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# A systematic review highlighting multiple benefits of urban agriculture besides food

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# A systematic review highlights that there are multiple benefits of urban agriculture besides food

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## Abstract

Urban agriculture, including peri-urban farming, can nourish around one billion city dwellers and provide multiple social, economic, and environmental benefits. However, these benefits depend on various factors and are debated. Therefore, we used machine learning to semi-automate a systematic review of the existing literature on urban agriculture. It started with around 76,000 records for initial screening based on a broad keyword search strategy. We applied the topic modeling approach to systematically understand various aspects of urban agriculture based on the full text of around 1450 relevant publications. Urban agriculture literature covers 14 topics, clustered into 11 themes related to urban agriculture forms, their multi-functionalities, and their underlying challenges. These forms are small-scale ground-based and building-integrated systems. The multi-functionalities include food, livelihoods, health benefits, social space, green infrastructure, biodiversity, and ecosystem services. Therefore, promoting urban agriculture requires accounting for its multi-functionalities, besides food provisioning, and encouraging efficient and sustainable practices.

*Keywords:* urban agriculture, topic model, systematic review, sustainability, ecosystem services, multi-functional

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## 1. Introduction

Urban agriculture is a globally prevalent practice, which encompasses various forms of farming activities within urban areas and their surroundings (Graefe et al., 2019). They include traditional farming, allotment gardens, rooftop gardens, hydroponics, aquaponics, and indoor vertical farming. Broadly, they are ground-based or building-integrated with or without space conditioning (Gold-

7 stein et al., 2016b). Several studies highlight the potential contributions of urban  
8 agriculture to nourish urban residents from local (Costello et al., 2021; Hume  
9 et al., 2021; De Simone et al., 2023) to global (Martellozzo et al., 2014; Clinton  
10 et al., 2018a) scales. For example, Kriewald et al. (2019) showed that urban  
11 agriculture could nourish about one billion people, i.e., 30% of the total urban  
12 population. Martellozzo et al. (2014) highlighted that cultivating vegetables in  
13 one-third of the global urban areas can fulfil the urban population’s vegetable  
14 demand. Berlin could produce up to 82% of its vegetable demand within the  
15 city, according to De Simone et al. (2023). Vegetables are an essential compo-  
16 nent of a healthy diet (Willett et al., 2019), which consumption is lower than  
17 the recommended value almost worldwide (Pradhan and Kropp, 2020; Harris  
18 et al., 2023). In this sense, current vegetable production can hardly meet the  
19 demand if the recommended intake level is achieved Dong et al. (2022). Urban  
20 agriculture might be an instrument to fill this gap Harris et al. (2023).

21 Urban agriculture, involving over 800 million people, is a pivotal aspect of  
22 the global food system (O’Sullivan et al., 2019). It constitutes a proportion of 5–  
23 10% of global food production (Clinton et al., 2018b), with a larger share in low-  
24 and middle-income countries, e.g., Zambia and Kenya, where 33% of households  
25 are involved (Davies et al., 2021a). Urban agriculture also provides multiple  
26 ecosystem services, amounting a value of \$33 billion annually (Clinton et al.,  
27 2018b). These ecosystem services include food production of 100–180 million  
28 tonnes, energy savings of 14–15 billion kilowatt hours, nitrogen sequestration of  
29 100,000–170,000 tonnes, and avoided stormwater runoff of 45–57 billion cubic  
30 meters annually. In an intensive urban agriculture scenario, the overall value of  
31 these services could reach as much as \$80–160 billion annually (Clinton et al.,  
32 2018b).

33 Besides the services mentioned earlier, urban agriculture can yield diverse  
34 social, economic, and environmental benefits, including community development  
35 and educational opportunities (Mirzabaev et al., 2021; Clinton et al., 2018b).  
36 Nonetheless, the applicability of these benefits remains a topic of debate because  
37 they depend on various factors, e.g., region, seasons, and forms (Mbow et al.,

38 2019). For example, urban agriculture contributes to climate change adapta-  
39 tion, e.g., reduced urban heat island effects (Li et al., 2014), and climate change  
40 mitigation, e.g., atmospheric nitrogen and carbon fixation (Beniston and Lal,  
41 2012). However, extensive irrigation will consume a large share of residential  
42 water use. By promoting the regionalization of food systems, urban agricul-  
43 ture helps to reconnect urban residents with nature’s cycles and reduce food  
44 transport emissions (Pradhan et al., 2020). One-fifth of food systems’ emis-  
45 sions come from transport (Li et al., 2022), which matters for climate change  
46 mitigation (Pradhan, 2022). However, urban agriculture’s overall emission re-  
47 duction potential is also questioned, mainly due to space conditioning systems  
48 with intensive infrastructure and a high energy demand (Goldstein et al., 2016a;  
49 O’Sullivan et al., 2020). Nevertheless, these systems could improve energy ef-  
50 ficiency and use renewable energy (Goldstein et al., 2016a; Van Delden et al.,  
51 2021).

