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# Convivial Green Space

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## Introduction

Green space in and around cities and towns has customarily been an important scale for growing food over millennia (Morris 1994; Rebora 2001; Gaynor 2006). At the urban scale such agriculture has been defined as ‘the production for domestic consumption or sale of food grains, tree crops, fresh horticultural produce, fish and animal products within an urban area’ (Koc et al. 1999: 13). Yet in the twentieth century, that critical relationship at the urban scale was dismantled in many places, which begs the question, to what degree should food production in a city take precedence over other meanings and uses of green space at domestic (or civic) scale? This is not a new question. There has often been a kind of moral judgement made upon those who chose to use open space for pleasure rather than production. Princely gardens of Hellenic times expressed the rulers’ political power through the symbolism of control over nature. The early Romans disapproved of the decadence of the expression, not its intent, managing to emphasize the simplicity and frugality of vegetable gardening which they enjoyed, while maintaining the apparent austerity of their philosophical convictions on plain living.

In recent years, a reappraisal of the importance of urban food growing has begun to reshape urban food space (broadly) driven in the global north by sustainability concerns, while in the global south issues of food resilience have been to the fore. Ideas about embodiment, visceral geographies and political ecology noted in the Introduction have been theoretically important in framing the way geographers and sociologists see food’s relationships to urban green space. For designers, by contrast, it is the spatial qualities that these parts of city form can encompass that are of particular interest. This chapter focuses in particular on some of the design and planning elements of the urban food-growing trajectory, and in exploring transformations in such growing practices, a central assumption is that conviviality can be expressed through these spaces and opportunities. It has been suggested that food-growing spaces’ conviviality encompasses the non-human as well as the relationship of people to one another and

this is not the conviviality of Ivan Illich’s ‘tools for conviviality’ (1979) nor of Zygmunt Bauman’s *modus conviviendi* (2003), who restrict their concerns to how people accommodate one another in the everyday business of living together. It is rather party to the kind of conviviality gathering force in the name of ‘posthumanism’. (Hinchliffe and Whatmore 2006: 125)

While accepting that the notion of conviviality can be broadened out from its human-centred roots, its expression still has design dimensions for urban green space. These are considered later in a chapter which explores the evolution of food growing in cities with reference to a range of examples from urban agricultural practice, and from perspectives that include environmental history, urban sustainability, planning and design. Relationships with the agricultural countryside and peri-urban agriculture are touched on, insofar as the emphasis is on design interplay arising from servicing urban food needs. However, this chapter pays attention mainly to growing space *in* cities whereas city peripheries are the theme of Chapter 7. While much of the focus is on the interplay of cities' design with food growing, the chapter also considers green spaces designed for food consumption and pleasure, in both historical and contemporary situations.

## Have we always grown food in cities?

Urban food growing has an extremely long history, with examples from a great diversity of cities (Mougeot 1994). As noted by Morris (1994), with the rise of farming, settled communities evolved in Neolithic times in places including Mesopotamia, Egypt and India, although Jane Jacobs (1972) has famously turned on its head the agriculture first-cities afterwards thesis, arguing that agriculture and animal husbandry arose in cities first. Her 'New Obsidian' of pre-agricultural hunters, a city described as located in the Anatolian plateau of Turkey, derived its wealth from trade in obsidian, with food bartering forming a crucial aspect of its economy only later (Jacobs 1972). Morris (1994: 304), however, demonstrates that Jacob's argument does not hold more broadly in the light of archaeological and other evidence. Rather, between 3,500 and 3,000 BC, some Neolithic villages began to transform into cities on alluvial plains, and one of the requirements for this 'urban revolution' was the production and storage of surplus food (Morris 1994: 5). Cities of the Indus River civilization, such as Harappa and Mohenjo-Daro 'were once specialized agrourban centres' (Mougeot 1994: 2) and the development of these early cities 'seems to have paralleled that in Mesopotamia, with Neolithic farming communities establishing villages on the higher plains away from the actual river courses during the fifth millennium BC, before becoming sufficiently well organized socially and technically to take on the challenge of farming the flood-plains' (Morris 1994: 14). In the city of Mohenjo-Daro, archaeological evidence shows substantial granaries, specialist shops and houses focused on courtyards (Morris 1994: 17), which could have included food-producing gardens. The presence of animal husbandry in urban areas is similarly evidenced in places like Ninevah in Mesopotamia, which had large open spaces for cattle grazing (Kostof 1992).

In traditional city form the need to ensure food supplies meant that perishable crops, in particular, were best located close to where they would be consumed. Growing food for personal and commercial reasons meant that productive land uses including urban gardens, allotments, orchards, market gardens, vineyards and bee-keeping spaces surrounded cities and were interwoven with them (see Figure 6.1). The cities of fifth-century BC Greece, for example, remained closely tied and dependent on agricultural hinterlands, while a plan of Rome shows that within the Aurelian wall (built in 272–280 BC) gardens covered ninety-eight

of the available 1,386 hectares (Kostof 1991: 41). It can be reasonably speculated that some of these gardens were used for food growing to complement the small shops, warehouses and wholesale food markets that supplied daily food needs (Kostof 1991: 47). As Kostof (1992: 166) further points out, open land within the city limits was not at all exceptional in antiquity and the Middle Ages

since the activities of the countryside did not stop at the city gates, fruit and vegetable gardens at the backs of houses spread patches of green through the urban form. Commons where town cattle could graze were often not much beyond the built up area, and doubled as recreation grounds.

By the eleventh century, population and food production were both growing, the latter allowed by the introduction of the three-field system, mills and other agricultural technologies (Hollister 1974: 150). These changes, in turn, saw towns revive: 'the European economy in the High Middle Ages remained fundamentally agrarian, but the towns were the economic and cultural catalysts' (Hollister 1974: 147) and were ready markets for local agricultural products. In medieval English cities, customary rights grew up in common law that stopped attempted enclosures of common pasture lands (Hollister 1974: 147).



Figure 6.1 Traditional productive urban space, Transylvania. Photo: Susan Parham.

In the fourteenth century the English town was still a rural and agricultural community, as well as a centre of industry and commerce ... outside lay the 'town field' enclosed by hedges, where each citizen-farmer cultivated his own strips of corn land; and each grazed his cattle or sheep on the common pastures of the town which usually lay along the river side. (Trevelyan 2007: 28)

Urban food production took on specific spatial forms, including the domestic kitchen garden, discussed in Chapter 2. Houses were interspersed with 'gardens, orchards, paddocks and farm-yards' (Trevelyan 2007: 28), and because agricultural practices were somewhat improved through feudalism, a food surplus became 'available to towns with their steadily growing populations of non-agricultural specialists' (Morris 1994: 69). In Italian city-states of the same period, meanwhile, the interdependence of town and country was equally well understood as not merely the consequence of landowning by citizens.

The essential function of the great majority of towns was as the principal market centre for local commodities. Most towns were probably dependent on their own rural territories for grain, wine, meat, cheese, vegetables and fruit, a majority even for their hides and wool, a great many too for their oil and fish. (Waley 1969: 35)

With colonialism, and the opening up of new urban spaces, urban agriculture in the New World often reflected broader movements of economic change and immigration and took particular forms of immigrant gardening, such as those of America's mining communities around Lake Superior (documented by Alanen 1990: 161) and the Dutch 'truck farmers' who settled the Calumet region on the southern edge of Chicago from the 1840s. These urban edge farmers worked the rich soils as market gardeners, selling at both wholesale markets and taking their excess produce directly to Chicago's burgeoning industrial areas (Zandstra 2004: 120):

with little money and no refrigeration, food needs were a daily project. Corner stores and street paddlers supplied fresh foods as well as other needs. Another strong tradition in those neighbourhoods was storing food for the long winter months. Canning, preserving, drying, pickling, 'krauting', or storing summer's abundance was an annual ritual. Dutch gardeners were a natural compliment to this industrial working population. Produce was often customised to meet the various ethnic requirements.

In the twentieth century, lucrative perishable vegetable crops, including turnip greens, mustard greens, collards and spinach greens, were grown to reflect the food preferences of black and white immigrants from the south, displaced by the Depression from their share cropping origins (Zandstra 2004: 120). Later, with an influx of Mexican families from Texas (originally to work seasonally on Dutch market gardens as labourers, later to stay as urban industrial workers), crops including 'cilantro, tomatoes, plus many varieties of peppers, such as jalapeños and poblanos, became staples in Dutch farmers' fields' (Zandstra 2004: 126).

