



5th AESOP Sustainable Food Planning Conference

Innovations in urban food systems

October 28th-29th 2013 **Montpellier**

The 5th AESOP Conference on Sustainable Food Planning will be held in Montpellier, France, on October 28-29, 2013. This conference will focus on innovations in urban food systems, with specific sessions on flows, land and governance.

Building upon the first four Sustainable Food Planning Conferences in Almere (2009), Brighton (2010), Cardiff (2011) and Berlin (2012), this conference will promote discussions between researchers and practitioners from across disciplines, approaches, and national provenances in the global North and the global South.

This event will be organised by the two research labs UMR Innovation and UMR Moisa (joint research units from INRA, CIRAD and Supagro) in connection with the UNESCO Chair on World Food Systems and the research program SURFOOD (Sustainable Urban Food) funded by the Agropolis Foundation.

Organising committee:

UMR Innovation (Coline Perrin, Christophe Soulard, Jean-Marc Touzard, Clément Arnal),
UMR Moisa (Paule Moustier, Sandrine Costa, Nicolas Bricas),
UMR Art-Dev (Max Rousseau)
UNESCO Chair on World Food Systems (Damien Conaré, Julie Debru),
Cardiff University (Kevin Morgan)

Conference theme

Urban food systems have received increasing attention in recent years and there is a growing international community of scholars from a range of different disciplines working in this promising field. Food policies can indeed improve urban sustainability, in particular in relation to issues of health and nutrition, education, economic development, environment and social cohesion. At the same time, conversely, cities and urban regions are gradually emerging as relevant scales and major forces driving the sustainability of agro-food systems and fostering food justice. Community initiatives and public policies are addressing the topic of urban food security in cities of the global North and the global South, albeit in very different contexts and in correspondingly different ways.

This 5th conference will focus on innovations and drivers for change: how can the actors of various value chains supply more sustainable food to cities? Considering that rural-urban dynamics are rapidly evolving, what roles can linkages with rural areas play in food and nutrition security for urban citizens? What processes and actors are best placed to promote the integration of food issues in urban policies? What is the role of consumers? To what extent are the global issues of climate change and biodiversity taken into account in urban food planning? And last but not least, what role does cultural diversity play in new urban food strategies?



The conference will be a platform to discuss conceptual and methodological advances in urban food systems and to draw lessons from both successful and failed experiences to develop policy proposals for more sustainable urban food systems. Participants will emphasize evaluative, systemic, comparative or territorial approaches, in order to cross the traditional disciplinary boundaries within both public policy (agriculture, planning, environment, etc.) and scientific disciplines (agronomy, economics, sociology, geography, urban planning, nutrition, political science, management, etc.). The specific focus on innovation highlights the management of change, the dissemination and the scaling-up of local experiences and knowledge transfers in both directions between North and South. Case studies are welcome, particularly where they evaluate the impact of innovations on urban food systems and provide interesting theoretical or methodological insights that help us to understand urban foodscapes in comparative perspective.

This 5th Sustainable Food planning Conference will feature three parallel tracks on flows, land and governance.

Parallel tracks

1. Flows: Reframing Urban Foodsheds

By taking into account the flows of people, goods, materials and knowledge that create urban food systems and reshape rural/urban linkages, systemic approaches help us to rethink or reframe urban foodsheds.

- How do long- and short- distance *migrations* change the demand for food in the current context of a booming urban population at the global scale? How do they impact urban diets and linkages to rural areas? Do promote an innovative entrepreneurship in the food sector?
- Considering the various *food value chains*, can we evaluate the flows of products and define an ideal food provisioning area for the city? Who are the intermediaries shaping these flows? How is it possible to create fair and sustainable markets for local products? Which links exist or could be created between global and local scales, and between the commodity sector and alternative food networks? Are logistical issues different according to the size of the city?
- From an ecological perspective, can an analysis of the *urban/territorial metabolism* of the flows in and out of cities help to save resources and foster closed-loop innovations, for example on food waste management or grey water recycling?
- How can we imagine and *map urban foodsheds* and the various types of flows structuring urban food systems? Can we map different types of food access (diversity, price)? Can we distinguish different types of urban agricultural systems based on various rural/urban linkages?

2. Land: Farming for the City

Beside landscape, leisure or environmental functions, food production remains an important function of urban agriculture in the context of the “New Food Equation”. However, preserving farmland from further urban encroachment remains a major challenge for the urban planning community.

- How can farmers who supply the city secure *access to productive land* in suburban areas? How does land tenure impact urban food systems? Does the urban food issue promote

innovations in land-use planning, leasehold agreements and land trusts? Can the farmland that produces healthy food around and for the city be considered a common pool resource? Are farmland protection policies connected to or renewed by urban or community food strategies?

- In highly urbanised settings, which *farming systems* can produce healthy and sustainable food? How do farmers adapt to an urban environment? How do they take advantage of urban sources of income? What is the real environmental impact of urban agriculture practiced on rooftops, in towers, and in containers? How can productive buildings, gardens and public spaces be designed? How can healthy food be produced on wastelands and brownfield sites? Is there an emerging interdisciplinary research field bringing together agronomy and urban planning?

3. Governance: Towards Food Justice?

Numerous innovative urban or community food strategies have emerged over the last decade. However, the framing of the food issue, the actions implemented and the stakeholders involved are different in each city. Can cross-sectoral and multi-stakeholder governance foster food justice – or even the right to food – in tandem with social, spatial and environmental justice? What are the barriers and challenges to an enhanced participatory governance of urban food strategies?

- How can the *diversity of local actors* beyond the participation of government, market and civil society representatives be integrated into food planning? On the agricultural side, how can urban gardeners, alternative and conventional farmers dialogue in order to improve urban food systems? On the side of the urban population, do food strategies acknowledge the formal and informal initiatives from various ethnic and social groups? Are the various food cultures and the interests of the most disadvantaged urban residents taken into consideration by urban food policies, and how? To what extent are community gardens and urban agriculture the unwitting agents of urban gentrification?
- What is the *appropriate scale* to set up an urban food strategy: the neighbourhood, city, city-region or bio-region? What arrangements and innovations are needed to better articulate the different policy sectors and levels of government around the food issue and to facilitate the "scaling up" of local initiatives?
- How should the *time span* needed to implement a successful urban food strategy be taken into consideration? Research highlights that innovative policies sometimes stop with the change of mayor, or that cities that are now praised for their food policy have seen it develop over many years or even over several decades. It would therefore be interesting to retrace the history of the various projects related to food in a single city and to compare the trajectories of several cities regarding the urban food question. What factors and actors are necessary for a successful urban food strategy to coalesce?

This session in particular will identify lessons from concrete experiences with the aim of developing policy recommendations for more sustainable urban food strategies.

Abstract submission

Each scholar can only submit and deliver only one paper. It is possible to be co-author of further submissions, but these must be presented by other researchers. **Please indicate the track in which you hope to present your paper.**

Extended abstracts should contain 600-1000 words and include the following:

- Title
- Intended conference track
- Introduction with: research question(s), purpose and originality of the paper
- Method(s) / approach
- Results
- Conclusions, clearly indicating the paper's contribution to the session theme and answering the research question
- Keywords (max. 5)
- List of key references (10 max)

Abstract submission only on <http://www1.montpellier.inra.fr/aesop5/index.php/call-for-abstracts>