52 Urban agriculture is one of the main economic activities of poor households  
53 in many low-income countries (Poulsen et al., 2015). Besides an income source,  
54 it can mitigate the impact of seasonal food consumption shocks. These so-  
55 cial and economic benefits of urban agriculture are also equivocal because of  
56 their dependency on the region and the form of urban agriculture. For exam-  
57 ple, ground-based urban agriculture faces pressure from urban sprawl (Pradhan  
58 et al., 2014). Nevertheless, some metropolitan areas are also observing agricul-  
59 ture renaissances with an increased share of GDP from the agriculture sector  
60 (Rybski et al., 2021). Additionally, conditioned urban agriculture could mainly  
61 produce leafy vegetables and herbs, i.e., limited food commodities. Often these  
62 commodities, produced in conditioned urban agriculture, are expensive and be-  
63 yond the reach of poor households (Al-Kodmany, 2018).

64 Informing these debates on the multi-functionality of urban agriculture re-  
65 quires an evidence synthesis from existing studies, e.g., based on a systematic  
66 review. So far, reviews of urban agriculture have focused on limited aspects.  
67 For example, Poulsen et al. (2015) and Warren et al. (2015) investigated ur-  
68 ban agriculture contributions to income and food security. Goldstein et al.

69 (2016b) compared environmental benefits between urban and conventional agri-  
70 culture. McCartney and Lefsrud (2018) reviewed studies on conditioned urban  
71 agriculture in extreme environments. Similarly, Al-Kodmany (2018) focused  
72 on vertical farms, requiring space conditioning. Appolloni et al. (2021) inves-  
73 tigated worldwide cases of urban rooftop agriculture, i.e., building-integrated  
74 systems. Recently, Payen et al. (2022) conducted a meta-analysis on urban  
75 agriculture yields, and de Oliveira Alves and de Oliveira (2022) focused on eco-  
76 nomic, social, and environmental factors to commercialize urban agriculture.  
77 Nitya et al. (2022) assessed the geographical landscape of urban agriculture  
78 quantitatively and qualitatively. Still, a holistic and robust evidence synthesis  
79 on the multi-functionality of urban agriculture is missing, including their spatial  
80 and temporal dynamics.

81 This study aims to fill the above-highlighted gap by holistically understand-  
82 ing the multi-functionality of urban agriculture. A holistic understanding needs  
83 to be based on an extensive body of literature. Therefore, we attempt to cover  
84 most peer-reviewed publications on urban agriculture. Using these publications,  
85 we systematically categorize topics on urban agriculture and their spatial and  
86 temporal dynamics. Our topics articulate urban agriculture forms and their  
87 multi-functionalities, including their challenges. The next section describes our  
88 methodology, followed by the sections analyzing the topics and discussing the  
89 novelties of our study.

## 90 **2. Methods**

91 We conducted a literature analysis to understand the multi-functionality of  
92 urban agriculture, and it comprised two parts. The first was to systematically  
93 search for peer-reviewed publications, excluding grey literature, on urban agri-  
94 culture and screen the relevant ones. We selected the relevant articles written in  
95 English and with PDFs available. Second, we applied a topic modeling approach  
96 to identify topics covered by these relevant publications.

97 *2.1. Literature search and screening*

98 We followed the preferred reporting items for systematic reviews and meta-  
99 analyses (PRISMA) statement (Page et al., 2021), the standard procedure, to  
100 search and screen literature (see Figure 1). We covered an extensive body of  
101 literature by applying a broad keyword search strategy instead of a narrow one.  
102 Mainly, we searched for literature with words “\*urban\* or city or cities” and  
103 “agricultur\* or garden\* or farm\* or food” and “form\* or type\* or typolog\* or  
104 class\* or kind\*” in the title, abstract, or keywords. We expected this search  
105 to return literature mentioning urban and agriculture and its type. Our search  
106 across the two well-established literature databases – Web of Science and Scopus,  
107 on 15.02.2022 resulted in around 76,000 records.