In nineteenth-century California and Australia meanwhile, Chinese market gardeners supplied fresh fruit and vegetables in a wide range of urban and rural contexts (Chan 1996; McGowan 2005). These gardeners were associated with the influx of miners to various gold rushes: in Queensland, for example, arriving to work the goldfields at Palmer's River in the north of that state (Jack et al. 1984: 51). Here, Chinese peasants from Hong Kong and Canton arrived by steamer to the remote Cape York region via Cooktown to both pan for gold and to lease space to garden in a location with an acute need for such food services (Jack et al. 1984: 51). All the gardeners on Cape York's Palmer Field were Chinese, counting some sixty-eight by 1883, but by 1900 few remained, with records showing only one gardener of Chinese origin, Ah Toy, gardening here until the 1930s (Jack et al. 1984: 51). Archaeological evidence indicates fruit trees including custard apples, orange, mandarin and mangoes as well as rough leaf pineapple were grown, and traces of vegetable irrigation ditches remain extant (Jack et al. 1984: 51). Now understood as pioneers, such market gardeners employed innovative growing techniques and were particularly skilled at conserving water in arid locations (McGowan 2005: npr). Their under-researched history of urban agriculture is now being reassessed, demonstrating that

Chinese market gardeners were ubiquitous in colonial Australia and for several decades after Federation. As early as 1863 one observer said of Victoria that there was 'scarcely a town but is now well supplied with all kinds of household vegetables by these celestial gardeners'. Many other contemporary observers made similar observations. In the Northern Territory in the nineteenth century the Chinese had total dominance of all agricultural and market gardening activity. (McGowan 2005: npr)

## Urban agriculture as a resilience strategy

Those writing about urban agriculture in non-Western urban settings have shown urban food growing to be a practice relatively unbroken over time, despite the imposition of unsympathetic colonial and technocratic regimes at the broad scale, and more individual scale problems of theft and predation (Freeman 1991: 98). Food security is at the heart of this activity (Pottier 1999). Understandably, with the extremely rapid urbanization experienced in developing-world cities since the 1960s, and the significant implications for food security of these burgeoning populations, the focus of much writing on urban agriculture in developing cities is its contemporary practices and future possibilities rather

than historic examples. What accounts from Africa, Asia and South America tend to show, though, is how central food growing is to urban quality of life, and how these practices shape the spatiality of places as well as being shaped by them (Ikpe 1994; Binns and Lynch 1998).

Migrants to urban areas often cannot find jobs and undertake urban agriculture as a stopgap survival strategy 'not only to deal with food insecurity and poverty, but also to organise with fellow citizens and improve the quality of life in their communities' (Redwood 2009: 4). Cities as diverse as Nairobi (Freeman 1991), Kampala and Shanghai have famously been virtually self-sufficient in food produced from localized agriculture, and in certain places in the first-world urban and peri-urban agriculture still contributes an important source of food (see Figure 6.2). In Moscow, for example, around 80 per cent of the population was reported in the late 1990s to be involved in some level of food growing (Brown and Jameton 2000). Evidence from Australia in the early 2000s demonstrated that between every second and third suburban household grew some of its own food (Gaynor 2006). In relation to more organized urban farming,

an estimated 33% (696,000) of the 2 million farms in the United States are located within metropolitan areas. These farms produce 35% of all crops and livestock sales. The United Nations document on urban agriculture reported that 25% of urban households in the United States are involved in gardening, including food gardens and landscaping. (Brown and Jameton 2000: 20)

In developing countries and continents, where food production is a crucial form of food support for many urban dwellers, such self-sufficiency is again on the urban agenda following the failure of the more technocratic approaches of the Green Revolution of the 1940s–70s (Freeman 1991; Redwood 2009). There is considerable literature on urban agriculture found within wider work on developing nations and food resilience, and this shows, as noted above, that much urban food growing is undertaken in the face of official discrimination, barriers or prohibitions (Mougeot 1994: 7). Yet informal urban agriculture is increasingly evidenced in places as diverse as Accra (Obosu-Mensah 1999) and Latin and South American cities (Redwood 2009). In fact, in both developing and Western urban settings, urban agriculture has grown up alongside urbanization and is increasingly understood to make an exceptionally valuable contribution to individual and societal urban resilience (Midmore and Jansen 2003; Mougeot 2005).



Figure 6.2 Urban agriculture project in Glasgow. Photo: Susan Parham.

Sometimes, the focus on urban food growing may be sanctioned and supported by government as it is driven by the exigencies of a particular crisis. In Havana's city and suburban areas, for example, the state of emergency brought about by an American trade embargo and the collapse of the Soviet bloc, which had previously offered support, led to an urban agricultural programme 'characterized by self-reliance, low input use, and organic farming practices' (Funes et al. 2002: ix). Cuba was forced to re-embrace and adapt traditional forms of urban agriculture, not only because of pressing external conditions, but also because of internal drivers such as the low quality of vegetables in urban markets and under-exploited spatial potential for production in urban areas (Altieri et al. 1999; Funes et al. 2002: 220). Such urban agriculture had to be responsive to a heterogeneity of urban and suburban conditions, have low impact to avoid the effects of toxic pesticides in proximity to people and be efficient in the use of water, maintaining soil fertility and cultivation of crops and animals, especially perishable foodstuffs (Altieri et al. 1999; Funes et al. 2002: 220). In Havana, the employment of a large number of people in urban agriculture (many of whom had emanated from rural areas) was one of its biggest social impacts, and driving these changes was the potential for increased income generated by selling produce from urban gardens; this attracted the attention not only of workers, but also of professionals from diverse backgrounds (Altieri et al. 1999; Funes et al. 2002: 222).

Individual food growers have also shown themselves highly reluctant to waste potential food-growing land, whatever position is taken by the state more formally. 'If one looks carefully, few spaces in a major city are unused. Valuable vacant land rarely sits idle and is often taken over – either formally, or informally – and made productive' (Redwood 2009: 1). In Quito, Ecuador, for example, around 35 per cent of urban land is vacant and some is used for food growing (Redwood 2009: 6). In Peru, urban agriculture is an effective livelihood strategy for the inhabitants of Lima's Carapongo neighbourhood where land reform in a peripheral area under threat from urban sprawl has allowed small farmers to work food plots, which were formerly the property of large haciendas (Villavicencio 2009). Experience from Africa, meanwhile, demonstrates that there is a positive correlation between urban agriculture and avoiding malnutrition (Maxwell et al. 1998). It also shows the critical role of women cultivators on vacant lots and in public land such as roadside verges, parks, drainage 'way-leaves' and institutional land: 'women are major producers of food in large cities now, as they have always been in rural areas' (Freeman 1991: 79). This can be critical for food security. Thus, in a city like Dar es Salaam in the United Republic of Tanzania, 'the proportion of families farming grew from 18 percent in 1967 to 67 percent in 1991 in response to food shortages, inflation and increased rural-to-urban migration (UNDP, 1996)' (Marsh 1998: 6).

## Urban food growing – sustainable urbanism implications

Despite these examples, a rapid decline in urban food growing appears to have been the prevalent mode in first-world cities' spatial, economic and cultural relationship with food production. The loss of market gardens, from examples such as their astonishing peak of urban productivity in the mid-to-late-nineteenth-century Marais in Paris, and the sharp decline in vegetable growing in the Ile de France region around Paris over the post-war period can be seen as symptomatic of broader trends in both attitudes to, and practices of, urban food growing (Stanhill 1977; Cockrall-King 2012: 84). The conventional argument about the loss of productive food space in cities over the twentieth century has ascribed transformations in the role and function of designed and informal urban green spaces as broadly an erosion in the perceived need to locate such food space close by living areas. It has also referred to structural economic changes impinging on traditional spatial practices including urban food growing, with these associated with the problem of time poverty under late capitalism. While this issue of compression of time available for food has been considered more in relation to food consumption, findings about the use of ready or partially cooked meals seem conceptually relevant here. Thus, while critically interrogating the term 'convenience food', Warde (1999: 521) notes that

The appeal of convenience increasingly involves appeal to a new way of conceptualising the manipulation and use of time. It speaks to the problem of living in a social world where people in response to the feeling that they have insufficient time, set about trying to include more activities into the same amount of time, by arranging or rearranging of their sequence.

