

Building Resilience in Urban Food Distribution

Presenter: Kyle Crane, Program on the Environment, University of Washington

Site Supervisor: Jenna Duncan, Homegrown Organics

Capstone Advisor: Eli Wheat, Program on the Environment, University of Washington



Background

- Industrial scale farming has increased the overall yield of US farms, but makes them more susceptible to disaster
- Urban food distribution (such as food gardens, food forests, & farm-to-school programs) can act as a safety net for small communities in times of crisis
- However, these solutions can buckle under stress or overuse

Research Questions

- What causes public food systems to buckle under pressure?
- How do we address these stressors?

Internship + Methods

- Homegrown Organics (HGO) works with private clients, turning their yards into productive food gardens.
- My research will take HGO's building techniques and apply them to public food distribution

Results: Problems

01

Lack of community support causes neglect

02

Space is difficult to find in cities

03

Concerns about safety of locally grown food

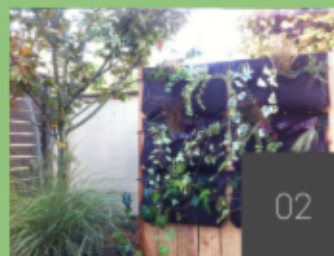
Results: Solutions

- Become a volunteer
- Petition local government for support
- Easy to maintain design
- Build in the outskirts
- Petition local government for space
- Build within unusable space
- Get the community involved in the growing process (see point 1)
- Petition the FDA to oversee projects

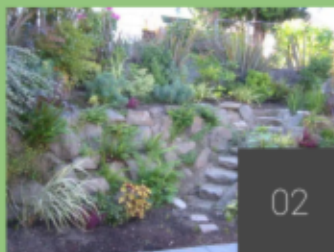
Example HGO Designs



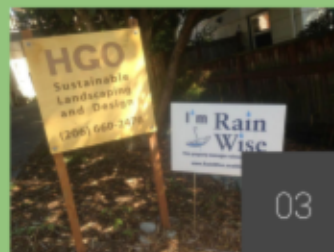
01



02



02



03

Implications

- Urban food distribution systems cannot, and will not replace industrial scale farming
- What urban food distribution can do is address local issues, and act as a safety net for communities in a pinch
- Making these systems reliable and proving they work is a huge part of making them effective. People are only willing to support a project they believe in, and these projects need community support to fully function