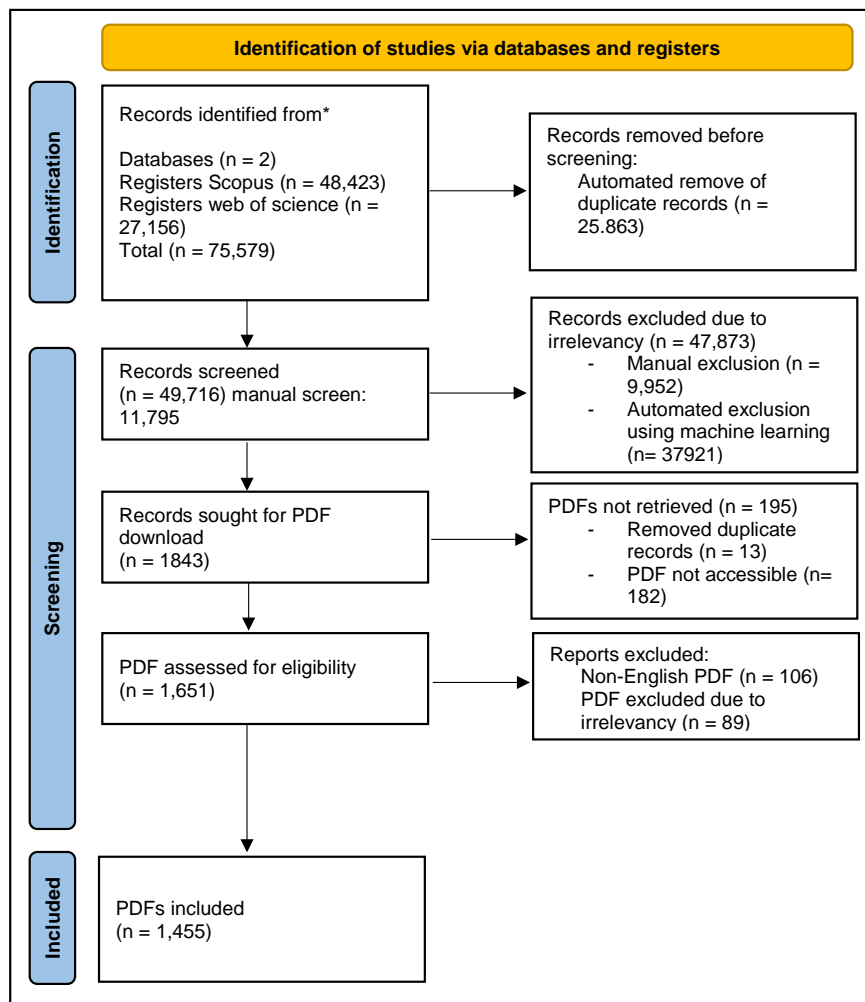


Figure 1: We followed the preferred reporting items for systematic reviews and meta-analyses (PRISMA) statement (Page et al., 2021) to identify the relevant literature from Scopus and Web of Science database for our study.

108 Screening relevant documents out of 76,000 records was a daunting task.  
 109 Thus, we applied a machine learning-supported literature screening approach.  
 110 We started by manually screening a subset of records, i.e., 1,000, to select rele-  
 111 vant documents by reading their titles, abstracts, and keywords. Then, we used  
 112 this subset to train support vector machine classifiers using *sklearn* (Chang and



113 Lin, 2011; Pedregosa et al., 2011) to prioritize documents likely to be relevant  
114 from the remaining records [see O’Mara-Eves et al. (2015) for a full discussion  
115 of machine-learning assisted screening approaches]. As new documents were  
116 screened, we re-trained the machine learning models to re-prioritize the remain-  
117 ing documents. We used stopping criteria for determining when it was deemed  
118 unlikely that more than 5% of relevant documents had yet to be identified  
119 (Callaghan and Müller-Hansen, 2020) (see Figure S1). Then, we collected the  
120 relevant documents’ full text, mainly PDF, for further screening. Our collection  
121 resulted in the full text of 1,651 out of 1,843 relevant records due to restricted  
122 access to some documents. Those articles were behind a paywall not accessible  
123 from the authors’ institutes or other means, e.g., www.researchgate.net. We  
124 again screened these full texts to make sure that they were related to food and  
125 urban agriculture and were in English. This screening returned 1,455 relevant  
126 documents.

