

FEEDING THE WORLD'S METROPOLISES

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PREPARATION PROCESS

PRELIMINARY PROCESSES

Helena [Local Co-Rapporteur] and Reuben [Dutch YPP] together with various academic staff from Wageningen compiled academic material for the basis of the workshop.

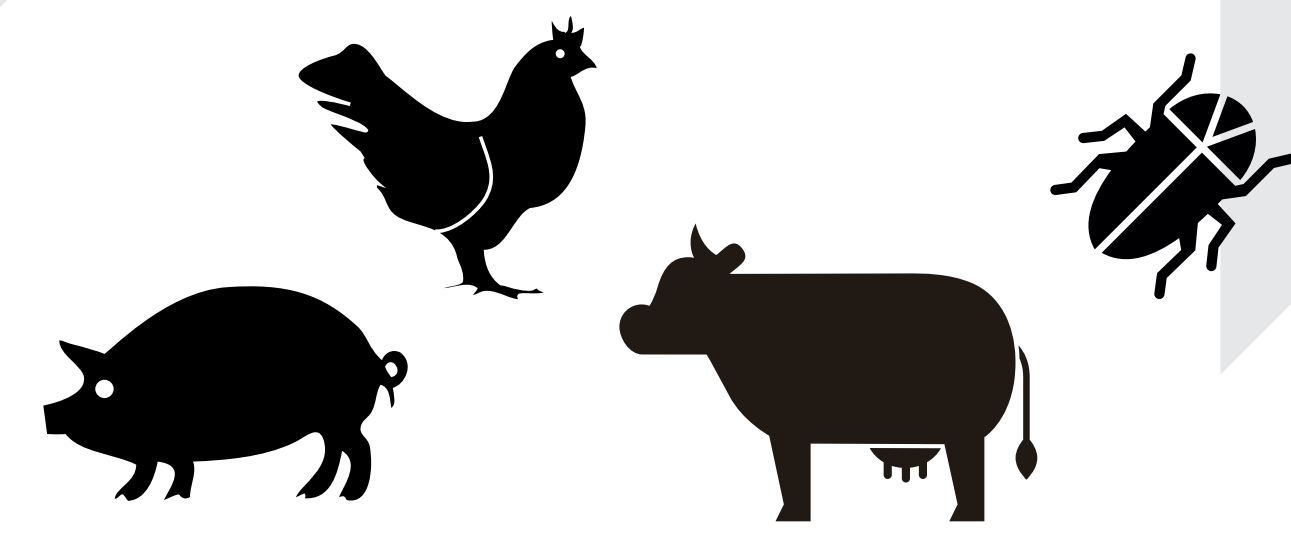
In conjunction with Otusola [International Co-Rapporteur] a call for paper submissions and provocative theses on food sustainability in cities was made.



WAGENINGEN & FOOD

Wageningen University is famous for its focus on food and environmental science. There is also a focus on healthy living environments. Wageningen is in a region called the Food Valley which hosts pioneering food start-ups and sustainability consultancies. There is much to learn about how planners can develop a healthy foodscape.

To this end the team planned focused visits to some of the key enterprises in the Food Valley with a view to engage with the professionals on topics of local policies, governance, economics and histories.



GLOBAL ENGAGEMENT

Wageningen University and the ISOCARP Team recognized the issue of global food insecurity as the larger challenge to our society and in particular our cities.

The involvement of the global YPPs along with the internationally selected papers made it evident that the scope of the workshop had to be enlarged to accommodate a discussion on food sustainability beyond the city as well.



INTERACTIVE WORKSHOP

The lessons learnt here were synthesized through focused group discussions and moderated plenary sessions.

The debate was lively, critical and fierce with all participants sharing personal as well as academic & professional experiences from their part of the world. The tone of the workshop was designed to be interactive in order to facilitate maximum knowledge exchange among participants.



OUTCOME

PLANNERS HAVE TO FAMILIARISE THEMSELVES WITH THE ISSUES OF FOOD PLANNING IN ORDER TO ENABLE MORE MEANINGFUL DISCUSSIONS AND COLLABORATION WITH FOOD EXPERTS AND LEADERS FROM OTHER DISCIPLINES.

LIVE CASE STUDIES

With an overview of the regional determinants of food production, distribution and food policies, the team's visit to the Food Valley exposed them to the region's innovative food enterprises.

Lessons learnt

- We should not be seduced by **farming skyscrapers** (or other large scale agriculture) as these are logistically non-viable and very energy intensive.
- Urban agriculture won't solve the food problem - a **change in city design** (e.g. by a strict urban growth boundary) could meet people's demands for a natural environment while reducing agricultural land loss.
- There is no equal distribution of arable farmland in the world. Consequently, there must be a **focus on doing more with less** in terms of extant arable land worldwide.
- Farmers and landholders shouldn't be confused. Agriculture is seen as a solution to solve poverty, but **food problems and poverty problems** are separate things. Poverty has more to do with food distribution than food production.



DESIGN LABS

[Supra-]regional food clusters

- **Double layering** of productive zones to ensure closed nutrient cycles.
- Integration of agricultural nodes with **transportation nodes** such as ports and highways.
- **Containing urban sprawl** with surrounding agro-belts and encouraging sustainable land use.

Local foodscapes

- **Food literacy** for raising public and professional awareness leading to better choices regarding food planning and sustainability.
- Connecting foodscapes with the **peri-urban** areas.
- **Food sovereignty** and culturally acceptable food needs to be ensured in the city and region.
- Locating food centres for **better accessibility and affordability**.

SUMMARY

The workshop was divided into two distinct parts - the lectures with their plenary discussions and the design lab. In the former section, current regional and global issues pertaining to food policy, urban planning and global food security were presented and discussed. Some key aspects that emerged were:

- Technological advances in food production & distribution lead socio-economic conditions and often cannot be implemented.
- Urban agriculture has emerged as a statistically underwhelming response to the issue of resolving metropolitan food security.

With a view to these important discoveries, the workshop's Design Lab focused on two distinct but complementary approaches to metropolitan food planning - Foodscapes and Supra Regional Food Clusters. The outcomes of these labs were as surprising as the outcome of the lecture sessions and have been consolidated in the above section.

FUTURE

ACCESS TO FOOD

The question of equal access to good food centers around distribution of food rather than agricultural output.

Planners should look at accessibility to high-quality food and engage with producers to identify opportunities for the provision of affordable and healthy food.



SCALES OF PRODUCTION

Growing urbanization demands that food production capacity also increases. This has repercussions for modern farming practices.

Planners and policy makers need to identify the gap between supply and demand in order to gauge the appropriate scale of production and distribution required for a city.

Image courtesy: PinkEek, DeviantArt



PREPARING FOR CLIMATE CHANGE

Climate change threatens food production and distribution. This would likely drive up food prices and threaten food security.

At a national level, governments need to simulate scenarios and develop policies to respond to local and global climate change effects and the resulting social impacts.



MANAGING FOOD WASTE

The potential to use food waste - wasted food as well as production waste - is typically overlooked in favour of convenience.

Food producers and consumers should be given incentives to reduce food waste. Generated food waste could be repackaged and fed into the supply cycle as a raw material for the bio-based industries.

