

Report

City Food Policy: citizens, farmers & workers - Enhancing inclusion, innovation and sustainability in food planning.



**Workshop organised in Rome,
March 20–21, 2014**

**In partnership with CURSA,
hosted by INEA**



Consorzio Universitario
per la Ricerca
Socioeconomica
e per l'Ambiente



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SUMMARY

As cities expand, the needs of farmers, citizens and workers increased in urban as well as in rural areas. While impacts of the food and financial crisis affect both rural and urban populations, the urban poor have been among the hardest hit. Citizens are almost exclusively dependent on food purchases and variations in food prices and income directly translate into diminished purchasing power and rising rates of food insecurity, thus compromising dietary quantity and quality. The issues linked with urban food policy call for a framework integrating a wide range of sustainable food and agriculture system elements into a community at a site, or neighbourhood or on city region wide scale.

A growing number of local governments across the world are rebuilding their food systems through innovative public policy. Increased attention for urban food systems responds to the need to place food higher on the urban agenda. Urban food systems are an increasingly important driver for many other urban policies such as health and nutrition, education, occupation, tourism, transport, waste and water management, adaptation to climate change and social welfare. A paradigm shift in both planning and policy formulation is required in order to ensure access to food, foster inclusion and innovation, improve environmental management, enhance rural-urban linkages and provide policy guidance at both national and municipal level.

This 2 days-workshop focused on imaging an inclusive, innovative and sustainable urban food policies and on comparing experiences in planning and implementation of food strategies. Three working groups discussed the following subjects that represent the pillars of Eating City Platform: Production, Consumption and Human Labour.

The workshop involved stakeholders (e.g, actors of food chain, scholars, and authorities) sharing views and practices in order to draw lessons for inclusive, innovative and sustainable food urban planning.

All participants have worked over a common declaration that will be addressed to the European MEPs and decision makers after the elections in UE Parliament.

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THE INTERVENTIONS

Aurora Cavallo, Francesca Giarè, Davide Marino (DiBT - University of Molise and Cursa, Inea), presenting : Cities as socio-ecological systems for feeding farmers, citizens and workers: the agricultural metropolis of Rome.

The case of Rome shows that if the city was the largest agricultural municipality in Europe until 1992, 2/3 of the urbanised surface has been build up in the last 50 years. The number of farms has strongly decreased from 1990 to 2000, when it started to slowly reverse, as the city faced the "new food equation" encompassing cities and agrifood systems, to improve local management of food systems, to integrate agricultural production into urban activity, towards the resilience of city-region territory taken as a whole.

Elena Di Bella (Province of Turin, Italy), presenting the "basket of typical products of Torino's province": A first step of a long path and a strategical project starting on 2002 year.

This food territorial marketing project has highlighted the possible trend evolution of local agriculture from exclusive to inclusive showing with facts that food governance is not only related to agricultural policy, nor to urban agriculture projects. It must not be seen as a project but as a process: in a decade, it has laid the foundation of a food agenda in the metropolitan area of Torino and Piedmont region.

Damien Conarè (Alimentation du monde- chair, Unesco - France) presenting : SURFOOD Sustainable Urban Food Systems".

To regain control on their food system and build alternative, urban stakeholders need conceptual frameworks and assessment tools, to define their strategies, monitor and evaluate their interventions. Surfood project, launched by Agropolis Foundation involve 25 research units, working within a trans-disciplinary approach in 4 "laboratory cities" in France(Montpellier), Morocco (Rabbat), Senegal (Dakar) and Vietnam (Hanoi).

Giuseppe Barbera (Palermo Municipality, Italy) presenting : Peri-urban agriculture, nutrition, social participation: The strategic agricultural plan Concadoro for the protection and enhancement of peri-urban agricultural areas of the City of Palermo.

Concadoro is a public-private partnership launched to develop peri-urban agriculture in the "Conca d'oro" (Gold shell) plain surrounding the city of Palermo, in order to connect small farmers and food producers, sustain short supply chain, create jobs according to fair and responsible economic models, protect and promote traditional landscape , reinforce city-countryside-sea relationships.