## 127 *2.2. Topic modeling*

128 We used the full text of the relevant documents to identify the topics covered  
129 by existing literature on urban agriculture. For this, our study applied topic  
130 modeling, an unsupervised machine learning technique, instead of predefining  
131 the topics manually. Topic modeling is a statistical model that helps discover  
132 abstract “topics” from a set of documents (Blei, 2012). It provides a probability  
133 distribution of the topics for each document, also known as theta ( $\theta$ ), and a  
134 probability distribution of words for each topic, also called beta ( $\beta$ ) or phi  
135 ( $\phi$ ). In other words, topic modeling clusters word and phrase patterns within  
136 the documents to a predefined number of topics to best characterize them.  
137 Identifying the optimum number of topics is crucial. If the number of topics is  
138 too small, the topics could be too general. If it is too large, the topics could be  
139 too many with some overlap or hardly interpretable. Thus, we chose 14 topics  
140 because of the jumps in Figure S2, following the method suggested by Nikita  
141 (2016). We used the R Package “topicmodels” for topic modeling (Grün and  
142 Hornik, 2011).

143 A few topics could be grouped into one larger theme, given the similarities in  
144 word probabilities with each other. For example, topics “Alternative livelihood”  
145 and “Alternative food supply” could be combined into one theme. For grouping  
146 the topics, we conducted hierarchical clustering of the probability distribution  
147 of words for each topic, i.e., beta ( $\beta$ ). Based on this clustering, we grouped  
148 these topics into 11 themes considering the Hellinger distance of 0.4 (see Figure  
149 S3).

150 We named these topics by analyzing the top probable words in each topic,  
151 i.e., words with a large value for  $\beta$  or  $\phi$ . Our interpretation of a topic was based  
152 on the documents for which it was a primary topic, i.e., the most probable  
153 topic or a large value for  $\theta$ . Further, we conducted a bibliometric analysis to  
154 understand these topics’ temporal and spatial dynamics. This analysis was  
155 based on the publication year of the document and study area, mainly country,  
156 disregarding the authors’ affiliations. Most studies focused on urban agriculture  
157 in one country, while a few covered multiple countries. Since one document could  
158 comprise many topics, we also investigated correlations among these topics and  
159 their networks. This investigation helped us to understand co-occurrence among  
160 topics.

### 161 **3. Results**

#### 162 *3.1. Urban agriculture topics*

163 We identified 14 topics related to urban agriculture by systematically ana-  
164 lyzing the current literature (Figure 2). Some of this literature was primarily  
165 associated with one topic, while others were broad, covering more than one. A  
166 few words were also the most probable word in many topics. We observed this  
167 overlap because these words, e.g., *urban*, *garden*, and *agriculture*, were common  
168 terminology across urban agriculture literature and were included in our search  
169 criterion. Nevertheless, their occurrence probabilities varied across the topic  
170 (Figure S4). Each topic focused on a unique and distinct domain. For example,



174 (see Figure S3). Three themes are related to the types of urban agriculture, i.e.,  
175 small-scale ground-based, building-integrated systems, and urban livestock. Six  
176 themes highlight the multi-functionality of urban agriculture. Their coverage  
177 ranges from a broad topic, e.g., food supply and livelihoods, to a specific one,  
178 e.g., ecosystem services and biodiversity. The last two themes are related to  
179 the underlying challenges associated with urban agriculture, including required  
180 inputs. The sections below briefly describe the topics with these themes.

### 181 *3.1.1. Small-scale ground-based systems*

182 Various forms of ground-based urban agriculture exist worldwide on a small  
183 scale. They include allotment, community, and home gardens. Among the 1,455  
184 documents, the 52 documents primarily address these small-scale ground-based  
185 systems, highlighting their multi-functionalities (see Topic1 in Figure 2). For ex-  
186 ample, Breuste and Artmann (2015) underscore the important role of allotment  
187 gardens in Salzburg (Austria) in providing recreation and nature experience.  
188 However, their importance in food production is declining there. In contrast, a  
189 case study in Hobart (Australia) shows that affordable access to vegetables moti-  
190 vates one to grow vegetables in home gardens, mainly for low-income households  
191 (Kirkpatrick and Davison, 2018). Inhabitants can have different motivations for  
192 engaging in urban agriculture. A case study from Hangzhou (China) highlights  
193 that inhabitants support converting public open spaces to community gardens  
194 because of food quality, entertainment, and saving expenses (He and Zhu, 2018).

