methods to map practices and the elements that shape them.

We intend to explore how cities and civil society groups have facilitated the adoption, implementation, and normalization of practices through changes to the elements of practices – the meanings attributed to a practice, its material dimensions, and the competences required for practitioners to engage in the practice. We will examine food practices that represent changes in local practices that affect different segments of the dominant food regime (e.g., urban agriculture, shopping at farmers markets, food recycling), which will illustrate how city governments and city-based civil society groups have influenced the adoption, implementation and normalization of sustainable food practices. We invite presentations of specific cases, proposed methodologies for food practice scholarship, and discussions about the social practice framework.

Abstracts for this working group can be submitted to:

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Working Group 23

Conceptualising and Assessing City Region Food Systems

In the context of rapid urbanization, a major challenge for the 21st century, cities are by far the biggest markets for agriculture and food industries. However, the food and nutrition security of (poor) urban populations is still at risk as a consequence of market volatility and rapid food price increases. In this context, there is an urgent need to develop tools, methodologies and approaches to address the challenges of food and nutrition security, agriculture and natural resource management. Moreover, there is the need to enable local authorities to ensure governance of dynamic and sustainable food systems, contributing to the realization of the right to food and the promotion of sustainable and healthy diets, with strong urban-rural linkages and enabling the involvement of all key local stakeholders, with particular attention to small-scale farmers.

In recent years, the concept City region food systems (CRFS) has emerged as promising approach to improve local food system sustainability, while taking into account ecological and socio-economic aspects. This is evidenced by, among other things, the growing number of cities worldwide which have developed their own urban food strategies and policies. Additionally, new governance structures for CRFS are being put into place, such as Food policy councils which spread from Canada and the US to Europe, and multi-stakeholder policy processes initiated elsewhere.

City region food systems encompass a given geographical region that includes a more or less concentrated urban centre and its surrounding peri-urban and rural hinterland; a regional landscape across which flows of people, goods, resources, and ecosystem services are integrally managed and provide a basis for sustainable livelihoods and resilient local economies. In this WG it is proposed to discuss conceptual approaches and assessment methods of city region food systems, with particular attention to the following issues:

- *How to identify weaknesses in existing food chains, gaps to be bridged and bottlenecks to be removed for more resilient and inclusive food systems?*
- *How to improve access to adequate food for the vulnerable and poor urban population, and enhance market access for the smallholder farmers in urban, peri-urban and rural areas?*
- *How to support local governments and multi-stakeholder bodies such as Food policy councils in taking informed decisions on food planning and prioritize investments to make the CRFS more sustainable and resilient and improve livelihoods of rural and urban dwellers?*

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Working Group 24

Revaluing institutional food procurement

A survey in the literature and praxis of public food procurement discloses two main narratives. The first, one can say, it is of 'instrumentalist character' in which the power of the public plate relies on the states' economic, institutional and regulatory authority to convincing people to follow trends. Within this account, procurement policies should attempt to 'rectify' the contradictions of industrialized food systems. A major task in this articulation is to explain the role and identity of states and cities in supporting and creating procurement policies towards the 'common good', generally attached to sustainability concerns. While the state represents a main pillar of the instrumentalist procurement narrative, the second component, we can call it the reformist agenda, also includes other organizations like well founded NGO's and United Nations Institutions. It is based more fundamentally on the idea that 'responsible institutional' food procurement inspires two waves of reform. In one hand, it promotes the creation of bounded markets for smallholder farmers (most of the times coupled with localization and rural development narratives) while strengthening access to adequate food (often associated with nutritional, cultural and right based discourses of consumption). On the other hand, it enables complex patterns of (inter) action and organization linking food system actors at multiple levels and scales, which in turn, enables food democracy to emerge in policy processes, governance structures, procurement and supplying practices.

