Urban Agriculture: Growing in America's Cities

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Urban Agriculture (UA): definition

The growing, processing, and distribution of food and other products through intensive plant cultivation and animal husbandry in and around cities
UA as economic development: history

• Trend: urban farming and gardening has grown during economic crises, contracted in prosperous times
• 1890s: Vacant Lot Cultivation Associations
• WWI, 1930s, WWII, ‘77-96: federal garden programs
• 2000s: civic agriculture and local food
  – Is this a fad or paradigm shift?
UA as economic development: logic

- Import substitution and multiplier effects of localization
- Changes in consumption behavior: increased local spending
- Attraction of new entrepreneurial, creative residents
- Innovation/experimentation leading to new export sectors
- Increased land values and productivity
- Low barriers to entry for firms and workers
- Social enterprise and workforce integration
- Supplemental income and social support

Ohio City Farm, Cleveland OH
Growing Home, Chicago
Las Parcelas Garden, Philadelphia PA
UA: economic development and resilience

...at different scales