

Cities Farming for the Future



BEIJING, CHINA

Beijing lies in the northern tip of the North China Plain and has a moderate continental climate with average annual rainfall of about 500 mm. It covers an area of 16,808 km² and has a population of 16.3 million (2007). Beijing metropolis has experienced rapid economic growth in recent years averaging at 14.2 per cent per annum. Its spatial expansion has also been extensive, with urbanisation reaching 84.5 per cent in 2007. This rapid urban growth has brought along some new challenges: a sharply increasing disparity between urban and rural incomes (now 3:1), a vast inflow of migrants (some 4 million at the moment), rapid loss of farmland, and a quick deterioration of the urban environment. Beijing faces a shortage of arable land and a shortage of water.

To help cope with these problems and make the city more liveable and sustainable, the municipal government - in cooperation with other stakeholders - is actively promoting the development of multi-functional recreational agriculture in the peri-urban zones of Beijing.

The measures taken to support the development of recreational agriculture include the following:

- Integration of multi-functional peri-urban agriculture into the long-term socio-economic strategic development and land use planning of Beijing.
- Implementation of a comprehensive programme for the development of peri urban agriculture (the "221" programme) and earmarking of a substantial part of the municipal budget for investments in the peri-urban region.
- Establishment of the Beijing Recreational Agriculture Association, which assists entrepreneurs and urban producers in creating agro-tourism facilities, develops guidelines and standards for agro-tourism parks and gardens and monitors their application.
- Organisation of urban agriculture festivals, exhibitions and certifications.



CITIES FARMING FOR THE FUTURE

The Cities Farming for the Future programme (RUAF-CFF) seeks to make a contribution to urban poverty reduction, urban food security, improved urban environmental management, empowerment of urban farmers and participatory city governance by promoting capacity development of local stakeholders in urban agriculture and facilitating participatory and multi-stakeholder policy formulation and action planning (MPAP) on urban agriculture, including safe reuse of urban organic wastes and wastewater.

CONTACT

The partners of the RUAF China network on urban agriculture are

- Beijing Recreational and Entertainment Agriculture Association (Liu Junping, Beijing coordinator)
- Institute of Geographic Sciences and Natural Resources Research, CAS
- Beijing Research Centre on Rural Economy
- Beijing Municipal Rural Affairs Committee
- Beijing Modern Agriculture
- Beijing Rural Tourism
- Crab Island Resort
- China Association of Agricultural Science
- Beijing Shunyi Initiative of Agriculture, Countryside and Farmers' Research
- Hunrun Food Group
- Beijing Agriculture College
- Agriculture University of China

Regional Coordination of the RUAF Cities Farming for the Future Project

Prof. Dr. Cai, Jianming
 Institute of Geographic Sciences and Natural Resources Research, Chinese Academy of Sciences
 Datun Rd.11 A, Anwai, Chaoyang District, Beijing 100101, P.R. China
 Tel: +86-10-64889279
 Fax: +86-10-64889279
 Email: caijm@igsnr.ac.cn
 Website: <http://www.cnruaf.com.cn/>

THE RUAF FOUNDATION

The central aim of the RUAF Foundation (the International Network of Resource Centres on Urban Agriculture and Food Security) is to contribute to urban poverty reduction, urban food security, improved urban environmental management, empowerment of urban farmers and participatory city governance by enhancing policy awareness on benefits and risks of urban agriculture, capacity development, facilitating local policy formulation and action planning on urban agriculture, and promoting networking and exchange of experiences. The RUAF - Cities Farming for the Future programme (RUAF-CFF) is executed by the seven regional RUAF partners in co-ordination with ETC Urban Agriculture (the Netherlands) in 20 pilot cities and 48 dissemination cities. The CFF-project is funded by DGIS (the Netherlands) and IDRC (Canada). More information is found on www.ruaf.org.

International Coordination: ETC Urban Agriculture
 Global website: www.ruaf.org

THE RUAF PARTNERS ARE:

- Municipal Development Partnership (MDP), Harare, Zimbabwe
- Institut Africain de Gestion Urbaine (IAGU), Dakar, Senegal
- International Water Management Institute (IWMI-Ghana), Accra, Ghana
- International Water Management Institute, (IWMI-India), Hyderabad, India
- Promoción del Desarrollo Sostenible (IPES), Lima, Peru
- Institute of Geographical Sciences and Natural Resource Research of the Chinese Academy of Sciences (IGSNRR), Beijing, China
- Environment and Sustainable Development Unit, American University (AUB-ESDU), Beirut, Lebanon
- ETC Urban Agriculture, Leusden, The Netherlands



BEIJING CHINA



"Developing urban and peri-urban agriculture ensures a harmonious urban-rural society in the capital city of Beijing. It is an approach to agriculture that serves Beijing's citizens and benefits farmers."

-- Mr. Niu, Youcheng, Deputy Mayor of Beijing



URBAN AGRICULTURE IN BEIJING

Peri-urban agriculture in Beijing is developing along two major lines: modernisation and its multi-functionality. Modernisation seeks the intensification of agricultural production (using greenhouses, irrigation and improved technology) and the diversification from grains to vegetables, herbs, animal products, flowers and horticulture.

An important function of agriculture that is developing is so-called “recreational agriculture” or agro-tourism. Already in the 1990s traditional harvest festivals were organised, such as the Watermelon Festival in Daxing, and recognising that these festivals attract many visitors, local farmers began extending their farming enterprises to include more profitable recreational activities. After 2002, with strong support from governments, more recreational opportunities were developed such as fishing, sightseeing, “pick your own fruits”, meal preparation and lodging facilities.

