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BOOK REVIEW

Urban and Regional Agriculture: Building Resilient Food Systems

■ Peter Droege, editor

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Urban and Regional Agriculture: Building Resilient Food Systems is an essential read for academics, policymakers, urban planners, and practitioners interested in understanding and promoting the potential of urban agriculture to create sustainable and resilient food systems. The book provides its target audience with valuable insights, interdisciplinary perspectives, and engaging case studies, offering a comprehensive exploration of the current state of urban agriculture and its role in achieving food security, environmental sustainability, and social equity in a rapidly urbanizing world.

A groundbreaking work, this book edited by Peter Droege provides a comprehensive exploration of the challenges and opportunities that urban agriculture presents in the context of an ever-changing world. In a time when urbanization, climate change, and food insecurity are increasingly intertwined, this book offers a timely and insightful analysis of the current state of urban agriculture and its potential to contribute to more sustainable and resilient food systems.

The editor has brought together an impressive array of international scholars and experts to examine various aspects of urban and regional agriculture. The book is well-organized into four sections, each addressing

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different themes: urban agriculture and resilient food systems, urban agriculture typologies and technologies, urban agriculture and planning, and case studies from around the world.

One of the most compelling aspects of the book is its interdisciplinary approach. The contributors draw from a wide range of disciplines, including architecture, engineering, economics, and social sciences, to explore the complex interplay between urban agriculture and resilient food systems. This multifaceted approach allows for a rich and nuanced understanding of the issues at hand.

Throughout the book, the authors emphasize the importance of innovation, collaboration, and policy in addressing the challenges facing urban agriculture. They argue that by integrating urban agriculture into city planning and development, communities can improve food security, reduce environmental impacts, and promote social equity. The book provides numerous examples of how this can be achieved, from the case studies of successful rooftop greenhouses in North America, such as Lufa Farms in Montreal and Gotham Greens in New York City, to the exploration of low-cost hydroponic systems for producing vegetables in South American cities.

The book also offers an interesting discussion of the environmental footprint of indoor farming across different systems, drawing from Julia Kurnik's Phase I Innovation Analysis. This chapter highlights the potential for indoor-soilless systems to reduce the environmental impacts of food production while providing fresh produce to urban communities. The authors also discuss the potential for cities to utilize underutilized and stranded assets to deploy well-integrated urban farms, further contributing to improved environmental and financial conditions.

In addition to its thorough analysis of urban agriculture, *Urban and Regional Agriculture: Building Resilient Food Systems* also explores the cutting-edge concept of Living Architecture. This EU-funded project aims to develop a selectively programmable bioreactor that recovers phosphates, cleans water, and produces electricity. The authors

speculate on potential design scenarios for the Living Architecture system, including applications for remote research facilities in extreme environments and as urban infrastructure.

The book's primary strength lies in its comprehensive exploration of urban and regional agriculture, providing readers with a solid understanding of the current state of the field and its potential for building more resilient food systems. The contributors' expertise and diverse perspectives contribute to a rich and insightful analysis that is both academically rigorous and accessible to a broader audience.

However, despite its many strengths, the book could have benefited from a more in-depth examination of the policy implications of its findings. While the authors touch on the importance of policy in supporting urban agriculture, a more detailed discussion of specific policy recommendations and their potential impacts would have further enriched the book's analysis. For those seeking more information on this topic, *Feeding Cities: Improving Local Food Access, Security, and Resilience* by [Christopher Bosso \(2017\)](#) can provide more in-depth insight.

Another area where the book could have delved deeper is the exploration of the social dimensions of urban agriculture. Although the authors do discuss the potential for urban agriculture to promote social equity, a more comprehensive examination of the ways in which urban agriculture can empower marginalized communities and foster social cohesion would have been a valuable addition to the book ([Taguchi and Santini 2019](#)).

Overall, *Urban and Regional Agriculture: Building Resilient Food Systems* is an essential read for anyone interested in the future of urban agriculture and its potential to contribute to more sustainable and resilient food systems. The book's comprehensive approach, interdisciplinary perspective, and engaging case studies make it a valuable resource for academics, policymakers, urban planners, and practitioners alike. While there is room for a more in-depth exploration of policy implications and social dimensions, the book offers

a solid foundation for understanding the current state of urban agriculture and its potential for addressing some of the most pressing challenges of our time. As cities continue to grow and face increasing pressure from climate change and resource scarcity, the importance of developing innovative and sustainable food systems becomes ever more urgent. The book provides a timely and insightful analysis of the potential for urban agriculture to play a critical role in building more resilient food systems.

In conclusion, the book is a vital addition to the literature on urban agriculture and its potential for addressing the challenges of food security, environmental sustainability, and social equity in a rapidly urbanizing world.

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