In some places, too, the narrative of food productivity decline is challenged, and although this relates to private gardens, the subject of Chapter 2, it is considered here because it also connects to broader perspectives on why food productivity has diminished. In her study of the Australian 'backyard', Gaynor (2006: 2), for example, argues that for private gardens in suburban locations, any characterization as a 'simple transition from production to consumption – from vegetable patch to swimming pool – is somewhat flawed', because in Australia at least, a considerable number of households continue to produce a proportion of their own food. So in relation to private green space, Gaynor's analysis contests the view that the loss of urban food productivity has been typified as a move from productive working-class back gardens towards private open space that is largely symbolic in its planting schemes (reflecting more middle-class conspicuous consumption of space). Such an analysis also challenges the theory that this alienation of traditional growers has been followed by a re-appropriation by middle-class households of vegetable growing for lifestyle and health reasons. Gaynor's alternative reading suggests, rather, that across the twentieth century, middle-class and 'respectable' working-class households in Australia have consistently grown food in their back gardens. 'For those people, home food production has long been a source of food valued for its freshness, purity and health giving qualities' (Gaynor 2006: 3).

Other theorists, too, have noted the material pleasures to be had through gardening and food growing. Perspectives include actor network theory which tends to rather problematize food-growing relationships, with the garden seen as 'an ephemeral and precarious outcome, whose achievement both symbolically and materially is constructed and negotiated through the interaction of different actors' (Power 2005; Hitchings 2003: 102). More applied approaches have tended to view gardening as both a private pleasure and an activity important to urban sustainability (Marsh 1998). In fact, sustainability analyses of city green space specifically for food-growing places the decline of urban public and private sites for food as a significant problem for, and in, many modern cities (Hough 1984). Food growing, and green space more generally, in most Western cities has become primarily symbolic in nature over the course of the twentieth century. The role of such space in material culture is increasingly distanced from food except at times understood to be of national emergency, when as many productive areas as possible have been given over to food growing. Wartime examples include Victory Gardens (see Figure 6.3) in the United States and Canada (Johnson 2009) and allotments in the United Kingdom (Crouch and Ward 1997), France (Jones 1997: 58) and the United States through which 40 per cent of fresh vegetables consumed by Americans in wartime were supplied by twenty million small gardens (Lawson, in Nordahl 2009: 17).

More broadly, urban sustainability theorists argue that our view of cities and their surrounding regions has become divorced from nature and thus from cities understood as appropriate sites for food growing (Hough 1984). Urban expansion has built over the open spaces necessary for private vegetable gardens; public green space is unproductive and energy profligate; and agricultural production technologies used for urban fringe production are wasteful, polluting and unsustainable (Hough 1984). In contrast to the notion of conviviality discussed at the beginning of the chapter, attitudes that underlie unsustainable

approaches to urban development and management reflect the way in which a dominant view of landscape has become detached from notions of ecology (Moran 2006). Cities have increasingly been developed as 'pedigree landscapes' stressing horticultural management, rather than relying on earlier ecological traditions of the cultural vernacular expressed in location-specific built forms and open spaces (Moran 2006).

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Figure 6.3 Second World War Victory Gardens poster, USA. Photo: War Food Administration, Agriculture Department, Washington D.C.

In design terms, the resulting 'fixed mould of aesthetic convention and maintenance procedures' has produced in many places a sterile food-free environment evident in a variety of open spaces: turfed parks, hard-paved streets, vacant lands, industrial zones, areas for waste disposal and other miscellaneous spaces (Hough 1984: 247). Sustainable diversity is now more likely to reside in the forgotten or abandoned sites spared the attentions of landscape gardening and scientific horticulture. Open space predominantly mirrors the industrialized countryside in which big agriculture is dominant, with its associated biodiversity, ethical and food quality concerns. Thus agricultural industrialization has urban space consequences: 'a lover of the countryside in the future will be more likely to find it in the old city and its fringe than in the land beyond' (Simmonds 1993: 101). Urban space may offer more fine-grained opportunities than the countryside for an ecologically based conviviality centred on food.

It is this perception in part that underpins the increasing interest by urbanists and sustainability theorists in the city as design and planning context for, and driver of, more sustainable agriculture. The analysis of urban food growing from different disciplines is increasingly interconnected because the effects are so clearly intertwined, and because urban food-growing promises a range of benefits (Garnett 1996; Howe and Wheeler 1999). Urbanists, for instance, argue that our current agricultural systems are unsustainable for urban dwellers for some of the reasons touched on above (Farr 2008: 179). Just as the loss of food-growing space in cities has negatively affected us (as is explored in depth in Chapter 8), urban growth in its sprawling incarnation is implicated in the loss of agricultural land on the urban fringe, which in turn has distanced those in cities from the immediacy of food production. As Barton et al. (2003: 30) explain, food is a key resource within an approach in which the 'basic principle of sustainable development is that buildings and settlements should use resources at sustainable rates and avoid polluting their own or the global backyard'. The social, economic and sustainability implications of shifts away from urban and peri-urban food growing are sharply illustrated in the American context. In the United States, there were more than six million farms in 1940, but by the turn of the century this had dropped to under two million (Nordahl 2009: 3):

And so the agricultural paradigm had shifted. The pervasive ideology of the mid-twentieth century became that food production was no longer suitable in and around our cities, as it had been for centuries. Growing fruit and vegetables was no longer work of community-minded individuals and families on small local farms, but endeavours better suited to corporate-owned, factory-like 'agribusiness' in more distant parts of the country. (Nordahl 2009: 3)

The sustainability case for urban food growing is also increasingly cogent. Not only can urban agriculture reduce the production of embodied energy currently associated with conventional agriculture, it has benefits in relation to reduction in greenhouse gas emissions

and waste production, improvements in air quality and biodiversity and numerous social and economic advantages in relation to seasonality and local consumption (Viljoen et al. 2005). The need to focus on these sustainability benefits has been emphasized by climate change and the increased challenges this brings in relation to food resilience and security (Dubbeling et al. 2011).

This sustainability analysis also has a health focus, as food-growing and healthy cities are increasingly seen as interdependent (Barton et al. 2003; Wakefield et al. 2007). Action on food growing that integrates health and planning approaches is advocated (Hoehner et al. 2003). Yet while theorists are more and more concerned with the characteristics of healthy cities, they may discuss food as an aspect of healthfulness in terms of social justice and inclusion, but are not necessarily foregrounding thinking about the spatiality of urban food growing and agriculture in their analysis (Corburn 2009). Rather, where there is a food-growing focus, issues of health may be perceived as about reducing risk in relation to hygiene practices in production (Redwood 2009: 239). A welcome exception is the increasing theoretical and applied interest in the relationship between neighbourhood food environments and (Cummins and Macintyre 2006; Stafford et al. 2007) obesogenic environments (Lake and Townshend 2006; Lake et al. 2010; Bagwell 2011; Ludwig et al. 2011) and food deserts (Wrigley et al. 2003; Smoyer-Tomic et al. 2006; White 2007; McClintock 2011; Thierolf 2012). While some have challenged the existence of this linkage, arguing there is no relationship between obesity and sprawl or contested aspects of the notion of obesogenic environments (Eid et al. 2008; Guthman 2013), work in this area is one of the developing intersection points between health-focused urban research and analysis of city design and planning in relation to food growing and consumption, and these perspectives are discussed in detail in Chapter 8.

## Convivial green spatiality

It is worth noting that gastronomers have been arguing for many years that food security and conviviality for urban dwellers are not givens, but increasingly compromised by unsustainable food-growing approaches, among other aspects of food's interplay with urban design and place (Parham 1990, 1992, 1993). More recent research findings reinforce the point that even in countries which are currently the most food secure, the most excluded will be worst affected (Gorton et al. 2010). The combination of climate change and variability in supply

are affecting the food system—from production, processing, and distribution through to consumption. Particularly vulnerable foods include fresh fruit and vegetables, intensive livestock and dairy, and seafood. Potential health impacts include compromised nutritional status because of modified food availability and affordability and higher incidences of foodborne diseases. (Edwards et al. 2011: 100S)

As this writer noted in 1993, 'the adverse signs are all around for those who wish to look: loss of market gardens, the decline of small centres on the urban fringe, increases in the long distance shipping of vegetables to urban markets ... soil erosion, land degradation, and increases in runoff pollution from hard paved garden spaces'. Gaynor (2006: 10) notes this view in her environmental history of growing food in Australian cities, arguing that the 'gastronomic positions on sustainable urban development' that have emerged are 'broadly ... characterised by a tension between the rural and urban commons: a desire for increased production of fresh food at home vies with a longing for more densely populated, cosmopolitan cities which (at least in theory) support a greater variety of food outlets, and local, sociable dinner companions'. This perhaps sets up the convivial green space argument as a dichotomy between productivity and conviviality when it is, rather, an attempt to meld the design and planning of food-centred urban space in ways that mutually support sustainable urban food production and consumption across urban, suburban and post-urban contexts.