Chang Tianle (Bejing Farmers market, China) presenting : Beijing Farmers' Market: Centre of a Sustainable Food Community.

China has faced food scandals in the last years. Soil pollution due to an increasing use of chemical in agriculture is becoming critical, Small farmers don't access easily to the market, in particular, to organic food market. In such a scenario, alternative food networks are developing, including a national network of farmers' market, among which Beijing farmer's market, which attracts as many as 2,000 people over a four-hour session despite it is homeless, moving to a new location for each session, advertised on social media.

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THE DIALOGUE: SHARING IDEAS

The working sessions have been facilitated in order to allow the three different groups to discuss the priorities set up in plenaries, bringing deeper insights. Each group has made 3 main statements, starting from the priorities selected by the participants. The objective of the whole meeting was to write a common declaration from all the participants.

Working session I - From farm to kitchen: how to build urban food infrastructures?

Building Community Kitchen or Community Food Centre that integrate food activities with the local agri-food provisioning area, enforcing urban procurement of local food and identifying the policy and regulatory environment of market.

Facilitators: Benedetta Di Donato and Judita Peterlin.

Participants: Sabrina Giuca, Stefano Panunzi, Silvia Paolini, Emanuela Rosio, Roberta Sonnino, Salvatore Stingo, Chang Tianle.

Food production and distribution is a highly regulated field: local authorities have a very important role, as they can use their position to remove at least in part barriers, facilitate the development of networks and develop opportunities for the valorisation of local products and alternative food networks. Urban food planning has to develop innovative strategies to influence the consumer and cook relationship to food, both among out-of-home food professionals and among households.

Food systems as a catalyst: procedures, tools and training will be designed to improve the adjustment to real food needs, the food choice (also connected to religions), the meal planning, the menu composition (in terms of safety, quality, nutrition), the final use of unconsumed food and waste, increasing the role of local food may help form a sense of community well-being and enhancing inclusion.

Main statements:

- 1. To facilitate new linkages between actors in the urban food systems.**
- 2. To promote flexible policies to recognize and empower local and small scale actors and facilitate local food procurement.**
- 3. To decrease food waste by increasing food sharing.**

Food democracy lays on the empowerment of all actors, beyond the fragmentation of interests over the food supply chain. Power sharing is needed in urban food systems in order to raise the sense of responsibility and participation fostering bottom up approaches.

To reach such objective, open, transparent and participatory food policies (ie. The role of food council, Consigli del cibo in Pisa) are needed to support the needs of farmers, citizens and more generally all workers involved in food chain, in order to ensure food security, access to land and ecosystem services management both within and outside cities. In particular fair competitive playing field must be warranted between small-scale producers and larger industries, with market rules which do not over-burden small-scale producers.

Food policies necessarily play a role at multi-scale level (local/regional/international/national) and consequently, they must integrate the relationship between local and global markets. In such view, it could be recognized a legal possibility in public procurement for local food chain actors (farmers, makers, caterers etc.).

Special emphasis is put on the promotion of food sharing initiatives to reduce food waste, in particular with the use of ICT.

Key messages:

- To connect up local stakeholders, citizens and institutions to create trust, new linkages and more efficient exchanges and strategies (e.g. policy forum);
- To develop local food role in urban planning strategies, including facilities, as a food assets. The impact of these infrastructures usually goes beyond the mere commercial and into a higher social cohesion of the population in these areas;
- To address gaps in local food processing, storage and distribution infrastructure by exploring possibilities that might include a food business incubator or food hub;
- To build recognition of short Food Supply Chain and Alternative Food Network, they can deliver solutions to many cross-departmental policy challenges, especially at a local level (e.g. food sharing experiences, Community Supported Agriculture initiatives, Farmers Market, community kitchen, solidarity purchased groups);
- To support and enable all forms of urban and peri-urban agriculture and make stronger connections with all parts of the food system;
- To facilitate local sourcing in public procurement through more effective communication and sharing of experiences (e.g. updating of existing green public procurement criteria for food and catering services, and, possibly, introduction of social considerations into public procurement within the broader framework of a socially responsible purchasing policy);
- To develop a fresh food financing initiatives and to drive public catering services to cook whole foods for nutritious meals and to increase the nutrition and cooking knowledge;
- To facilitate the transition from a charitable food model to one based on principles of a just and sustainable food system (e.g. food recovery programs and initiatives to channel surplus edible food to people);
- To decrease food waste throughout the food system increasing food sharing and recapture in the food chain (e.g. expand food scraps pilot program to all single-family residential areas, develop strategies to reduce food packaging in city facilities).

