

A conference addressing the necessary and emerging restructuring of food production systems from a spatial perspective. What role can territorial and spatial planning, and architecture play in reorienting food production toward preferable spatial, social, climatic, environmental, and biodiverse outcomes?

PROGRAMME

- 08:30 Registration and coffee
- 09:00 Welcome:
Lene Dammund Lund, Rektor,
Royal Danish Academy
- 09:05 Introduction:
Deane Simpson, Professor,
Royal Danish Academy
- 09:20 Lecture:
Carolyn Steel, Architect, Author
of Hungry City/Sitopia, London
- 10:30 Coffee break
- 10:45 Lecture:
Milica Topalovic, Associate
Professor, ETH Zurich
- 11:45 Panel discussion I:
Existing systemic conditions and
barriers. Panelists representing
business, environmental and
political interests:
- Thomas Roland, Coop, CSR
Head
 - Rikke Lundsgaard,
Danish Society for Nature
Conservation, Senior Advisor
 - Michael Minter, Concito,
Program Lead: Future Foods
 - With Carolyn Steel and
Milica Topalovic
- 12:30 Lunch
- 13:30 Lecture:
Line Gordon, Director,
Stockholm Resilience Center
- 14:00 Lecture:
Vicente Guallart, IAAC,
Barcelona

- 14:30 Lecture:
Karl-Martin Buch Frederiksen,
Sweco Denmark
- 15:00 Coffee break
- 15:30 Panel discussion II:
Future systemic conditions:
frameworks/imaginaries.
Panelists representing
innovation and change agendas:
- Finn Arler, Aalborg University,
Professor
 - Paul Rye Kledal, Researcher,
Author of 500 Years of Urban
Farming in Denmark
 - Charles Bessard, Bessards
Studio, Architect, Partner,
co-maker of ReDane
 - With Line Gordan,
Vicente Guallart,
Karl-Martin Buch Frederiksen
- 16:15 Closing comments
- 16:30 End of programme, apéro

Tuesday October 25th, 2022

Auditorium 2
Royal Danish Academy—Architecture
Danneskiold-Samsøes Allé 53
1434 Copenhagen K

Entrance free, but registration required at
www.kglakademi.dk/foodconference

Presented by
Royal Danish Academy
and Sweco, in collaboration
with ARKAIA



SWECO 
ARKAIA

FOOD-SCAPES

25.10.2022

FUTURE SPACES OF SUSTAINABLE FOOD PRODUCTION

“Far from being solved, the question of how to feed cities is arguably the greatest of our age. [...] Industrial agriculture is now our most damaging global activity, yet modern urbanity depends on it.”

Carolyn Steel, Hungry City and Sitopia

“We can fish on land, grow salad on the 10th floor, create single plants that grow potatoes underground and tomatoes above, we can measure each leaf... Why did our achievements happen in secret? Are we embarrassed about our inventions at the moment we most depend on them?”

Rem Koolhaas, OMA/AMO

This conference will address the necessary and emerging restructuring of food production systems from a spatial perspective. What role can territorial and spatial planning, and architecture play in reorienting food production toward preferable spatial, social, climatic, environmental, and biodiverse outcomes?

Globally, roughly a quarter of GHG emissions; and more than three-quarters of the drivers behind land-use change and biodiversity loss are related to our food systems. Within that larger system, Denmark is one of the world’s most intensive sites of industrial food production, with one of the highest ecological footprints in the world. More than 60% of Denmark’s total land area is dedicated to food production – with around 80% of that area used to grow animal feed. These practices have been criticised for their negative impacts on the environment and on biodiversity, as well as the suboptimal production of nutrition they represent. Similarly, the disconnect between the spatial logics of the countryside as a space of industrial food production, and the city as site of food consumption has been criticized for its contribution to ongoing environmental degradation. Despite these urgent concerns, food production, remains an absolutely essential activity that must be addressed in any picture of a more sustainable and just future.

One of the core questions concerning how to address these challenges is a spatial one – land-use – a theme at the core of spatial planning. How will the necessary transitions of these existing systems be spatially conceptualized, negotiated, organised, planned, and regulated? What will be its emerging spatial building-blocks in the form of landscape typologies, infrastructural typologies or architectural typologies, for example? How might these typologies and the relations between them suggest the potential for alternate formats of urban, peri-urban or rural space?

Emerging food production technologies, practices, policies, and cultural changes point to potentially significant spatial and environmental implications for the countryside, as well as the city. Controlled-environment vertical-farming technologies for example, use considerably less land area than conventional vegetable crops – pointing to the potential to repurpose portions of cropland to uses such as afforestation, reflooding drained peatlands, rewilding, etc. Ongoing experiments in practices such as regenerative farming and pixel farming suggest similar transformative spatial and organisational potential. Emerging technologies and practices also point to the possibility for expanded food production spaces in urban contexts, closer to where food is consumed. Such developments, however, still generally operate as fragmented niches of activity. Their broader spatial implications and their ability to address climate and environmental goals, and food system resilience remains underexplored – as does the potential role of spatial planning and architecture in contributing to this aspect of the so-called green-transition.

This conference is therefore intended to reflect on the potential for these kinds of evolving developments to contribute to challenges of climate mitigation, climate adaptation, biodiversity, and food security/sovereignty. How might they unfold new spatial and territorial imaginaries; challenge the conceptual maps of our territories; and provoke alternative spatial configurations of how food production, humans, and other species might interact on and within territory. How do these developments challenge how we have thought about the countryside and the city, and the relation between them? What might be the relevant modalities of spatial planning and architecture within this field of activity, particularly in times of increased environmental crisis, political inertia, and a dearth of concrete spatial visions for a way forward?

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FUTURE SPACES OF SUSTAINABLE
FOOD PRODUCTION**

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The conference will be run in parallel to an autumn semester Master-level studio at the Royal Danish Academy study program Urbanism and Societal Change which is developed in collaboration with the organization ARKAIA, an impact investor in sustainable and resilient food futures.