More broadly, and perhaps understandably, surveying contemporary cities that appear largely to have abandoned food production, recent writers on sustainable food planning and design, Viljoen and Wiskerke (2012: 19), have declared that urban food growing 'is, or at least until recently, was often not an issue on the urban planning, development and/or policy agenda', noting the way that food growing has not been regarded as an urban activity (Pothukuchi and Kaufman 1999, 2000). At a more applied level, in a developing-world urban context, it is also suggested that urban agriculture has been discouraged because of a particular paradigm operating in relation to urban space: 'in the eyes of planners, architects, politicians and developers, trained as many across the world are, in the arts of town planning by European colonial systems, farming in the city was considered a practice either to be discouraged or ignored' (Redwood 2009: 5).

Yet not all planners, urban design writers or urban food practitioners have been oblivious to the problematic decline of food growing in these varying urban contexts: some have offered proposals to respond to these transformations in urban space, with alternative, productive examples and ideas. The disconnect between food production and cities has been challenged practically and theoretically over the course of the past fifty years not only by the actions of individual households (Gaynor 2006), but also by the countercultural urban farming movements of the 1960s and 1970s (Olkowski and Olkowski 1975), through proposals for gastronomic design and planning strategies for cities and for more convivial green space (Parham 1990, 1992, 1993, 1996), in a revival of specific urban growing forms such as allotment holding (Crouch and Ward 1997) more recently in the growth of interest in so-called edible landscapes and edible cities (Esperdy 2002; Vitiello 2008; Paull 2011) and in relatively current calls for agricultural urbanism (Duany 2011; Broadway and Broadway 2011; Phillips 2013) that seek to re-engineer urban form to more productive ends.

The rebirth of urban food growing has been driven by a diversity of factors. Some of these are long term. Immigrant experiences and food practices feature prominently here while others have been propelled by requirements for subsistence or national emergencies, as in

Cuba's case. More broadly, in the 1990s and 2000s, the focus has been on a holistic and critical look at the current food system, and has resulted in increasing attention to urban food resilience in the face of issues including food scares, unethical production, anxieties about food industry monopolization, rising food poverty and sharpening climate change effects. From a study of urban agriculture in three US cities suffering from post-industrial decline, Meenar et al. (2012: 1) note that urban agriculture can be part of a conscious urban design and planning strategy of 'ecological and cultural regeneration based on a notion of "post-growth"'. Practical actions are occurring in many places (see Figure 6.4), often within an urban greening paradigm (Pincetl and Gearin 2005: 377; Birch and Wachter 2008). City-level policies for urban agriculture are a growing trend, as in the American city of San Jose (Schultz and Sichley undated). As one online commentator (cities.mrc) argues, 'Cities around the world are emerging as key locales for growing food. A variety of approaches are being piloted to enhance health and well-being, encourage local economic growth and self-sufficiency, enrich social cohesion and community development, and diversify urban greening and resilience'.

In some urban areas, traditional, convivial connections to food growing have remained relatively strong. In France, for instance, in the late 1990s, over 20 per cent of fruits and vegetables consumed were thought to be grown in family plots, with just over half of households owning a garden and two-thirds of these gardens including some vegetables (Jones 1997: 58). The *potager* has been seen as embodying the French garden, and is now fashionable again, but was in any case a tradition maintained across France by every class over centuries: 'the very word "jardin" long meant, to the vast majority of the French population, a kitchen garden' (Jones 1997: 8). Although the decline of kitchen gardening in urban areas in France reflected a post-war urban boom which 'played down country roots in the euphoria of modern appliances and paid holidays', by the 1960s there was again a 'nostalgic return to the earth and a war between organic methods and chemicals in gardening and agriculture ... today ... every tiny hamlet in deepest France reveals small kitchen gardens, tucked into the most unlikely corners' (Jones 1997: 8). Space constraints for food growing in cities have been met with ingenious solutions in many places: 'as populations grow and land becomes a luxury in the urban environment, smart young gardeners have adapted the *potager* to the smallest city spaces. It appears as a table-top garden on a roof terrace or confined to an oil drum – a useful solution for a mobile population' (Abbott 2001: 8).



Figure 6.4 Community Garden, Adelaide. Photo: Susan Parham.

## Allotments – decline and revival

The history of decline and revitalization of allotments in the United Kingdom is an instructive example of the renewal of food-centred green space in cities. Allotments were an English invention, which can be traced back to cities most affected by the beginning of the industrial revolution in the late eighteenth century when small gardens on the edge of town could be cheaply rented by working-class people, and 'where they could be out in the fresh air with their families, and incidentally raise food to supplement their diets' (Kostof 1992: 57). The allotment as a land use form increasingly appeared in European cities by the end of the nineteenth century and remained popular as a warm-weather leisure retreat (Kostof 1992: 57). In the United Kingdom, allotments were still commonplace in cities in the first half of the twentieth century, and the Tudor Walters report of 1918 proposed using 'backlands' in the middle of large suburban housing blocks as allotment sites (Whitehand and Carr 2001: 47).

Although allotments persisted as a feature of urban landscapes in British cities, by the latter half of the century, they were increasingly understood as a leftover urban form, no longer of use and representing a spatial management problem for local authorities (Whitehand and Carr 2001: 47). Crouch and Ward (1997) reflect on the threats to allotments in the 1980s through local authority sales to speculative house builders, yet note that despite these depredations, urban allotments have a special position in British cities, as a form of both

urban agriculture and open space (see Figure 6.5). For instance, local authorities have a statutory duty to provide land for cultivators and most allotment sites cannot be sold-off (despite huge commercial pressure on urban land) without central government consent (Crouch and Wiltshire 2005: 125). The difficulty until recent times has been a range of external forces impinging on the perceived necessity for keeping allotment space:

The original logic for providing and protecting this land was rooted in the poverty of manual workers over a century ago, however, and while allotments still provide for subsistence needs in many deprived communities, here as elsewhere the availability of cheap supermarket foods and the claims of work time and alternative leisure time pursuits have undermined the revealed demand for allotments. (Crouch and Wiltshire 2005: 125)



Figure 6.5 Contemporary allotment garden, London. Photo: Susan Parham.

A recent change in attitudes to urban food growing has seen the rebirth of the allotment movement, and now, again, allotments are perceived as important to urban agricultural practice in the United Kingdom and elsewhere. As Buckingham (2005) notes, in the United Kingdom allotment holding has shifted from primarily an older male, working-class activity to

one in which younger and more middle-class women now take a more substantial role. In various local authority areas in London, allotments have become so popular that they have long waiting lists, or those lists are so extensive they have been closed to those wanting to join in urban food growing. This shortage is in part because authorities sold-off many of the extant allotments before this cultural change occurred. In addition, some well-known gardeners have taken up the allotments cause, arguing that the narrow cost-benefit analysis of economists which says that private allotments, 'or as they are officially known *leisure gardens*', are expensive to run is wrong (Don 2009).

