

**SUPURBFOOD** is a research project funded by the European Commission's 7<sup>th</sup> Framework Program. It aims to contribute to the development of sustainable modes of urban and peri-urban food provisioning.

### **About the project**

Until recent, short food supply chains and multifunctional agriculture were considered to be part of the rural development realm. However, this project looks at these topics from the perspective of urban rather than rural development. Short food supply chains have been advocated as a means to reduce the environmental impact of the agro-food system. However, to improve the ecological performance of the agro-food system other flows ((e.g. nutrient, water, and urban waste) need to be considered as well. In the current context these aspects are usually treated separately. This project will treat them in an integrated manner.

### **Approach**

Research will be carried out in seven European city-regions (Rotterdam (NL), Rome (IT), Ghent (BE), Vigo (ES), Bristol (UK), Zürich (CH) and Riga (LV)) in collaboration with a diverse group of SMEs to further innovate in urban and peri-urban food provisioning, nutrient, water and waste management, and multifunctional use of urban and peri-urban space. Finally the project will also establish links with researchers, policymakers and SMEs in these domains in developing countries. This will be organised through a process of dialogue, sharing of experiences, exchanging of best practices and joint learning.

### **More information**

[www.supurbfood.eu](http://www.supurbfood.eu)



### **Introducing 'Voedselteams' (Foodteams)**

Small-scale producers have difficulties to find their way into the increasingly globalized food chain. Consumers on the other hand demand more transparency in the food chain.

Voedselteams is a network of local food teams and sustainable (small-scale) producers. Through this network they organise the trade of sustainable regional and seasonal products in the short food chain thereby strengthening the link between producers and consumers. The producers offer a wide range of products: fruit, vegetables, dairy products from cows, goats and sheep but also meat, bread and fruit juices. Products are sold for prices that allow producers to have a fair income.

**As organization Voedselteams would like to contribute to regional food systems and argue for food sovereignty.**

### **Who is involved?**

Up till now Voedselteams has received regional funding from Flanders to pay few employees that coordinate the working of 134 teams and connected producers throughout Flanders. The employees also lobby on regional level for improved policies for small-scale producers in the short food chain. However the funding is decreasing; Voedselteams is therefore faced with the challenge to find other ways and sources to finance their organization. Furthermore each team is managed on voluntary basis.

## Order and pick up

A food team consist of 30 to 40 families. They order products that are offered by local mostly small-scale producers on a weekly basis. Each team has a depot in their neighbourhood. Here, the local products are weekly delivered. As a result one get to know people living in the neighbourhood, which increases the social cohesion.

The producers cooperate to allow the products to be delivered as efficient as possible. In one region the distribution is organized in cooperation with a social employment organization thereby creating local employment opportunities. Finally once delivered consumers pick up the food by bike. This way the CO<sup>2</sup> emissions for transport are minimised.

Nonetheless, the number of teams is continually increasing and with that the amount of transported products. As a result Voedselteams currently facing to challenge to scale up and professionalize while staying authentic.

## Where are 'Voedselteams' and their producers located?

Food teams are active in the several cities in Flanders. Within each city several neighbourhoods host one or several food teams. The local producers are split to deliver in 3 regions. They supply the food teams in their region. For example Ghent is located in the region East Flanders and has 17 teams and about 15 producers in their network.



Product ready to be picked up

## Lessons from Voedselteams for SUPURBFOOD

- ✓ It developed a system that efficiently delivers local products to consumers.
- ✓ Their activities on the level of the neighbourhoods create social cohesion. The initiative is therefore multifunctional.
- ✓ The system allows for the reuse of packaging material, which reduces costs for local producers and reduces the waste streams from food consumption.

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