

## Barcelona Declaration on Urban Agriculture and the Common Agricultural Policy

The COST Action TD 1106 Urban Agriculture Europe has started in 2012. It gathers researchers and practitioners from more than 20 European countries.

The objective is to elaborate a European perspective on Urban Agriculture and its potentials for a sustainable development according to the Europe 2020 Strategy. To this end the Action will prepare recommendations for improving European policies. A special emphasize is to be placed on the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP).

The CAP is currently repositioned. Thus, the Action has elaborated this short term declaration on Urban Agriculture and the Common Agricultural Policy.

We define Urban Agriculture as spanning all actors, communities, activities, places and economies that focus on biobased production, in a spatial context that, according to local opinions and standards, is perceived as "urban". Urban Agriculture takes place in intra-urban and peri-urban areas.

Because agricultural production in the urban realm tends to be strongly context related (to local markets, citizens, urban spaces, historical traditions, cultural heritage and so on) Europe's Urban Agriculture is characterized by a broad variety of types. These types offer a lot of values for a smart, sustainable and inclusive growth and for job creation as well.

Based on a long tradition of direct custom orientation Urban Agriculture provides a high knowledge and innovation potential. Its products aim at quality, specialization and services and therefore can be trend setting / impulse giving for the whole agricultural sector. Urban agriculture can contribute to resource efficiency by linking material flows and shortening supply chains resp. production miles (smart growth). Urban agriculture is an excellent tool for building up, designing and maintaining the cities green and their climate active infrastructure. It can provide the urban dwellers with high quality recreational experiences, especially if it is addressed as part of the cities' tangible and intangible cultural heritage (sustainable growth). Urban Agriculture is actually on the agenda of most European cities because it offers among others benefits for health and well-being, food consciousness and food sovereignty and especially for social inclusion and job creation on a low threshold (inclusive growth).

Despite its high potentials Urban Agriculture is largely neglected in Europe's policies and especially in the CAP. Urban Agriculture is neither institutionalized on the EU administration level, nor in the member states. As the Directorate's General name puts out "Agriculture" is automatically combined with "Rural Development". Thus, UA is double marginalized by CAP: Due to its small size it does not really benefit from the direct payments pillar. Due to its location it is not covered by most of the rural development programs. The CAP has a long tradition for recognizing a multifunctional character of farms and agriculture in Europe. This character of farms is excessively well developed in the Urban Agriculture of Europe, hence it makes sense to integrate this job and growth promoting branch of agriculture in the CAP thinking.

Therefore we ask for a stronger consideration of Urban Agriculture in order to create valuable development impulses in urban and suburban areas and this is where most of Europe's citizens live - in the world's most urbanized continent.

We recommend to EU Commission and Council of Europe to

- recognize Urban Agriculture as a driving force for innovation in the whole agricultural sector
- recognize Urban Agriculture as a cultural resource for quality of urban life and wellbeing
- raise awareness for Urban Agriculture and its special conditions, potentials and demands
- promote research on Urban Agriculture

We recommend specifically to the EU Commission to

- define specific objectives on UA related to the characteristics of different forms of UA
- include Urban Agriculture issues in the mission statement of Directorate-General for Agriculture and Rural Development (DG Agri)

- install an advisory group on Urban Agriculture at the DG Agri
- institutionalize Urban Agriculture within one of the DG's Agri units

Concerning the CAP reform we recommend to both, the EU Commission and the member states

- to rearrange direct payments for the benefit of small-size, labor-intensive and innovative forms of agriculture
- not to limit the Regional Policy and Rural Development Programs and the Communitarian Initiatives as LEADER or PRODER automatically to rural areas, but to widen up the scope of at least some programs to urban areas
- to create development programs that stimulate smart, sustainable and inclusive growth by Urban Agriculture

The COST action UAE will carry forward its work until 2016 and differentiate its policy recommendations. We hope for a fruitful exchange of views with the European Commission and member states' administrations in order to address the potentials of Urban Agriculture as a multi-capable tool for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth all over Europe.

*For the members of COST Action TD 1106 "Urban Agriculture Europe":*

*Prof. Dr. Frank Lohrberg  
(Action Chair)*

This document was handed over to the Directorate-General for Agriculture and Rural Development on the occasion of a steering group meeting of COST Action Urban Agriculture, June 11<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> 2013 in Brussels.