Blogs in broadsheet newspapers trace the allotment year and a number of cookbook writers, and restaurateurs similarly have documented their allotment adventures in London (Clark and Clark 2007; Tulloh 2011), while a food critic's allotment is the subject of a recent book on kitchen gardens (McCulloch 2011: 86). These situate contemporary allotment holding as an authentic gastronomic, often immigrant, practice borne out of cultural preference as much as necessity. Those with considerable cultural capital in Bourdieu's terms are now joining in and benefitting from their allotment food growing (and it could be argued appropriating the cultural capital of their allotment neighbours through their books and articles). As one allotment gastronome reflects, this food-growing practice allows both spatial and cultural access that would otherwise be unavailable:

That first summer I was rewarded with a place where I felt far away from the city without ever leaving it ... I learned that our site is an inspiring mix of Turkish, Portuguese, West Indian and English gardeners, each with their own approach and their own vegetables. My plot may be sandwiched between a busy road, a sewage works and a dump, but its fertile soil is dark and alluvial with the texture of very rich chocolate cake. (Tilloh 2011: 14)

Another says something remarkably similar:

The first person we met was our neighbour Hassan: kind Mr. Charisma, who was to become our friend and mentor. He introduced us to other people on the allotment – Cypriots, Kurds, and Turks. We soon realised that we were among special people who thought differently about growing and could teach us much about cooking too. Our eyes were opened to things such as frying green tomatoes, cooking artichoke leaves, braising wild poppy leaves, and much more. The Eastern Mediterranean was alive in Hackney Wick. (Clark and Clark 2007: introduction)

One of the insights this newly acquired practice revealed was that people who traditionally grow food on allotments also cook sustainably from scratch. 'Cooking from an allotment means I can't help but cook seasonally. Now I pick first and then decide what to make with it.

The pressure of trying to plan what to cook is gone; the garden does it for me' (Tulloh 2011: 12). Yet all is not entirely Edenic in urbanism terms in these magical food spaces. Reflecting on the fragility of allotment lands in the face of competing pressures on urban space, Clark and Clark (2007: viii) point out that at the time of writing, their 'century old allotment' area in east London was removed to make way for part of the London Olympics site, and they struggled to obtain an alternative site the following year. These tropes of the allotment as both working class and immigrant cultural form, and more latterly, stylish foodie accoutrement, map across arguments in support of allotments. Allotments have three very positive roles that would place them in the 'convivial green space' frame and reflect particular positive urban design elements. These are their role as part of the urban green, their contribution to the urban landscape as sites for autonomous and creative activity and their work as spaces in which people reconnect with each other 'as communities of propinquity and interest' helping to build local identity (Crouch and Wiltshire 2005: 128). The vernacular landscape of the allotment, with its ramshackle sheds often of found materials, is still sometimes seen as problematic in urban amenity terms, while also now valorized as part of the urban world's landscape charm and sustainability. As one cookbook-writing allotment holder describes their allotment 'infrastructure',

All that I needed was a shed. This my husband built for me out of timber scrupulously salvaged from skips. But by the time he'd bought the clear plastic corrugated sheeting that I'd decided I had to have for a lean-to greenhouse, it ended up costing nearly as much as a ready-made shed. My sister decorated the door with a pattern of parrots and the children painted a scribble of owls and numbers on one side. (Tulloh 2011: 14)

## The emergence of urban agriculture as a movement – urbanism implications

In recent years, renewed interest in urban agriculture in the first world has emerged from a variety of directions (see Figure 6.6). Among other justifications, urban food growing has become known as a healthful pursuit supporting individual well-being, a way of avoiding pesticide-ridden commercial crops, seen as reflecting broader concerns for the sustainability and resilience of cities and enhancing food security for individuals on low incomes (Hallberg 2009). Defined as occurring in three waves, the revival in the popularity of allotments is situated as responding to issues including about food safety, globalization, food miles, food quality, increased urbanization and climate change (Cockrall-King 2012: 73). Recent urban agriculture proposals are not simply alternatives to commercial fruit- and vegetable-growing operations in and around cities (and increasingly removed from them spatially) but often act as a practice-based critique of these mainstream spatial arrangements. As Flores (2006: 2) argues, 'Whether you live in an apartment, in the suburbs, on a farm, or anywhere in between, growing food is the first step toward a healthier, more self-reliant, and ultimately more ecologically sane life'. Civic agriculture in these terms is defined as embodying

a commitment to developing and strengthening an economically, environmentally, and socially sustainable system of agriculture and food production that relies on local resources and serves local markets and consumers. The imperative to earn a profit is filtered through a set of cooperative and mutually supporting social relations. Community problem solving rather than individual competition is the foundation of civic agriculture. (Lyon, quoted in Nordahl 2009: 10)



Figure 6.6 Skip garden, King's Cross, London. Photo: Susan Parham.

The 2000s have seen the rise of a vast range of urban food-growing projects, schemes, networks and strategies, with urban governments and city dwellers increasingly aware of food-growing issues and prepared to make changes in their own food production and consumption habits including adopting permaculture approaches (Cockrall-King 2012; Viljoen and Wiskerke 2012). As Nordahl (2009: ix) reports in the American context, with the economic downturn and unstable food supply as one of the effects of climate change on cities, public networks of food-growing opportunities on underutilized public (and private) land are increasingly seen as feasible. It has been realized that it is in urban rather than rural or urban fringe locations that the best opportunities may be found 'to realize the environmental, economic, and equitable benefits of a more local system of agriculture ... in and among the places we pass by daily on our way to work, home, school, commerce, and recreation' (Nordahl 2009: 8).

By the early 2000s, in Canada and the United States, 'seemingly everywhere, cities were forming food-policy councils; community gardens were multiplying; and municipal governments were voting on whether to allow households to keep a few urban chickens or a beehive; or to permit commercial farming to coexist with other commercial pursuits in their cities' (Cockrall-King 2012: 15; Lawson 2005). In the South Australian capital city of Adelaide, for example, proposals emerged as part of development of a long-term vision for the city to convert part of the parkland area encircling the central city into a city farm. Thus, in a process of engagement based on ideas for enlivening the central city and framed by its 5,000 postcode,

'Farming the City', or bringing sustainable agriculture, rooftop crops and hanging vertical gardens into the CBD and inner suburbs, has emerged as a key theme among the 1000 ideas already uploaded to social media sites. A range of uses for the 50ha city farm – mocked up during 5000+ forums to generate debate – includes wheat crops, citrus orchards or huge lettuce gardens. (Monfries 2012)

As this author argued previously (Parham 1993), opportunities for urban food production are available at a range of scales, from private gardens, through productive streets, to public and community gardens, allotments and farms. Recent work on rooftop and 'leftover space' food-growing opportunities offer a number of urban retrofitting possibilities (Engelhard 2010; Parham 2012). Nordahl (2009: 9) asks urban dwellers to give attention to the food-growing potential of plants in all of a city's public spaces: 'fruit trees and shrubs along streets and in medians; orchards in parks; herbs and vegetables in planters located on plazas and sidewalks in our commercial areas; and roof top agriculture, to name a few'. In part, the wellspring for such action is to bring people in touch with food; loss of connection being considered a hallmark of the modern food system. Reflecting on his own regional food background,

Nordahl (2009: 11) notes a high level of gastronomic alienation from locally produced foods: 'many lowans have never eaten tofu, tasted soy milk or ever heard of edamame-yet Iowa is the largest grower of soybeans in the country'.

## Urban agricultural projects – community gardens, urban orchards and beyond

As urban agriculture has gained momentum, a renewed interest in urban food growing has seen a focus on settings such as old industrial regions (Reid et al. 2012) and explored actions from front yard farms (discussed in Chapter 2) to edible estates (Haeg et al. 2008), community gardens (Irvine et al. 1999) and orchards, guerrilla gardening (Severson 1990; Tracey 2007), food networks and crop swaps (see Figure 6.7). Often, these have an overt focus on community support and resilience in the face of food poverty while wider benefits to well-being are also noted (Hynes and Howe 2002). They also have potentially dramatic spatial effects. Reflecting on her experience of community food growing in Eugene, Oregon, Flores (2006) suggests turning wasted lawn spaces, including parks and front gardens into urban food production sites. 'Food not Lawns started several more gardens and circulated seeds, plants, and information. We planted food all over town-vegetables and fruit trees in public parks, berries along the bike path, squash down by the river-anywhere that looked like it would get water and sunshine' (Flores 2006: 10).



Figure 6.7 Community Garden Scheme, North London. Photo: Susan Parham.