Working session 2 - Beyond the food pyramid towards food self-sufficiency

Searching for a new paradigm for a territorial food planning able to improve the local management of agri-food systems, both local and global and evaluate the local food provisioning area.

Facilitators: Davide Pellegrino and Natalija Lekic.

Participants : Gianluca Brunori, Marcello Cerasola, Maria Chiara Giorda, Efstathios Grigoriadis, Anna Lei, Giacomo Lepri, Simona Limentani, Maria Grazia Mammuccini, Dalia Mattioni, Anna Palazzo, Andrea Pezzana, Gianni Scudo, Ntourus Sotirios, Michela Zanardi.

Urban and peri-urban agroecosystems have the potential in cities to regulate climate, protect against hazards, meet energy needs, support agriculture, prevent soil erosion and offer opportunities for recreation and cultural inspiration, by protecting the agricultural land around cities, optimizing the role of farming in providing urban and ecosystem services other than food, and strengthening urban-rural linkages. Resilient city-region food systems are also characterized by lower urban footprints, or foodprints, and reduced emissions related to food transport and food waste.

Neighbourhood food: searching for a new paradigm for a territorial food planning able to improve local management of local and global agri-food systems (both local and global) and evaluate local food provisioning area.

Main statements:

1. **Policy: Urban food policy should use plural-disciplinary approach based on subsidiarity and participation in order to create sustainable food system.**
2. **Economy: Urban food system should rely on place-based economy and landscapes, supporting employment, sustainable food production and consumption, with the focus on public goods.**
3. **Education : Sustainable food habits should be promoted through life long learning, social dialogue fostering and cultural diversity respecting.**

Among the ideas that attracted wide consensus among the participants, urban food policies should rebuild links between cities and countryside in order to promote sustainable production and consumption, taking care of health, environmental issues, respecting cultural diversity, putting emphasis on local employment.

Several areas of improvement have been identified, such as a market that stimulate small scale production and local food production competitiveness and become accessible to local products. Globalization put high pressure on local products' prices that should rely on quality as a differentiation marker to remain competitive (quality as an advantage of local products). This focus on food quality instead of food quantity should be directly related with efforts to reduce food waste and losses and return value into food.

To reach this objective, measures must be taken to support local producers, to solve land access problems, to support farmers in terms of source prices (water, land..) and also with appropriate economic support (bank credits, subsidies) to reduce bureaucratic obstacles and to enable small scale producers to meet food safety standards. Among the initiatives that could be taken by local authorities the use of public owned land-fields to maintain farmland, promoting multi-functional agriculture dealing with different issues such as food production, employment, facilities, education, health and environmental protection. Specific emphasis on sustainable agriculture promotion should be made in areas with ecological problems. Urban, peri-urban and rural farming production should also be integrated into an overall picture of agriculture, emphasizing local employment.

In parallel, social dialogue should take place, on the various aspects related to food issues, to involve citizens, raising awareness on their own responsibility and role as co-producers to promote food systems biodiversity and sustainability.

Indeed food is a vector to promote healthy life style and prevent diseases and also a vector of cultural identity. Therefore it is important to map food needs, taking into account social issues in urban areas, and use communication tools, such as food labelling, to define styles, historical and culture connections, using food cultural identity to allow different communities to understand respectively each other and to bridge.

