



# Welcome to this first issue of the Urban Agricultural Magazine

**Growing cities and urban populations are one of the big challenges of the future. The importance of urban agriculture in sustainable urban development is growing. As recognition grows, more people are becoming involved with the issue. Many newsletters and magazines have devoted editions to the subject in recent years including GATE, Urban Age, African Urban Quarterly, and the LEISA Newsletter and there have been many workshops and conferences on the subject.**

## Editorial

In 1996 a group of international institutions - the Support Group on Urban Agriculture (SGUA) - gathered in Ottawa to discuss the potentials and risks associated with urban agriculture. They also discussed strategies that could be used to overcome the principal constraints to sustainable food production in and around the cities of the South.

This group of experts concluded that a major bottleneck was lack of communication on urban agriculture among actual and future practitioners whether researchers, city farmers, urban planners, consumer organisations, city administrators, national and international support organisations, and other stakeholders. The RUAF Programme (Resource Centre on Urban Agriculture and Forestry) was developed to fill this gap.

The publication of the Urban Agriculture Magazine (*UA-Magazine*) is one of the ways the RUAF Programme intends to facilitate the flow of information and discussion on the actual and potential roles of intra-urban and peri-urban agriculture. The RUAF web-site, which soon will be released, will be the main medium in this process. The site will provide additional information including reviews of recent publications, a guide with information on institutes and resource-persons and institutions on urban agriculture, and a (inter-active) bibliographic database. There will also be news and networking. Some of this information is also included in this hard-copy version of the *UA-Magazine*.

**The UA-Magazine will be published three times a year on the website**

## THE URBAN AGRICULTURE MAGAZINE

We have discussed many formats for the *UA-Magazine*. We have been trying to find a balance between a fully electronic magazine and the "hardcopy" version, something that would meet the needs of all our readers and contributors. What you have before you is a magazine format that is still

**The Urban Agriculture Magazine**  
RUAF, P.O. Box 64  
3830 AB Leusden, The Netherlands  
ruaf@etcnl.nl

in an experimental stage.

The *UA-Magazine* will be published three times a year on the RUAF-website.

Subsequently it will be published and distributed in hard copy.

The *UA-Magazine* will act as a platform for the exchange and discussion of quality information on urban agriculture including research results, project experiences, critical analysis of conventional and innovative policies on urban agriculture. We hope that the *UA-Magazine* will stimulate and facilitate an interdisciplinary debate. Urban agriculture is a typical cross sectoral phenomenon and joint reflection and active co-operation between various disciplines – including planners, health specialists, water management experts, agriculturists and environmental specialists - is essential. At the same time the *UA-Magazine* is not just another journal for experts. All types of stakeholders are needed to build, examine and consolidate the growing body of knowledge on urban agriculture. The experiences presented should reflect the viewpoints of all city farmers, men or women, consumers, local authorities, local private enterprises, and other service organisations. Development of sustainable urban food systems requires the active involvement and support of various actors - the general public, local neighbourhood groups as well as urban food producers and consumers.

The *UA-Magazine* will facilitate the sharing of information on the impact of urban



**PAGE 8**

### **Urban Food Security; Urban Agriculture Response to Crisis**

This article is based on information extracted from 20 city case studies on urban agriculture world-wide and additionally draws from experiences of the Urban Vegetable Promotion Project in Dar Es Salaam (Tanzania). It is argued that local authorities have to take their responsibilities in securing urban food security.



### **Urban Agriculture and Biodiversity**

Bringing back agriculture, forestry, aquaculture and livestock rearing to the human settlement is a key component to reduce the ecological footprint of cities. This statement is defended and illustrated in this article with different examples.

agriculture and promote analysis and debate on critical issues for the development of the sector. We welcome contributions on new initiatives at individual, family or enterprise, neighbourhood, city and national levels. We want to publish the “best” or “good” or even “bad” practices in urban agriculture.

We will give attention to the technological aspects - appropriate cultivation technologies for urban conditions, for example - as well as to social and economic aspects of urban food production and distribution systems such as gender aspects, distributional aspects, consumer-producer linkages. Special attention will be given to the integration of urban agriculture into city development and land use planning and

the development of more adequate and operational local standards and regulations for urban agriculture.

All issues of the *UA-Magazine* will focus on a selected theme, which will be prepared and edited in collaboration with a guest editor who is a specialist in that theme. The next issue will focus on Urban Livestock, and is planned for October 2000. This issue has been planned for some time. Urban Livestock is an often neglected issue, because attention tends to focus on vegetable production in the cities.

#### **FORTHCOMING ISSUE**

During two workshops, in Quito and Hanoi (see page 34/35), a survey was carried out on the issues respondents

## **The Support Group on Urban Agriculture (SGUA)**

The Support Group on Urban Agriculture (SGUA) dates back to 1991 when UNDP established the Urban Agriculture Advisory Committee, which in the next year resulted in the establishment of the Support Group on Urban Agriculture (SGUA). This Group has been looking into the identification of key research and development needs in urban agriculture and how to co-ordinate and pool support of SGUA-participants. In this past decade, the number of international support organisations involved in Urban Agriculture has rapidly grown, which is reflected in the growing number of organisations participating in the SGUA (actually over thirty international organisations participate).

