

# CHINESE URBAN AGRICULTURE ASSOCIATION



Visit of municipal officers to an agro-park in Zhengzhou, 2006



Forum on Sustainable Urban Agriculture Development in China, Nov. 2005, Wuhan

**The Chinese Urban Agriculture Association (CUAA) supports the development of multi-functional and environment-friendly urban and peri-urban agriculture by facilitating dialogue and cooperation among local governments, researchers, local practitioners and producers.**

## New challenges; changing policies

The Chinese Urban Agriculture Association (CUAA) was established in 2006 to jointly address the ever-increasing challenges associated with rapid urbanisation in China, such as environmental deterioration in the city region, increasing food insecurity for the urban poor, and a rapidly increasing disparity between the incomes of urban and rural inhabitants. National and city governments have gradually become aware of the growing need to actively stimulate urban and peri-urban agriculture as a way to help overcome these challenges. They are now committed to the development of multi-functional urban agriculture that combines sustainable agricultural production, the provision of recreational services and the protection of natural resources, thereby generating economic, ecological and social benefits.

## The role and activities of CUAA

CUAA actively explores new approaches to integrate urban and rural planning and seeks to facilitate sustainable development of urban and peri-urban agriculture.

### CUAA is doing this by:

- Acting as a platform for communication and dialogue between policy makers, entrepreneurs, researchers, agricultural producers and other stakeholders.
- Advising central and city governments through lobbying and consultancy activities on issues related to integrating urban and rural planning, stimulating technical and organisational innovation in urban and periurban agriculture and the design of guidelines and regulations for different types of urban agriculture (e.g. agro-tourism parks).
- Providing staff training and technical assistance regarding multi-stakeholder policy and action planning on Urban Agriculture involving local authorities, experts, enterprises, farmer organisations and farmers. With the support of the RUAF Foundation, to date more than 16 cities have been assisted.
- Organising annual seminars and study trips for mayors, municipal officers and other stakeholders to discuss various policy measures for sustainable development of multi-functional urban and periurban agriculture and to encourage mutual learning and sharing of information and experiences.
- Evaluating (on behalf of various city governments) the achievements of local policies and projects on urban agriculture.
- Supporting (together with the Ministry of Education and some key universities) the development of higher-degree courses on urban agriculture, in order to enhance general capacity building for the sustainable development of urban and periurban agriculture.

### Achievements to date:

- Growing interest in the development of multi-functional periurban agriculture. Recreational agriculture is quickly becoming a major branch of urban agriculture in addition to high-tech and greenhouse agriculture.
- Growing support for urban and periurban producers: cooperative development, new technologies, marketing.
- More sharing, dialogue and cooperation between local governments, experts, agro-enterprises and farmers on issues pertaining to urban and periurban agriculture. The multi-stakeholder planning approach is spreading quickly.

### Cooperation

CUAA has established close working relationships with various municipalities, the National Development and Reform Committee, various ministries (Agriculture, Housing and Construction, Sciences and Technology, Land Resources, Education, Environment Protection) as well as with the Institute of Geographic Sciences and Natural Resources Research of the Chinese Academy of Sciences, Chinese Agricultural University, Beijing Agricultural College and many other Chinese universities and institutes.

At international level, CUAA cooperates with the International Network of Resource Centres on Urban Agriculture and Food Security (RUAF Foundation).