### 195 *3.1.2. Building-integrated systems*

196 Urban agriculture could also be integrated into buildings. These building-  
197 integrated systems are becoming popular in recent decades across the world. It  
198 is the primary topic of the 109 relevant documents (see Topic2 in Figure 2). The  
199 two main types of building-integrated systems are rooftop and vertical farming.  
200 Different forms of rooftop farming include soil-based, soil-less, conditioned, and  
201 unconditioned systems. Vertical farming comprises hydroponics, aquaponics,  
202 aeroponic, and other soil-based multi-layer agriculture.

203 Many studies highlight the social, economic, and environmental benefits of  
204 building-integrated systems and their designs. Mainly, they could enhance food  
205 safety and security for urban populations (Despommier, 2011). For example,  
206 case studies in Vancouver (Canada) show that green roofs and walls could pro-  
207 vide 54% of the vegetable demand and contribute to greenhouse gas emissions  
208 reduction (Roehr and Laurenz, 2008a). In the meantime, they could also de-  
209 crease buildings' heating and cooling energy demand and reduce the urban heat  
210 island effect (Roehr and Laurenz, 2008b). A Singaporean case study highlights  
211 the adequate availability of sunlight for farming on under-utilized vertical spaces  
212 of residential buildings (Song et al., 2018). However, in the case of limited sun-  
213 light and indoors, vertical farming can be carried out using Light Emitting  
214 Diodes with photo-synthetically active radiation (Uddin and Suliaman, 2021;  
215 Chaudhry and Mishra, 2019; Kozai et al., 2016). Monitoring technologies are  
216 also available to ensure optimum plant growth in such building-integrated condi-  
217 tioned systems. For example, Pramono et al. (2020) design monitoring systems  
218 for hydroponic. However, McCartney and Lefsrud (2018) highlight that sus-  
219 tainability of available technologies and energy efficiency are important issues  
220 to be considered in these building-integrated conditioned systems. The envi-  
221 ronmental benefits of these systems could be offset if applied technologies are  
222 unsustainable and energy intensive.

### 223 3.1.3. *Urban livestock*

224 Besides crop cultivation, livestock rearing is also a part of urban agriculture  
225 in many low-income countries (Abdulkadir et al., 2012). The 67 relevant doc-  
226 uments have urban livestock as their primary topic (see Topic3 in Figure 2).  
227 For example, Roessler et al. (2016) present that urban farmers in Ouagadougou  
228 (Burkina Faso) and Tamale (Ghana) keep a wide range of livestock (e.g., pigs,  
229 cattle, goats, and poultry) together with crop cultivation. Similarly, poultry is  
230 the dominant livestock in Kampala (Uganda), followed by pigs, cattle, goats,  
231 and sheep (Komakech et al., 2014). Several studies highlight various aspects of  
232 urban livestock, including their sustainability aspects (Hellyward et al., 2019).

233 For example, it is an additional source of household income in many countries  
234 (Gillah et al., 2012), e.g., Ethiopia (Ayenew et al., 2011) and Tanzania (Swai  
235 et al., 2005). However, improper management of urban livestock also poses  
236 environmental and health risks, including disease transmission. For example,  
237 a Morogoro (Tanzania) case study highlights the risk of contamination with  
238 potential zoonotic pathogens due to improper manure management practices  
239 (Lupindu et al., 2012). Another disease risk practice is consuming dead and sick  
240 animals (Alarcon et al., 2017). Besides livestock management, using wastewater  
241 to irrigate urban agriculture could also contaminate its produce, e.g., bacterial  
242 contamination (Fuhrmann et al., 2016) and antimicrobial resistance (Bougnom  
243 et al., 2019). Due to these linkages with health risks, our unsupervised topic  
244 model also bundles wastewater-related studies with urban livestock. These risks  
245 could be reduced with proper management, e.g., sanitation facilities (Martinez  
246 et al., 2013), recycling manure for crop production (Diogo et al., 2013), and  
247 awareness raising (Alarcon et al., 2017).