The SGUA aims to stimulate and facilitate activities regarding urban agriculture by national and local governments, NGOs, and agencies for international and bilateral development co-operation, and the direct involvement of local stake holders (associations of urban farmers, neighbourhood organisations, small entrepreneurs active in recycling of organic wastes, etc.) in the planning and implementation of such activities.

The SGUA is guided by a Steering Committee in which at present participate representatives of IDRC (secretariat), UNDP, FAO, DGIS, CIRAD, ETC and TUAN. Members of the SGUA meet at least bi-annually since 1992, hosted by one of its members: In 1999 SGUA members met in Havana, Cuba, hosted by DSE, taking

wanted to address in a Magazine on urban agriculture. The respondents were requested to give their opinion on important issues in urban agriculture that should be tackled in forthcoming issues on the *UA-Magazine*, both in an open question, and by giving a score (1-5) to a list of given issues. They were further asked how they preferred to receive the Magazine. On the latter question, half of the respondents indicated that they preferred the internet, while the other half would like to receive a hard-copy or a diskette. According to the open questions, the next issues of the *UA-Magazine* should deal with Technologies; Policy Development; Methodology (in assessment, planning and implementation); and Impact Monitoring. The rankings of the given subjects, showed that a focus on Methodologies; Health; Waste Management; Marketing; Planning; and Methodology Development, would be preferred.

Based on the results of these surveys, and considering that the

forthcoming electronic conference, organised by FAO and ETC (see page 33), will supply us with a lot of potential contributions, the following planning for the next six issues is made:

No. 3 *Integration of urban agriculture in urban planning* (January 2001)

No. 4 *Management of urban agriculture related health aspects* (April 2001)

No. 5 *Methodologies in planning and facilitation of urban agriculture* (September 2001)

No. 6 *Urban agriculture and food security* (December 2001)

A questionnaire similar to the one used in the two workshops mentioned above has been included in this issue. We would be grateful if you would fill it in and return it to the editors so we can take account of your suggestions and comments.

In the near future RUAF will also produce regional hard copy versions of the *UA-Magazine* in local languages, in close co-operation

## AHMEDABAD GREEN PARTNERSHIP PROJECT

To make an urban forestry programme a success, the project partners need to keep a constant dialogue and a long-term commitment to make it happen. This is

illustrated by the Ahmedabad Green Partnership Project, an effort between the Ahmedabad Municipal Corporation (AMC) and the Private Sector in Ahmedabad, India.



PAGE 21

with regional institutions and networks. This year we will only distribute an English version to members of the SGUA and readers that do not have access to the Internet or will use the hard copy version for local promotional activities.

### THIS ISSUE

For this first issue, we decided to present a range of topics on urban agriculture, rather than a thematic selection, in order to give the readers an idea of the array of subjects that could be dealt with in the *UA-Magazine* in future. The collection of articles sought and received (no call was done for this issue), do show a certain thematic focus: various articles deal, explicitly or sideways, with urban agriculture as a response to crisis and as a mechanism applied by disadvantaged families to secure their livelihood under adverse conditions. Economic crisis, and related problems of unemployment, lowering cash incomes and

### In this issue

- 5 Concepts and Definitions
- 8 Urban Agriculture, a Response to Crises?
- 11 Urban Agriculture and Biodiversity
- 13 The Integration of Agriculture in Urban Policies
- 16 Living with Livestock in Town
- 19 Dynamics in Tropical Home Gardens
- 21 The Greening of Ahmedabad
- 24 The Urban Farmers of St. Petersburg
- 27 Urban Agriculture in Havana



RUAF is a global initiative of the Support Group on Urban Agriculture, co-ordinated by ETC

advantage of their participation in the international workshop 'Growing Cities Growing Food'. The next meeting is foreseen in July 2000 in Berlin.

The main functions included in the Global Initiative of the SGUA are the following:

- ❖ *Policy development*: SGUA-members actively support awareness creation among local authorities regarding the potentials of urban agriculture, seeking the integration of urban agriculture in city development. *Research*: SGUA stimulates innovative research on urban agriculture, with an emphasis to removing roadblocks for the integration of urban agriculture in policies and planning at national and local levels.
- ❖ *Technical assistance*: SGUA encourages and facilitates that technical assistance is made available to target group organisations and support organisations active in the field of Urban Agriculture, with an emphasis on South - South co-operation.
- ❖ *Investment and credit*: SGUA encourages private investment in urban and peri urban dairy and small livestock, vegetables and poultry production, the production and distribution of agricultural inputs, and other urban agriculture related small and micro enterprises.
- ❖ *Information and Communications*: were identified as one of the main functions of the Global Facility. SGUA members jointly formulated the RUAF Programme in order to facilitate communication on urban agriculture and to enhance documentation and exchange dissemination of experiences.