In addition to these main narratives, the same survey also discloses that responsible institutional food procurement has increased amid municipalities, public schools and restaurants. At the forefront of this endeavor are large cities that represent both opportunities for scaling up and bottlenecks for smallholder farmers to supply food. But, urban settings are releasing the 'city food imagination' that is often expressed in food strategies, creative tendering processes and supportive policies. And farmers are re-discovering the value of producers' cooperatives, short circuits and other forms of cooperation in processing and delivering activities.

In short, there are a variety of mechanisms and devices for public and institutional intervention. They can offer valuable insights on how to build up public food purchases and more sustainable, just and efficient food strategies. Consequently, we would like to hear experiences in responsible procurement practices by cities, different regions of the world and farmers, as well as small and large urban centers, comprising low-, medium or high levels of income. We also look forward submission of abstracts from NGOs and Multilateral organizations. In particular, this working group will give priority to contributions addressing the following themes:

- *At theoretical level we welcome analysis on: how institutional food procurement is driven by different geo-histories, goals, structures and processes; anatomy of public food procurement agenda setting and the politics of scaling up; governance structures and processes designed to enabling change, coordination, learning and adaptation; how diverse and contested practices of procuring, supplying and consuming might lead to new perspectives - or political action - on sustainable, just, and secure food systems, participation and food democracy.*

- *From a food a more practical perspective we encourage papers discussing: the role, enablers and barriers of responsible institutional food procurement on integrating smallholder producers, women and youth into institutional markets; the contest and struggles between and among actors and public agents for elaborating rules, budgets, nutritional guidelines, quality standards and experimenting at local level; spin-off impacts on local food markets, rural development and the livelihood of smallholder producers; the processes of embedding culture in public tendering; the re-emergency of farmers cooperatives and collective devices.*

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Working Group 25

Postharvest Aspects of Local Food Supply Chains of Urban Centres

Local food systems are essential contributors to food and nutrition security in urban centres, as well as to the overall growth of city-region economies. However, significant opportunities exist to improve the environmental sustainability and social inclusion characteristics of such food systems.

In industrialized economies, local food supply chains ("local" commonly refers to food produced by or sourced from nearby farms and producers, yet the structure of these supply chains can take numerous forms) have recently re-emerged as an alternative to conventional food systems (e.g. based on economies of scale). The supply chains of urban food systems in developing countries vary by location, commodity and consumer. In many urban centres food is sourced within the country and then traded and transported through a fairly informal but often well-organised chain to urban centres. In some locations some types of food (usually staple commodities) may also have to be imported from other countries during some periods of the year or in response to poor harvests or civil disturbance. However, in all these situations, the postharvest aspects of the value chain are important for ensuring the functioning, quality and sustainability of the food supply chain. Urban food systems in many rapidly urbanising developing countries are becoming increasingly dynamic, and postharvest activities (e.g. transformation into innovative processed food) are playing an increasingly important role.

This working group aims to explore the diverse postharvest elements of local urban food systems, focusing on what is of interest for developing countries. Contributions to this working group may be in the form of study reports, empirical analyses, descriptions of innovative arrangements, or theories, targeting areas related to, but not limited to, the following topics:

- Analysis of the postharvest systems of an urban local food supply chain
- Environmental sustainability of postharvest stages (e.g. energy, water and other input use in packing, processing, storing, transporting, marketing) of an urban local food supply chain
- Transferring the true "environmental cost" of food through postharvest means (e.g. labelling, pricing).
- Social sustainability aspects of the postharvest stages of urban food supply chains (e.g. equitable profit distribution among value chain actors, working conditions in postharvest operations)
- Unpacking the complexity of food quality (including food safety) perceptions among different consumers and its effect on the postharvest stages of local food systems
- Innovative certification systems influencing postharvest stages of urban food supply chains
- Influence of consumers' needs and demands on postharvest practices within the urban food supply chains
- Challenges associated with, and for, small local producers and informal markets in urban food systems
- Reducing postharvest food losses to improve the social, economic and environmental sustainability of urban food systems
- Contribution of social innovations for overcoming postharvest constraints in urban food supply chains
- Exploiting comparative advantages of postharvest characteristics of local food value chains

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