Examples of fresh produce grown on public land include those at a significant scale such as in the shrinking city of post-industrial Detroit with its well-known urban farmers movement (Bonfiglio 2009; Giorda 2012). These also encompass a plethora of small-scale instances in the form of community gardens, vacant lot plantings and reuse of blighted or abandoned land (Wakefield et al. 2007). In Detroit, one among many examples is a series of vacant lots in a deprived area taken over by a non-profit organization for fruit and vegetable growing (Choo 2013). A diversity of such urban agriculture schemes are underway in cities including Los Angeles, Vancouver, Toronto, Milwaukee, Detroit, London, Paris and Havana (Cockrall-King 2012). These are sometimes a contested process (Staeheli et al. 2002; Smith and Kurtz 2003). At other times, as in London's, *Capital Growth*, a partnership between the public sector and community groups supports food-growing opportunities, training and education, with its 2013 campaign, 'Growing a Millions Meals for London' directed towards making London again a food-producing city (Capital Growth 2013). Capital Growth's website includes a 'capital growth space finder' through which people can find local food-growing spaces and opportunities:

We have a large garden at Sotheby's Mews Centre which we would like to develop into a community allotment where members of the centre, older people living in Islington, can grow and harvest food which can be used by themselves but also by the centre. Part of the project will be a community kitchen where food can be cooked and served to members of the community. We will aim to set up a gardening club who will maintain and look after the raised beds. As far as possible we will use recycled materials. We will have the facilities to compost food and garden waste and harvesting rain water. As many members are BME we will encourage them to grow food from their own cultures. (Capital Growth Space Finder 2013)

At the other end of the urban spatial spectrum, in Todmorden, a village of some 17,000 inhabitants in west Yorkshire, a residents' group decided to start growing edible plants in a number of public locations around local streets and underused spaces on public land in an initiative that became known as *Incredible Edible Todmorden*. Reportedly tired of food plans, strategies and policies, in 2008, the group began a process of appropriating 'neglected verges, and spaces around halls, council buildings, the canal, and the local railway station, for food growing' (Paull 2011: 28). Paull (2011) explains that villagers took a while to catch on to the idea of 'open source food' in which it was permissible to pick food in public places planted by someone else. These 'public space food plantings' were described by one of the scheme's main proponents as "'propaganda gardens' – something to use as a tangible expression of a set of bigger ideas – including growing local, eating local and fresh, eating seasonal, and knowing the provenance of food' (Warhurst, quoted in Paull 2011).

The development of community gardening projects has sometimes been highly contested, as in the example of New York where a neoliberal agenda on the part of city government saw attempts to sell off community garden space to speculative property developers to realize the property market value of the land (Smith and Kurtz 2003). In Toronto, meanwhile, community gardens have been described as providing opportunities by which (to paraphrase) individuals and communities actively make places, construct culture and in so doing assert their food citizenship (Baker 2004: 305; Palassio and Wilcox 2009). Toronto's 110 community gardens are seen to be part of a food security movement in the city which challenges the corporate food system, allows participants to actively shape their communities and engage cross-culturally (Baker 2004: 305). Such gardening offers the chance 'for people to dirty their hands, grow their own food, work with their neighbours, and generally transform themselves from consumers of food into "soil citizens"' (Baker 2004: 305, quoting Esteva and Prakash 1998; DeLind 2002). While it is acknowledged that people grow food in these gardens to save money, to exercise and to pursue their cultural food preferences, it is also suggested that these food-centred activities contribute to a broader, explicit strategy by the community garden movement to increase urban food resilience. Of particular interest in relation to the spatiality of the community gardens is their location in often-leftover spaces that reflects both the cultural marginalization of their proponents and the messy nature of cities' spatial structure:

Hidden away in corners of public parks, on apartment-building properties, in backyards, on rooftops, and behind churches are Toronto's 110 community gardens, many of which reflect the city's increasing ethnocultural diversity in the faces of the gardeners and the varieties of plants they grow. Immigrant gardeners bring local knowledge from around the world and adapt it to urban gardening spaces in the city of Toronto. As in the example of New Orleans's Vietnamese market gardens (Airriess and Clawson 1994), many of Toronto's community-garden plots reflect the landscape memories of their gardeners. (Baker 2004)

Urban agricultural interests have also turned to productive street trees and urban orchards, and while the latter are being notably revived on the urban fringe (as discussed in Chapter 7), some more city-based examples also exist or have been proposed.

We should plant orchards of fruit trees on common land and in parks and gardens everywhere. The ubiquitous Queensland Box could be replaced by quince, pear, apple, or plum trees in our streets. Orchards give the land an almost magical quality. They also let people who are out of touch remind themselves of the seasons, harvest, and provide a source of fresh food. (Parham 1992: 4)

The Headingley Community Orchard, for example, has been developed by residents and workers from the Headingley area of Leeds in the United Kingdom, in the form of a 'collective dispersed orchard' which is located on underused land owned by others but available for use (Tornaghi 2012: 349). This 'dispersed' orchard is described as an example of urban agriculture which offers the opportunity for 'new ways of sharing spaces and experiencing conviviality in public spaces' (Tornaghi 2012: 349), while the example of the Union Street urban orchard, meanwhile offers a 'worked' case study of urban food production as an interim or temporary use carved out of what might seem on first acquaintance a very unlikely site in an inner post-industrial area of London. Conceived as part of an architecture festival, over four months in 2010, a vacant site in the Bankside area of Southwark was transformed from its derelict state to become a temporary orchard planted with eighty-five fruit trees housed in remodelled pallets (Bost 2010). The Bankside Open Spaces Trust were approached to take a role in creating the temporary orchard space that was designed with elements including a scrumping shed, seed shed, table tennis skip, 'living ark' and 'nest', and the range of fruit trees included apple, pear, quince, medlar, plum, greengage, peach, cherry and apricot. It was noted that

the tight timescale, the lack of money and the temporary nature of the Orchard raised concerns, but as that long winter melted away so did our concerns. The central idea of transforming a desolate interim car park into a stage for a life affirming interaction with art and nature became a daunting but irresistible prospect. (Bost 2010: 48)

Over the course of the few months of its brief life, a series of events and parties were run in the urban orchard, including a harvest celebration, and the site attracted over 10,000 visitors. At the end of the project the trees were transplanted to a number of locations in the local borough including housing estates, sheltered housing and existing community gardens (Beirne 2011: 73). As Bost (2010: 50) points out, the temporary nature of the orchard meant that its appeal was somewhat limited to the 'sophisticated cognoscenti' who immediately connected to it, rather than permeating out to the less hip. But, equally, its evanescent nature meant 'the Orchard did not have to suffer the indignity of a slow decline because it disappeared so quickly' (Bost 2010: 50).

The art of foraging for food from publicly accessible sources in an urban context has also gained popularity in recent years and is linked to urban orchards in the sense that some foragers are also active in planting productive plants suitable for foraging visits (Pollan 2006). This urban gleaning is the continuation of a long tradition of gathering leftover food from fields and forests that would otherwise go unused, and in an urban context has had something of a revival. Reflecting on his own foraging experiences, Pollan (2006) situates this as both a personal gastronomic pleasure and a precursor to a better understanding of where food comes from, while Fowler (2011: 11) argues that urban foraging allows her to pick foods such as fruits that are 'far more beneficial to me and my surroundings than anything I buy out

of a packet'. Nordahl (2009: 76) similarly suggests that foraging for urban food is not only better for increasing food system understanding but also offers other very real benefits including enhancing environmental responsibility by locally sourcing some foods that would otherwise require shipping in and providing extra calories for snacks and even (potentially) whole meals.

In the previously mentioned city of Adelaide, olive groves planted in the parklands ringing the central city from the nineteenth century onwards have remained a strong feature of the parkland landscape even after significant olive oil production from them ceased in the twentieth century. Post war, Italian and Greek migrants to the city began to harvest the olives, and, in recent times, a new set of middle-class urban gleaners have begun to do the same. Nordahl (2009: 76) suggests that in his area of Berkeley he has seen 'oranges, lemons, cherries, persimmon, fennel, the occasional tomato vine, as well as rosemary, thyme, sage, and other herbs – all occupying space between the sidewalk and the street' and references the Fallen Fruit foraging group in Los Angeles (Nordahl 2009: 77) that collects publicly accessible fruit and now plans 'fruit parks', that is, community orchards. Today's urban foraging practices, both individual and more organized, reflect a range of motivations: from ameliorating food poverty and hunger to exploring sustainability possibilities and reflecting gastronomic preferences of some restaurateurs and others. It may well be that such foraging can be criticized because it fits a hipster habitus, but this should not bar us from being interested in design which supports foraging opportunities, and other forms of convivial green space, and is hence considered in the next section.