#### 248 *3.1.4. Food systems transformation potential*

249 Promoting urban agriculture can contribute to sustainable food systems  
250 transformation. The 64 relevant documents, including 13 review articles, men-  
251 tion this potential as the primary topic (see Topic4 in Figure 2). For exam-  
252 ple, Specht et al. (2014) and Thomaier et al. (2015) describe the contributions  
253 of building-integrated systems in providing economic outputs (e.g., food, non-  
254 food, and non-market goods), environmental benefits (e.g., recycled resources  
255 and reduced food miles), and social advantages (e.g., food security, education,  
256 and connecting consumers to food production). Orsini et al. (2014) estimate  
257 that 77% of the vegetable requirements of Bologna (Italy) could be met by  
258 rooftop farming together with biodiversity enrichment. Interestingly, a mul-  
259 tidimensional sustainability study shows that urban agriculture in Makassar  
260 (Indonesia) is more sustainable in the economic dimension than the ecological  
261 one (Abdullah et al., 2017). Accordingly to Sanyé-Mengual et al. (2018), better  
262 crop management and garden design could reduce the environmental impacts

263 of urban agriculture. These examples highlight the need for proper manage-  
264 ment and design for urban agriculture to contribute to sustainable food systems  
265 transformation (Goldstein et al., 2016b). Moreover, a wider uptake of urban  
266 agriculture requires community behaviour change and appropriate policy mea-  
267 sures (Ghosh et al., 2008). A survey of urban dwellers in Berlin (Germany)  
268 reveals that urban agriculture businesses are socially acceptable only if com-  
269 bined with ecological and social goals (Specht et al., 2016). However, business  
270 opportunities in urban agriculture, e.g., rooftop farming, are still untapped be-  
271 cause most of the current rooftop farms focus on social-educational goals and  
272 improving urban living quality (Appolloni et al., 2021). Overcoming barriers  
273 to urban agriculture is crucial for up-scaling its food systems transformation  
274 potential, which may vary across regions.

### 275 *3.1.5. Food supply and livelihoods*

276 Many studies elaborate on urban agriculture’s contribution to enhancing  
277 food supply and livelihoods, highlighting more specific aspects. Our literature  
278 analysis results in two topics about these aspects.

279 Food production in urban and peri-urban areas is considered an innovative  
280 approach to supplying food, non-food, and non-market goods. It is the primary  
281 topic of the 93 relevant documents (see Topic5 in Figure 2). Urban agriculture  
282 is a new opportunity for high-yield vegetable production because of its higher  
283 yield than traditional farming in general (Payen et al., 2022). Case studies from  
284 Beijing (China) and Milan (Italy) present agro-tourism enterprises as an inno-  
285 vative form of urban agriculture, which integrate urban-rural development, be-  
286 sides supplying food (Yang et al., 2010; Spagnoli and Mundula, 2021). Similarly,  
287 Guzmán Fernández et al. (2020) highlight other non-marketable benefits of ur-  
288 ban agriculture in Mexico City (Mexico), which include creating jobs, reconnect-  
289 ing with nature, and knowledge transfer. Diekmann et al. (2020) also presents  
290 similar benefits from urban agriculture in San Francisco (United States). How-  
291 ever, these alternative approaches to supply food need to be connected with the  
292 mainstream system (e.g., supermarkets) and traditional local and small-scale

293 producers for upscaling their benefits and transforming broken food systems  
294 (James, 2016).

295 Urban agriculture also provides households and farmers with an alternative  
296 form of livelihood. These aspects of urban agriculture are the primary topic  
297 of the 135 relevant documents (see Topic6 in Figure 2). For example, a review  
298 study highlights that urban households will continue strongly engaging in agri-  
299 cultural activities in low-income countries (De Bon et al., 2010). Engagement in  
300 urban agriculture could also increase urban households' income, improve their  
301 living standard, and provide other livelihood benefits (Van Averbek, 2007) to-  
302 gether with increased food access (Khumalo and Sibanda, 2019). Urban agricul-  
303 ture needs to be promoted and supported to obtain these benefits. A Malawian  
304 case study highlights that these supports would be more effective if targeted  
305 to poor women by providing agricultural extension services and wealthier farm-  
306 ers to increase the employment opportunities associated with urban agriculture  
307 (Mkwambisi et al., 2011). Moreover, issues related to residential development,  
308 land tenure, transport infrastructure, and the use of urban spaces need to be  
309 adequately addressed to ensure households' ability to produce, sell, and access  
310 food (Davies et al., 2021b).