Key messages:

- To assess and planning initiatives to integrate food and non-food resource issues in ways that are participatory, effective and result oriented (e.g. to fix quantitative goals - specific actions and timeline -may include a percentage of national territory that has participated in integrated urban rural ecosystem assessment and planning processes);
- To recognize local production in the form of urban and peri-urban agriculture as one of those sources which increase food and income security at household level and buffer shocks to food price hikes, market distortions, and imported supplies (e.g. green infrastructures to bring protected land into food production and to create investment vehicles for long-term agricultural production on protected land);
- To create novel functioning ecosystems that generate many provisioning, regulating, supporting and cultural services (such as local food, climate regulation, water purification, habitat for biodiversity, recreation, etc.) that enhance urban inhabitants' well-being (e.g. regenerating and restoring brownfields and other non-used urban land, surface and groundwater resources);
- To foster procurement policy that supports a new food system that in turn benefits small and family farmers and increases urban and rural food security in both the short and long term (e.g.

- access to business, legal and financial support and advice to create efficiencies to produce required documentation, land banking, payment for ES);
- To plan and support small scale land holder projects as ways to apply their strengths in the local setting, both in and around the city often cannot compete with conventional and large scale farms outside the city;
 - To foster city-region food systems as they offer at the same time opportunities for resource recovery and climate change adaptation (e.g. designating low lying areas and flood plains for agriculture to prevent construction and reduce the impact of floods);
 - To develop technical assistance programs or market-based solutions that enable farmers to protect natural resources (e.g. environmentally preferable purchasing protocols, composting and food scrap recycling at local scale programs);
 - To manage the post harvest, post processing and post consumer food waste as a key strategy for urban food security.

Working group 3 - Considering the flows: how to reduce food miles and increase food travellers?

Most potential visitors want to taste fresh local products, traditional dishes, or regional specialities (even when they came back at home), as well as the farm and the places where those products are grown or made and the linked landscapes.

Facilitators: Ella Weggen and Aurora Cavallo

Participants : Giuseppe Barbera, Damien Conaré, Egidio Dansero, Elena di Bella, Raffaella Di Napoli, Lilian Pellegrino, Luca Ruini, Pierre Vuarin.

The experience of products, farms, farmers' markets, agritourism, wineries, restaurants, agricultural landscapes have to become a reason to visit a city. Food as tourist's attraction can increase the local economy.

Food is a cities' attraction: city food policy calls for changes encouraging tourism models to focus on local food (food travellers vs food miles), even as a tool for sustainability.

Main statements:

- 1. To promote legal possibility in public procurement for local food.**
- 2. To stimulate tourist to buy local food, by creating a programme to integrate local or regional food and stimulate cities to use food as a touristic attraction.**
- 3.**
- 4. To enhance network between local authorities and local producers and caterers to promote sustainable, diverse and dynamic local food.**

Food governance must not be reduced to a research field or experimental exercise, nor to an œno-gastronomy experience. It is a daily exercise of democracy linking all actors from producers to consumers at local and global level.

By mapping local food activities as a tool of consciousness and awareness, both principles of subsidiarity, stating that food ought to be handled by the smallest, lowest, or least centralised authority capable of addressing it effectively and sovereignty which asserts the right of people to define their own food systems, should be applied at urban level, to promote new social agriculture model in order to reduce poverty, self supplying and food security.

Both principles should be introduced into public procurement legal aspects, in particular in relation with local food integration in territorial food supply chains and public food services in school, prisons, hospitals, restaurant. They should also be safeguarded within the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP) agreement that is presently being negotiated between the European

Union and the United States and that aims at removing trade barriers in a wide range of economic sectors to make it easier to buy and sell goods and services between the EU and the US.

In parallel, new technologies (ex. ICT) should be used to network and promote sustainable, diverse and dynamic local food systems and keep them attractive to stimulate tourist to buy local food (i.e compensation with local food vouchers, urban gardeners and traditional landscapes, food guide tours eg Hungry City).