## What are the design requirements for urban food growing?

Theorists from urban biodiversity, sustainable cities and urban design perspectives are increasingly tying together notions of food-centred productivity, with reshaping and retrofitting urban built form (Dunham-Jones and Williamson 2009; Tachieva 2010). Drawing on pre-urban patterns from European experience, Vall-Casas et al. (2011) argue that the rediscovery of rural grids and watercourses can form the physical design and landscape basis for remaking suburbia as more sustainable urbanism, including for urban agriculture. Notwithstanding the critiques of radical political ecology which problematizes biodiversity corridor and framework approaches within its Marxist analysis of urban landscapes, it appears that when successfully designed, urban food-growing spaces can contribute to making convivial outdoor rooms on which public green space is focused. The idea of design for 'nourishable' places (Mouzon 2008) has emerged, while constructs such as the urban bioregion seek to interconnect cities and their landscape contexts and opportunities in much more resilient ways, as explored in Chapter 9. Issues of urban food security are sharpening interest in the possibilities for the design of convivial green space. Among conceptual approaches is that of 'continuous productive urban landscapes', the 'CPULs' which seek to insert an unbroken chain of open spaces across cities, linking urban and rural space and providing opportunities for urban food growing from inner city to fringe locations (Viljoen et al. 2005: 11).

As noted in Chapter 2, Alexander et al. (1977: 792) offer notably holistic proposals for remaking city form in ways sympathetic to food growing. In *A Pattern Language* (Alexander et al. 1977: 302), it was argued that (to paraphrase) urban green space provides a kind of flip side to lively, engaged streets; forming the quiet backs, still water and cool greens that urban dwellers turn to when the pace and connection of civic life threatens to overwhelm their sense of self. Just as city dwellers need promenades to which the café is the proper adjunct, they also require quiet places where 'the mood is slow and reflective', where only natural sounds can be heard, where there are pools and streams nearby, but where walking is protected by a comforting wall at one side (Alexander et al. 1977: 302). Within this wider set of spaces, a series of patterns for urban gardening are laid out that echo in spatial terms the kitchen gardens of traditional cities and include terraces and bunds on which to plant vegetables and orchards, wild gardens, garden walls, trellised walks, greenhouses, garden seats and vegetable gardens (Alexander et al. 1977: 302). The designers are very conscious that these productive spaces can (and should) be very beautiful and robust over the long term, as in the example of the *limonaie* of Lake Garda described by D. H. Lawrence which form exquisite 'terraced labyrinths', some of which have borne fruit for 150 years (Rudofsky 1964: npr).

Farr (2008: 179), meanwhile, proposes that in terms of urban food production, 'planners and architects have the opportunity to bring back what years of irresponsible practices have taken away' and documents a number of built and unbuilt examples for well-designed space for growing. This design schema integrates food production and food access into urban and neighbourhood plans and includes both individual domestic and community scale interventions (Farr 2008: 179). These encompass rooftop and household gardens, greenhouses, community gardens, orchards, aquaculture, edible landscapes and farms, and include opportunities for reusing compostable material to make soil (Farr 2008: 180). Duany (2011: 8), meanwhile, suggests employing a holistic design and economic model of 'agrarian urbanism' in which 'society is involved with food in all its aspects: organizing, growing, processing, distributing, cooking and eating it'. In his model, 'the physical pattern of the settlement supports the workings of an intentional agrarian society' and includes saving existing farmland, cultivating land within existing cities and suburbs and allowing urban working farms. Rather than situating this as some kind of nostalgic return to traditional (often backbreaking) agricultural labour, Duany (2011: 8) argues for design and process that is a pragmatic response to present difficult urban conditions. Thus, agrarian urbanism would learn from successful placemaking examples including Garden Cities, and employ modern management practices to be 'profitable, popular and reproducible' (Duany 2011: 9).

Allotments, discussed earlier in the chapter in relation to their historic evolution, have also interested contemporary urban designers who can have useful roles in helping find ways to accommodate the 'living landscape and culture of the allotment' within previously mentioned continuous productive urban landscapes (Crouch and Wiltshire 2005: 130). As a result of European cities' history of allotment garden provision, many cities have extensive allotment garden holdings, with cities including Copenhagen, Freiburg, Paris and Vitoria-Gasteiz rich in this regard (Beatley 2012: 22). Yet, although allotments are more accessible and human-

scaled than the industrialized countryside, designers have been somewhat ambivalent about them, as these apparently unkempt spaces may undercut notions of order and clean lines in urban development (Crouch and Wiltshire 2005: 127). In fact, the 'unhappy marriage' of allotments and imposed design has been 'a persistent feature of manuals and government-inspired advice since the 1930s, and even before that Garden City design included neatly arranged allotment plots, although on the traditional layout. But the gardeners persist in softening the edges, disrupting the lines, etching their culture into the landscape' (Beatley 2004: 129).

Allotments in contemporary cities may still send 'mixed messages' to urban designers, seen by some as simply leftovers from wartime austerity, and viewed as 'semi-derelict eyesores' while in some instances attracting lengthy waiting lists of would-be holders (Barton et al. 2003: 160). In the United Kingdom, this contemporary design friction between allotments as 'chaotic but well tended urban landscapes melding rural and urban' and normative preferences for a more apparently orderly landscape reminds allotment experts of previous attempts to give these spaces a design makeover (Crouch and Wiltshire 2005: 130). Related to the Thorpe Report of the 1970s, ill-fated proposals to turn allotments into 'leisure gardens', with European-inspired design models including spiral-shaped spaces, turned out to be prohibitively expensive to impose and were resisted by allotment holders (Crouch and Wiltshire 2005: 130).

Of course, there are legitimate design and equity problems of accessibility, as early adopters can keep allotments for generations, restricting access to garden space to a privileged few and in a de facto way enclosing public land into semi-private spaces from which most are excluded (Crouch and Wiltshire 2005: 127). Despite such failures, successful allotment design offers a unique opportunity to contribute to a productive and aesthetically satisfying urban landscape. In fact, 'many organizations now see the allotments renaissance as representing an important tool for delivering sustainability to neighbourhoods', especially in their greening, health, social inclusion and food-growing opportunities for low income and elderly people (Barton et al. 2003: 160). On this basis, Barton et al. (2003: 31) suggest that food growing should be part of the urban designers' checklist of good urban form, with designers asking 'is the potential for households to grow their own food at or very close to their dwelling being maintained, even in this era of low participation in vegetable gardening?' Good design can thus be seen as critical to balancing private and public accessibility and use. Designers' skills could make allotments more open and more widely valued green space, 'through designs which encourage and enhance the gaze, stimulating the viewer to ponder the merits of buying a fork and joining in, while protecting crops and property from misadventure with softened but appropriate security, and integrate the loose-fit character of new allotments into wider design schemes' (Crouch and Wiltshire 2005: 130). In addition to the allotments themselves, a well-designed allotment area could include shelter belts, a sustainable urban drainage scheme, a wildlife garden and balancing pond, community composting, a community garden, a community orchard and pedestrian and cyclist cut-throughs (Barton et al. 2003: 160).

Finally, in this section on productive design opportunities, like allotments, the previously mentioned community orchards are a design area relevant to both urban and rural settings. In some cases they have replaced allotment areas where use has declined. In others, vacant industrial land in urban areas has been reused in a temporary way, as in the Union Street example referred to earlier in the chapter. Urban orchards have been seen to both improve the environment and the biodiversity of places including housing estates, industrial estates, hospitals and schools (Barton et al. 2003: 161). Echoing the allotments discussion above, in relation to the design of orchards, it is argued that 'the presence of orchards adds an experience that has all but vanished from cities the experience of growth, harvest, local sources of fresh food, walking down a city street, pulling an apple out of a tree and biting into it' (Alexander et al. 1977: 795).

## Green space and food consumption

While this chapter has so far focused on green spaces in cities primarily in relation to food production, open spaces in cities have long been the sites for outdoor eating, as touched on in Chapters 4 and 7. Eating outdoors is well recognized as a feature of farm working, and has given rise to particular meal structures and settings in that context (Burnett 2003: 21; Fenton 2003: 39). Similarly, in cities, from necessity or choice, eating outside has long been a feature of both working lives and leisure activities. Burnett (2003: 26) notes, in fact, that the urban working class of nineteenth-century English towns often lacked adequate kitchens at home, worked long hours and were forced by their circumstances to buy minimal rations to eat on the street and doorsteps from both street sellers and a plethora of small shops. Food available on the street in nineteenth-century London included hot eels and pea soup, pickled whelks, fried fish, sheep's trotters, baked potatoes, ham sandwiches, pies, boiled puddings, cakes, tarts, gingerbread, muffins, crumpets, ice-cream and coffee (Burnett 2003: 26).

