

 **Social and economic equity** Action 3.4

 **Food Production** Action 4.1

FOOD POLICY

Agro-ecological urban and peri-urban food production

KEY WORDS

Food sovereignty, urban gardens, local production, food access

OBJECTIVES

- To care for the population in conditions of social vulnerability and improve their life quality.
- To produce healthy local food for the population, allowing a nutritious and pollutant-free diet.
- To promote the food autonomy of Rosario, and reduce its dependence on distant products.
- To mitigate the effects of climate emergency by increasing permeable surfaces and heat and carbon dioxide absorption.

POLICY DESCRIPTION

The Urban Agriculture Programme was created in 2002 to guarantee food security for people in vulnerable situations, in a context of strong dependence on distant food and deep social, economic and political crisis. The aim was to improve the habitat, giving value to degraded spaces by converting them into productive ones. The municipality mapped the most appropriate and permanent unbuildable spaces and, based on soil mapping, identified the most suitable soils for food production.

In 2008, several vegetable gardens were established and equipped with productive infrastructure. The municipality granted the right to use them for food production for an unlimited period of time to socially vulnerable people, as long as they respect certain production criteria (agro-ecological management) and provides technical assistance and training.

In response to the greater demand for agro-ecological products and aiming at scaling up the programme, in 2016 the Green Belt Programme was launched on private land (either owned or leased) in the peri-urban area. Thus, 800 hectares were protected in the peri-urban area and additional vegetable gardens were created within the urban area.

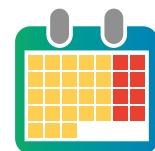
Both programmes offer to users:

- Technical support in agroecology and production monitoring.
- Market differentiation of agroecological products.
- Access to commercialisation points in 50 non-sedentary markets (fairs) operating once a week, daily markets and agroecological shops.
- Networking with other neighbouring cities to commercialise the products.

The municipality is currently working on:

- The design of more sustainable food diets, introducing legumes as a vegetable protein and favouring home-grown food.
- The transition of food aid programmes by including urban and peri-urban products.
- Trials with freeze-dried food for people in vulnerable situations without food refrigeration or conservation infrastructure, aiming at ensuring access to quality and safe food (through simple handling and without risk of contamination).
- Developing a participatory guarantee system.
- The use of renewable energies in the productive spaces.

CONTRIBUTION TO SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS



In 2002 the Urban Agriculture Programme was created and in 2016 the Green Belt Programme was generated, integrating the peri-urban area. In the coming years, the aim is to scale up production by articulating urban, peri-urban and metropolitan areas of Rosario and to develop a quality label through a participatory guarantee system.

DEPARTMENTS IN CHARGE

Cabinet Coordination - Strategic Programme for Innovation in Food Quality (Articulation of Food Policies).

Secretariat of Human Development and Habitat - Sub-secretariat of Social Economy (Urban agriculture).

Secretariat for Economic Development and Employment (Green belt).





BUDGET

480,000 € for 2022.



KEY STAKEHOLDERS

Secretariat for the Environment and Public Space

Secretariat of Planning

Faculty of Architecture, Faculty of Agricultural Sciences, Engineering and Hydraulics

Food Institute

College of Nutritionists

INTA - National Institute of Agricultural Technology

Social organisations

Environmental NGOs

BENEFICIARIES

1 million inhabitants of Rosario, potential consumers. Around 3,450 families (400 in a situation of social vulnerability, 3,000 in family gardens and 50 producers in the peri-urban area).

ASPIRATIONAL QUANTITATIVE OBJECTIVES

20%-30% of Rosario's population with access to healthy food.

800 hectares of land turned into agro-ecological production.

Overall aspiration of the food policies committed to The Barcelona Challenge:

<https://toolkit.thebcnchallenge.org/challenges/report/233>

STRENGTHS AND SUCCESS POINTS

The main strength is the fact that the municipality has considered these programmes as an investment and not an expense; being the promoter of the initiative and providing technical assistance and investment in equipment, as well as including the trade aspect to ensure the sale of the production.

Another element is the inclusion of agroecology and urban and peri-urban agriculture in public policies and providing an enabling regulatory framework for the initiative.

From the beginning there was a transversal coordination (networking with local organisations), with participatory governance, facilitating the appropriation of the project by the community.

A success point has been the creation of a civil association of gardeners (Network of Gardeners). Other aspects are the established links with the health area of the municipality (medicinal gardens, healthy diet in health centres), introducing a circular economy approach by reusing organic waste to produce compost and involving public bodies as important consumers of the generated production, through public food procurement.

CRITICAL POINTS

A mayor critical point is land tenure, in the sense of ensuring secure and stable access to productive spaces in and around cities. Also mapping the land and protecting productive spaces as such by incorporating them into land use planning as green infrastructure.

OBSTACLES AND SOLUTIONS

It is necessary to raise awareness among the population about conscious and responsible consumption, emphasising that by buying food products from these initiatives they are rewarding this kind of healthy and local production.

Another important aspect is to achieve community ownership of the project, making its permanence possible beyond the current government administration.

Also, to have stable spaces for commercialisation through short and local distribution channels.



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FURTHER INFORMATION

Website Urban Agriculture Rosario

Website Green belt, sustainable food production

Report: The Green Belt project, a public policy for a sustainable peri-urban area in Rosario.

Metropolis, article on Food-based responses to the climate emergency and urban inequality in Rosario

2020-2021 Grand Prize Winner: Sustainable Food Production for a Resilient Rosario | World Resources Institute