



# Caring local and regional agricultural and food practices

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## Background

An increasing number of promising practices of caring and connective agriculture is developing in the Netherlands under the headings of CSA, Urban Agriculture, Permaculture and Care farming. They can link producers with different groups of citizens, generating social and ecological benefits. In addition an increasing number of farmers is opting for regional food chains. Support is limited however.

## Objective

We explore the values, motivations and experiences of different types of agricultural and food initiatives at local and regional level that challenge our conventional food system in order to inspire citizens and farmers.

## Introduction

There is growing concern about the negative impacts of conventional agricultural and food practices. Alternative models to the dominant paradigm are developing. We explore the diversity of practices operating at the local and regional level that aim to reconnect farming with the community and the region and a harmonious relationship with the environment.



## Results

Types	Key issues	Examples	Involvement Citizens
Urban citizen initiatives	Community development Inclusion Empowerment By local food production	Community gardens City farms	Gardening by citizens Vulnerable citizens
Agro-ecological farms	Food production embedded in care for environment, community	CSA, Food Forest, BD farming	Critical citizens interested in/ involved in food production
Farmers producing for the region	Healthy, fresh, seasonal food; local economy	Cooperative of farmers like Oregional	Connection through supermarket, catering

### Three types of initiatives

We identified three main types of initiatives: from urban citizens, from farmers opting for agro-ecological agriculture practices and farmers searching for regional sale of their products.

## Results

- The types differ in focus, values, objectives and citizen involvement.
- They develop new business models including care and education.
- They have the potential to involve and inspire stakeholders and integrate food production and care for people and environment.



Case	Liessenhuus	Ruimzicht	Food Garden
<b>Type of farm</b>	Care Farm based on biological principles	Care Farm based on biodynamic and CSA principles	Urban Farm based on Permaculture principles
<b>Principles guiding the Farmer's practices</b>	Social justice, mutual learning, individuality of each participant	Healthy vital planet. Holistic learning, reflection, personal development	Cooperation, nature and people
<b>Care for Community: underpinning principles and practices</b>	Safety and social inclusion	Involvement and education of the community	Food for Food bank; encouraging people to participate; urban platform for social and developmental issues
<b>Care for Environment</b>	Biological, seasonal	Care for the earth, soil, plant life: mulching	Permaculture; Creating a food forest; Healthy soil
<b>Care for Vulnerable citizens</b>	Discover what interests them, equal relationship	Support in what they want to be; personal development	Re-integration equal relationship; contribution to useful work; creating a community
<b>Care for Food</b>	Fresh food for people via foodbank	Food experience, education	Fresh vegetables

### Characteristics of Urban and Agro-ecological farm cases

## Conclusions

- Citizens, social entrepreneurs and farmers develop inspiring examples of caring local and regional food production.
- We can learn from their values and approaches to connect to citizens.

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