Traditionally, more conviviality in food's interplay with open space has been available to those further up the social hierarchy who have been able to enjoy al fresco meals in parks, pleasure gardens and tea gardens, with notable examples, as discussed in relation to 'Les Wauxhalls' in Chapter 4. In London, for example, the fashionable Ranelagh Gardens offered 'lawns and walks, flowers and shrub berries, fountains and statuary, dancing platforms and stages for musical and theatrical performances' and such riverbank-based or semi-suburban green spaces provided more affluent urban dwellers with airy locations to which they could bring their own food and drink or buy refreshments which were served in booths (Burnett 2003: 26). Others spent evenings at Hampstead Heath, although its current reputation would suggest today that sex rather than food in the open air is the main attraction for some. Picnics were also a feature of French social life outdoors for all social classes, and while generally held in a rustic or rural setting, meals out of doors became a feature of aristocratic town life and revolutionary street banquets (Csergo 2003: 145). At an aristocratic level, the *fête champêtre* was a common 'outdoor' dining form in the reigns of Elizabeth I and Louis XIV, for which often extremely ornate pavilions were constructed in the open air to house banquets. An example of such a fête in the garden of the Earl of Derby at The Oaks, in June 1774, is included in *The Works in Architecture of Robert and James Adam* (Vol.111, Plate 22)

and can be seen at the Sir John Soane Museum. Here diners are shown at an enormous table in the grandest of (temporary) ballrooms. By Victorian times, large-scale picnics such as that detailed by Mrs Beeton (1861) were mammoth affairs requiring substantial planning.

In continental Europe, a long tradition of beer gardens and outdoor café threads through urban life and in contemporary practice of the use of urban street space for food, dining outdoors is sometimes situated by place users as denoting a 'European' sensibility (Parham 2012). Fieldwork in London suggests that sitting outside to eat and drink is both highly valued as a food practice (Parham 2012) and for designers and place marketers widely understood as a marker of urban vibrancy. Work from the United States suggests that urban parks are key sites for some Hispanic communities to socialize around food (Rishbeth 2001). While tailgating parties outside football stadiums have become ubiquitous. Yet within the context of arguments about development density and place design, café culture and outdoor dining have sometimes been argued to be citified imports redolent of the urban *flâneur* rather than reflecting more home-grown suburban mores centred on the private realm of home and family.

Despite such cultural anxieties about urbanity, outdoor restaurant dining is ubiquitous across cities, and sometimes ingenious space capturing, heating and cooling arrangements are employed by restaurateurs to make this possible in what would otherwise seem unpromising urban conditions. Such dining is at once a prime example of commercial conviviality and an area of spatial contestation reflecting changing attitudes, including in relation to tobacco smoking. Research from South Australia (Miller et al. 2002), where bans on smoking in both indoor and outdoor food settings have been in place for some time, suggest that this has increased the enjoyment of such spaces for a substantially higher percentage of diners than prior to the ban coming in. More recent research from another Australian state also found majority support for smoke-free outdoor dining areas (Walsh et al. 2008). Arguments over smoking in food space suggest changing, and more informed, perspectives on what constitutes convivial green space.

## Convivial green space as public policy

Design and planning for urban food growing is increasingly recognized as a public infrastructure and policy matter that fits within both wider urban sustainability initiatives and those more recently focused on food resilience and conviviality (Neuner et al. 2011). It was reported as early as the beginning of the 1990s that aspects such as water infrastructure which would support urban food growing were increasingly subject to both guidance and practical retrofitting interventions. 'Governments are looking at more environmentally conscious approaches to waste water and sewerage – ponding and woodlotting, retaining grey and stormwater on site to water gardens is quite likely to become ubiquitous. There are plans afoot to dig up the concrete around our creeks and create corridors for wildlife out of ugly drains' (Parham 1993).

In more recent days, existing food-growing spaces and further opportunities for them have started to be reflected in strategies, plans, policies and design guides from national, regional, city and local governments, as well as design experts (Cooper-Marcus and Francis 1997). The planned poly-nucleated city of Almere in the Netherlands, for example, has been argued to be based on principles of sustainable development. Its designers have proposed an entirely new growing zone adjoining the town, with the intention of the Agromere proposal to reintegrate food growing into Dutch city life (Jansma and Visser 2011). There are also a considerable range of food-growing policy initiatives in the United States, including the City of Seattle Municipal Plan of 2005, which 'recommends an increase in number of gardens city-wide as well as a target of one community garden for each 2,500 households located within designated villages throughout the city' (Neuner et al. 2011). The Central Bedfordshire Design Guide (2010: 55) from the United Kingdom proposes allotments as part of a town's 'green infrastructure' and sees these as an important potential element of any public realm design. The London Food Strategy (2006: 72) notes a need to 'Expand individual & community growing in response to demand (e.g. allotments, community gardens, parks & open spaces, school grounds, etc.)' while in Melbourne, Australia, there has been an attempt to develop a policy for Food Sensitive Planning and Urban Design (FSPUD) that encompasses a range of urban food-growing opportunities within a sustainable city paradigm (Donovan et al. 2011). At an 'in principle' level, Nasr and Komisar (2012) also propose ways to reintegrate food and agriculture into urban planning and design practice.

The benefits of explicitly directed policy and projects do not just accrue in first-world settings. The Food and Nutrition Bulletin (1985) shows how a 'garden city in the slums' in Lima is ameliorating food poverty, while Marsh (1998: 5) notes how, in very poor areas in developing countries, urban food gardens can have significant benefits in relation to supporting food security, as well as reflecting available resources, food preferences and cultural traditions. While opponents tend to argue instead for vitamin supplements and targeted subsidies, often their analysis of cost-benefit is extremely narrow, tending to focus on one element such as vitamin deficiency. A wider view finds that even in very marginal situations, homestead gardening and other more community-based urban food-growing opportunities contribute strongly to well-being (Marsh 1998: 5). Once again, design sensitivity is critical, as there have been situations in which, where government is involved,

'improved' gardens are planned and developed for which the effort and costs for the household often outweigh the benefits, leading to eventual abandonment of the gardens after the project subsidies terminate. Were the improved gardens to build on the characteristics and objectives of traditional gardens in the region, many resource constraint problems could be anticipated and avoided. (Marsh 1998: 5)

## Convivial green space in review

Growing food in cities is an ancient practice, as is eating food outdoors. The close interplay between outside living space, and food sources and practices, traditionally reflected resource constraints and led to growing and eating spaces and approaches that varied by place and time but always acknowledged that local supply of food mattered. Food growing and eating were not just borne of necessity, though, but in many cases sources of pleasure and enhancement of the convivial green space of the town. In Western cities, by the mid-to-late twentieth century, however, these realities no longer seemed to apply on the production side while spaces for outdoor food consumption became more prominent. Growing food close to living space no longer appeared necessary for health, sustainability or economic necessity; thus growing spaces in cities dwindled and interest in food production likewise declined. Exterior food spaces at the same time were increasingly seen as markers of urban vitality, although were contested in terms of civilized behaviour, including in relation to damaging practices like smoking.

By contrast, in the developing world, the absolute requirement for local food sources never went away, and the role of urban agriculture in supporting resilience, mitigating food poverty and dealing with climate change has been increasingly recognized despite technocratic arguments associated with notions of modernity that discount such place-based necessities. In the West, along with a rump of those who had continued to grow food in urban areas through allotments, community gardens and urban farms, the radical social movements of the 1960s and 1970s ushered in new perspectives on food and revived not only community food-growing spaces and practices but also awareness of the design basis and requirements for these to succeed; a cultural change that has again been revived and extended in the early twenty-first century. As an understanding of the fit between urban agriculture, sustainability and food resilience has grown, the burgeoning urban agriculture movement has taken off. In cities currently, there is a rich array of urban food-growing and foraging activities which have reacquainted urban dwellers with the vital design and practice interconnections between cities as places for living and convivial green space for food. Similarly, on the consumption side, outdoor dining spaces and opportunities offer a diverse set of designed settings in the public domain that support convivial urbanism. In this chapter, a fundamental conclusion is that at the scale of the convivial green, such urbanism offers substantial design opportunities for interweaving food production and consumption space. In the next chapter, we will expand to the scale of the urban periphery where contestation between living and food growing is perhaps at its sharpest.