### 311 *3.1.6. Social and public health benefits*

312 The social and public health benefits of urban agriculture are the primary  
313 topic of the 113 relevant documents (see Topic7 in Figure 2). Social benefits  
314 of urban agriculture include education and learning (Rahm, 2002; Hong et al.,  
315 2021), community network and social capital (Adate et al., 2021; Kirby et al.,  
316 2021), reconnecting with agricultural practices and nature (Cattivelli, 2020;  
317 Artmann et al., 2021), and knowledge exchange (Dobson et al., 2020; Sanyé-  
318 Mengual et al., 2020). Urban inhabitants are motivated to participate in urban  
319 agriculture to eat safe and healthy food and obtain these social benefits (Bellows  
320 et al., 2009). Besides providing healthy diets, urban agriculture contributes  
321 to a healthy and active lifestyle (Van den Berg et al., 2010; Fisher-Maltese  
322 et al., 2018; Stubberfield et al., 2022), healing, therapy, and recovery of patients,



323 (Jeong et al., 2020; Heckman, 2012), and improvements in mental health (Koay  
324 and Dillon, 2020; Harada et al., 2021).

### 325 *3.1.7. Social space and urban development*

326 Many studies have highlighted that urban agriculture is a means for urban  
327 transformations. Our literature analysis results in two topics related to this  
328 theme.

329 Urban agriculture provides social space for grassroots sustainability move-  
330 ments (Turner, 2011; Hawkes and Acott, 2013; Atkinson and Vilorio, 2013),  
331 which is the primary topic of the 181 relevant documents (see Topic8 in Fig-  
332 ure 2). Guerrilla gardening is an example of such movement, which has been  
333 practised to express the need to transform urban spaces (Adams and Hardman,  
334 2014; Mikadze, 2015). Similarly, school gardens connect children to food pro-  
335 duction and consumption, education, nature, and stewardship (Cairns, 2017),  
336 leading to more sustainable futures (Moore et al., 2015). A case study of Dublin  
337 (Ireland) and Belfast (Northern Ireland) highlights that allotment gardens could  
338 reduce social barriers, foster knowledge exchanges, and generate empathy among  
339 their practitioners (Corcoran and Kettle, 2015). However, there might be con-  
340 flicts among urban gardeners with different visions. Nevertheless, such conflicts  
341 may also positively result in cultural disruption and destabilized hierarchies  
342 (Aptekar, 2015). Studies also highlight that urban agriculture could enhance  
343 food justice and reduce inequalities, mainly for disadvantaged populations (Mil-  
344 bourne, 2012; Miller, 2015; Aptekar and Myers, 2020; Sbicca and Myers, 2017).

345 Sustainable urban development by promoting urban agriculture (Jahrl et al.,  
346 2021) is the primary topic of the 115 relevant documents (see Topic9 in Fig-  
347 ure 2). For example, Roth et al. (2015) highlight that urban agriculture can  
348 stimulate and support urban renewal and regeneration of the German Ruhr  
349 Area. Similarly, a case study in Central Jakarta (Indonesia) highlights urban  
350 agriculture’s contribution to sustainable urban development based on produc-  
351 tive green space, social cohesion, and food expenditure saving (Jap et al., 2021).  
352 A successful governance strategy to promote urban agriculture requires em-

phasizing various social, economic, and environmental benefits associated with urban agriculture, addressing city-specific needs beyond food production (Prové et al., 2016). Here, governments could play essential roles by facilitating multi-stakeholder processes, developing appropriate policies, conversing existing urban farms, and allocating land for urban agriculture (Halloran and Magid, 2013). In return, local government partnerships with urban agricultural movements could foster community development (Gough and Accordino, 2013). Since urban development is also linked with urban policies, our unsupervised topic model bundles documents related to urban food policies with this topic (Moschitz, 2018; Vara-Sánchez et al., 2021)

### 3.1.8. *Green infrastructure and Urban planning*

Urban agriculture is a part of green infrastructure and nature-based solutions that promotes the greening of cities (Contesse et al., 2018). It is the primary topic of the 131 relevant documents, considering cultural and historical aspects and modern urban planning (see Topic10 in Figure 2). For example, the historical Persian Gardens in Iranian cities consist of ornamental and agricultural plants (Farzin et al., 2020; Khalilnezhad, 2016). Similarly, Chiayi City (Taiwan) has green alleys with edible plants as a part of the cultural landscape (Lee et al., 2017). These examples show the existence of urban agriculture for a long time in the form of green spaces (Casadei and Bazzocchi, 2017; Liu, 2011). Currently, urban agriculture is also becoming popular in modern urban planning for incorporating green spaces in cities (Bohn and Chu, 2021), reviving their economies (Nefs et al., 2013), and reusing abandoned infrastructure (Matacz and Świątek, 2021). For example, Middle et al. (2014) argue integrating community gardens into public parks is an innovative approach to providing ecosystem services in cities. A case study of Flint, Michigan (United States), highlights an urban agricultural approach to deal with vacated land in shrinking cities to make them more sustainable and livable (Pallagst et al., 2017). Similarly, Szopińska-Mularz and Lehmann (2019) depict that obsolete inner-city car-parking infrastructures in cities in the United Kingdom could be used for

383 urban agriculture, e.g., hydroponics.