Two categories of farming enterprises are engaged in providing recreational agriculture. The first is farmer or village-based agriculture, which includes orchards or fish ponds, where visitors can pick their own fruit or catch their own fish, lodging and meal-preparation facilities, and horseback riding.

By 2007, some 1032 agro-tourism parks and 630 agro-tourism villages had been developed, of which 65 high-level resorts. Altogether, these parks and resorts received over 26 million guests in 2007, and earned a total gross income of RMB 1.8 billion. The prospects for further development of recreational agriculture in Beijing are promising since the income and leisure time of the urban people is growing as well as their interest in outdoor recreation and the environment.



MULTI STAKEHOLDER ACTION PLANNING

RUAF Cities Farming for the Future Programme (RUAF-CFF) facilitates participatory and multi-stakeholder policy formulation and action planning (MPAP) on urban agriculture in Beijing. This MPAP approach is well adapted to promote multi functional (peri)-urban agriculture and involves multi-stakeholder processes.

The Institute of Geographical Sciences & Natural Resources Research, Chinese Academy of Sciences, is cooperating with the China Urban Agriculture Association, the Beijing Recreational and Entertainment Agriculture Association, the Beijing municipal and sub-level governments, universities and other institutes, to support the enhancement of urban agriculture in the peri-urban planning in Beijing. This platform brings different actors involved in peri-urban agricultural development, like farmers, entrepreneurs, farm-cooperatives, universities, research institutes, and government departments together; facilitates the integration of urban agriculture into city development plans and urban policies; and seeks to design longer-term action plans to support the development of sustainable urban and peri-urban agriculture in Beijing. Particularly in its multifunctional form that includes agricultural productivity, ecological protection, and social inclusion. Major activities are research and dissemination of innovative concepts; advocacy and lobbying; and providing inputs and support to policy making process.



KEY RESULTS

- Agreement has been established among farmers, citizens, experts and policy makers on the important roles of multi-functional agriculture in peri-urban development.
- Explicit attention is given to socio-economic and land-use planning, that includes urban agriculture, by Beijing and local governments.
- Three pilot projects have been developed, which serve as examples for both farmers and policy makers.
- Frequent communication between practitioners, policy makers and researchers via personal contact, domestic meetings and an international workshop, has been established.
- A network on peri-urban agriculture has been established, which is expanding to other cities including Shanghai, Chengdu, Lijiang, and Nanjing.

So far, there are four books, one report, five dissertation and three papers published. All documents regarding this work can be found at <http://www.cnruaf.com.cn> and in English at www.ruaf.org

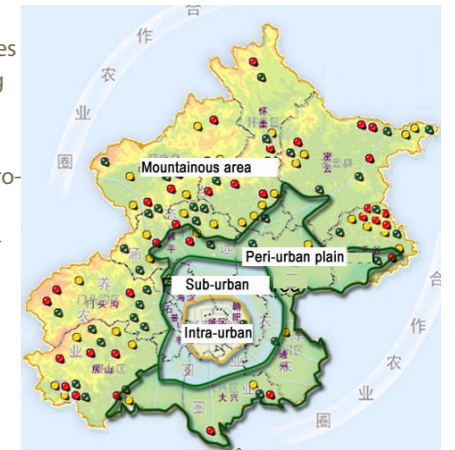
PERI-URBAN AGRICULTURE ON THE CITY AGENDA

Urban and peri-urban agriculture has been integrated in both socio-economic and land use planning of Beijing municipality. A key element in the city's efforts to develop peri-urban agriculture is the “2-2-1 Action Programme on Urban Agriculture”, a comprehensive long-term programme initiated by the Beijing municipal government in April 2004 that:

- maximises utilisation of resources and the market (2 basis concepts)
- mobilises the supportive inputs of capital and technology (2 major inputs)
- facilitates (1) information platform for sharing agro-technologies and experiences.

Land use planning of Beijing metropolitan area has divided the city into different zones to encourage different functions according to their comparative and competitive advantages. These zones are:

- Intra-urban: green spaces and parks, agro-exhibitions, allotment gardens.
- Sub-urban: sightseeing, agro-parks, eco-education, landscape management.
- Peri-urban plains: intensive high-tech agriculture and livestock keeping.
- Mountainous areas: village-based agro-tourism, ecological protection, cultural heritage.



IMPLEMENTATION

- The RUAF-China platform has persuaded the Beijing government and local governments, such as Miyun County, to support peri-urban agriculture. It has also established a partnership with two farm cooperatives and universities including the Agriculture University of China, Beijing Agriculture College and Beijing Agricultural Bureau.
- The RUAF-China platform contributes to the policy making process by undertaking research on innovative concepts and by balancing the values and benefits of various stakeholders. For instance, it facilitates more frequent and interactive cooperation between enterprises and farmers, and integrates the agro-chain from production to service involving consumers, visitors and technology experts.
- Particular attention is given to the situation of migrant farmers in Beijing. Three villages located in inner (Chaoyang district) and interim (Shunyi district) Beijing were therefore selected as study sites. An in-depth analysis was undertaken with 15 migrant farmer households and other actors, such as the local government, enterprises, merchants, transporters, farmers' organisations, consumers, NGOs and a village council. Through these interviews the main issues facing migrant farmers were identified.
- In Shunyi, working closely with a local NGO, Shunyi Sannong Association established a platform for policy makers, farmers and researchers. This platform now provides ideas for local farmers as well as informing researchers and policy makers about current and future issues related to peri-urban agriculture, and as such seeks to improve the public's awareness and perception of peri-urban agriculture.