Key messages:

- To connect up local stakeholders, citizens and institutions to create trust, new linkages and more efficient exchanges and strategies (e.g. local marketing networks, labelling, a “buy local” campaign involving restaurant, farmers’ market, local farmers, producers’ cooperatives);
- To build local food brand and emphasise local identity and authenticity in branding and promotional strategies (e.g. list the place of origin on the label and encourage consistent cities origin by producers, edible landscapes);
- To provide links between people in a community, they bring the consumers (including end consumers such as visitors and intermediate consumers such as hotels and restaurants) and producers closer together (e.g. farmers markets can become a time for socialization in communities as well as providing a focal event for visitors);
- To add value to local produce before it is exported (e.g. bottle and package food locally, consider using distinctive local packaging in order to reinforce local brand identity);
- To encourage private/public partnership in order to introduce local food in tourism industries (e.g. hoteliers and restaurants need to purchase and promote local foods, produce and beverages);
- To introduce travellers and customers in local food system (e.g. the role of Information and Communication Technologies, selling directly to consumers via farm web shops, direct mailing, farmers’ and produce markets using farm door sales, utilising newsletters, websites and the internet to create an on going relationship with consumers).

THE COMMON DECLARATION

The following is a declaration presenting the results of a 2 days-workshop focused on imaging inclusive, innovative and sustainable urban food policies. This declaration is a summary of the ideas shared by all participants to reach these goals.

This declaration summarizes the outcomes of presentations and discussions that involved stakeholders of food chain, scholars and authorities of 15 cities in EU, United States and China sharing views and practices in order to draw lessons and compare experiences in planning and implementation of food strategies. Starting from three main topics all participants propose a common agenda addresses to the EU, national and cities decision makers.

Enhancing inclusion, innovation and sustainability in food planning

“A paradigm shift in both planning and policy formulation is required in order to ensure access to food, foster inclusion and innovation, improve environmental management, enhance rural-urban linkages and provide policy guidance at both national and municipal level. The character of urban food policy food calls for a concerted commitment at both EU and macro regional, regional and local level.

A growing number of local governments across the world are rebuilding their food systems through innovative public policy.

The issues linked with urban food policy call for a framework integrating a wide range of sustainable food and agriculture system elements into a community at a site, neighbourhood or city-region level, beyond the boundaries of the urban areas itself, including towns, semi-urban areas, and outlying rural lands. Cities are a part of social-ecological systems and agricultural production is an integrated urban activity that contributes to the resilience of cities. Most future urban expansion will occur in areas of low economic and human capacity, which will constrain the conservation of biodiversity and management of ecosystem services. City-region food systems are an increasingly important driver for many other urban policies such as health and nutrition, education, landscape management, transport, environment, waste and water management, disaster risk reduction, adaptation to climate change and social welfare.

To implement wide-ranging food policies cities should have a designated department - at macro regional level - that works as a vehicle for change, policy making, facilitating projects, providing consultancy, training, communication affecting all stakeholders in the food system able to manage the following issues:

- To promote a territorial agri-food system planning to improve the local management of agri-food systems, those are both local and global;
- To support the needs of farmers, citizens and workers involved in food chain within open, transparent and participatory food policies;
- To guarantee the need for diversification over-burdens small-scale producers, preventing a competitive playing field with larger industries;
- To ensure food security, access to land and ecosystem services management both within and outside cities;
- To recognize the role agriculture as both a large scale user of land and a provider of landscapes. The adaptation of agricultural practices to local conditions has led to a wide variety of landscapes;
- To experiment linking research to policy-making in the field of sustainable food consumption and production and to support research programs on local food systems;
- To integrate food system knowledge into a robust and comprehensive education programs.”

Eating cities symbolize the metabolism of glocapolis, where the challenge of III millennium is happiness in food biodiversity, reducing waste to zero, promoting food democracy and justice in local/global ambivalence and interdependence.

Stefano Panunzi

THE GALERY