More information on the SGUA, its members and their activities can be encountered on the IDRC website [http://www.idrc.ca/cfp/sguaf\\_e.html](http://www.idrc.ca/cfp/sguaf_e.html)  
Contact Luc Mougeot (PhD), Co-ordinator Cities Feeding People Programme  
IDRC, telephone: 613 236 6163, #2310 fax: 613 567-7749 -  
[LMougeot@idrc.ca](mailto:LMougeot@idrc.ca) - [www.idrc.ca/cfp](http://www.idrc.ca/cfp)

**We hope you appreciate this UA-Magazine**

relative high food prices, is certainly one of the factors inducing rapid growth of urban agriculture. However, a crisis is not the only driving factor. There are numerous cities where urban agriculture has developed where there has been no experience of crises or where the crisis – for certain categories of the population – is an intrinsic part of the urban system.

All the articles show that urban agriculture is extremely heterogeneous, in size, extent and management levels. Urban agriculture

may be a matter of survival, positively affect biodiversity, increase food security, improve waste-recycling, but may also impose additional problems. They also call for a need for systematic analysis of cases and the impact of urban agriculture, the exchange of information and development of policies.

Two articles (Mougeot and Gündel, de Zeeuw and Waibel) are reworked articles taken up in the Reader: Growing Cities, Growing Food (Bakker et al. 2000). The full text of these presentations can also be found on the RUAF website, while hard copies are available from DSE, Germany.

We hope you appreciate this *UA-Magazine* and that you make yourself known to us, so that we start to know who our readers are.



## PAGE 19

### **DYNAMICS IN TROPICAL HOMEGARDENS**

The importance of home gardens, the small areas of cultivated land immediately

surrounding a home or a homestead, is often underestimated despite its vital contribution to meeting various household-needs, especially for poor families in developing countries. In this article, the impact of homegardens in the Philippines is explored.

# Resource centre on Urban Agriculture and Forestry (RUAF)

The aim of RUAF is to facilitate integration of Urban Agriculture in the policies and plans of city authorities and to facilitate the formulation of projects on urban agriculture with active involvement of all local stakeholders. The duration of RUAF is five years, which started in October 1999. A midterm review will take place in the third year of the Programme.

## OBJECTIVES

The general aim of RUAF is to facilitate integration of Urban Agriculture in the policies and plans of city authorities and to facilitate the formulation of projects on urban agriculture with active involvement of all local stakeholders (like urban planners, groups of urban farmers, consumer organisations, technical and credit organisations, environmental groups, health authorities, related local small enterprises, and others).

The information pro-actively disseminated by RUAF is also intended to influence agricultural research and extension organisations to include urban agriculture and to provide more support to urban farmers.

The specific objectives of the RUAF-Programme focus on: awareness raising; identification and analysis of critical issues; improving access to documented experiences; supporting local capacity development and networking; secure embedding of RUAF activities in international organisations. Next to the Newsletter, RUAF outputs are: one electronic conference on a selected key theme per year; a bibliography on Urban Agriculture accessible by Internet and on diskettes; a resource directory; a “Reader” on Urban Agriculture and a homepage. Furthermore, it is envisaged that six Regional Focal Points are in operation.

## ORGANISATIONS

The RUAF-Programme will be administered by IDRC (in the “Cities Feeding People Programme”). The leading implementing organisation will be ETC-International, based in Leusden, The Netherlands, who will co-ordinate the activities of six regional focal points, TUAN, City Farmer Network and other organisations participating in the Programme. RUAF will maintain close working relations with the IDRC’s Cities Feeding People Programme (CFP), FAO’s Food for Cities Programme (FFC) with the UNDP-UNCHS Urban Management Programme (UMP), WHO’s Healthy Cities Programme, The Local Environment Initiatives Agenda 21 (ICLEI), the CGIAR Strategic Initiative on Urban and peri-urban Agriculture (SIUPA) and other relevant international programmes. RUAF will also closely co-operate with existing and new regional networks on urban agriculture. An important aim of the RUAF Programme is to have RUAF services integrated in regular programmes of organisations and networks.

RUAF receives financial support of DGIS (the Netherlands) and IDRC (Canada). Other institutions have contributed to specific components of the programme like CTA (database on resource persons), GTZ (city case studies / Reader), DSE (regional workshop, publication of the Reader) and SIDA (annotated bibliography).

*For more information, visit the RUAF Web-site: <http://www.RUAF.org>  
Or contact Ir. Henk de Zeeuw, co-ordinator RUAF, Visiting address:  
ETC, Kastanjelaan 5, 3830 AB Leusden, the Netherlands  
E-mail: [ruaf@etcnl.nl](mailto:ruaf@etcnl.nl) Phone: +31-33-4943086 Fax: +31-33-4940791*