### 384 *3.1.9. Urban land cover and ecosystem services*

385 Many studies have highlighted urban agriculture as a land cover and land-  
386 scape component. It links rural and urban areas, provides various ecosystem  
387 services, and shelters biodiversity. Our literature analysis results in two topics  
388 related to these aspects of urban agriculture.

389 The first topic is mainly related to urban agriculture as a land cover and  
390 landscape component, appearing primarily in the 99 relevant documents (see  
391 Topic11 in Figure 2). These documents include studies applying remote sensing  
392 and GIS techniques to spatially map urban agriculture, its characteristics, and  
393 its changes across time (Ghosh and Head, 2009; Pulighe and Lupia, 2016; Smith  
394 et al., 2017; Haase et al., 2019). Here, we mainly highlight urban-rural linkages  
395 instead of discussing the methods. Peri-urban agriculture, i.e., farming around  
396 cities, is a land cover and landscape component that links urban and rural areas  
397 with multiple socioeconomic and environmental functions (Serra et al., 2018).  
398 For example, wastewater from urban areas could be used to irrigate peri-urban  
399 farms (Jampani et al., 2020). However, rapid urbanization also puts pressure  
400 on peri-urban agriculture, converting it into built-up areas and transforming  
401 barren land for agricultural use (Jampani et al., 2020). Nevertheless, market-  
402 oriented farmers could also adapt to rapid urbanization and utilize the provided  
403 opportunities by commercialization, specialization, and intensification of their  
404 farming under certain conditions (Follmann et al., 2021).

405 The second topic is ecosystem services and biodiversity related to urban agri-  
406 culture. It is the primary topic of the 103 relevant documents, including seven  
407 reviews (see Topic12 in Figure 2). Besides supplying food, urban agriculture  
408 provides various ecosystem services, including pollination, pest control, climate  
409 resilience, water regulation, nutrient cycling, recreation, and other cultural ser-  
410 vices (Lin et al., 2015; Cabral et al., 2017; Speak et al., 2015). However, there  
411 might be trade-offs among these ecosystem services depending on urban agri-  
412 culture management (Taylor et al., 2017). For example, Stenchly et al. (2019)

413 highlight a potential trade-off between bio-control of pests and pollination ser-  
414 vices. Areas of urban agriculture are also considered biodiversity hotspots,  
415 including flora diversity (Borysiak et al., 2017; Tew et al., 2021). A case study  
416 of two cities in Canada shows a high level of functional trait diversity of wild  
417 bees in community gardens (Normandin et al., 2017). Similarly, another study  
418 highlights allotment gardens as an alternative to natural habitats for bumble  
419 bees (Ahrné et al., 2009). Urban agriculture, mainly soil-based, is also rich  
420 in invertebrate species (Smith et al., 2006), e.g., ground beetles, ants, spiders,  
421 millipedes, gastropods, and rove beetles (Braschler et al., 2020). Moreover, ur-  
422 ban agriculture with ponds and trees could also harbor amphibians, birds, and  
423 mammals (Loram et al., 2011).

#### 424 *3.1.10. Water and other agricultural inputs*

425 Urban agriculture requires water and other agricultural inputs and provides  
426 water-related ecosystem services, a primary topic of 83 documents. Several stud-  
427 ies investigate the water and nutrient balance of urban agriculture. For example,  
428 Wang et al. (2008) and Abdulkadir et al. (2013) highlight nutrient surplus in  
429 urban and peri-urban vegetable farms in Nanjing and Wuxi (China) and Kano  
430 (Nigeria), respectively. Excess application of fertilizers is a problem in many  
431 urban agriculture systems, which leads to nutrient pollution and poses a risk to  
432 water bodies and soil quality (Wielemaker et al., 2019; Abdalla et al., 2012; Kong  
433 et al., 2015; Small et al., 2019). Addressing this risk requires an optimum appli-  
434 cation of fertilizer to maintain crop yields and minimize nutrient loss. Doing so  
435 with the application of compost in urban agriculture could help close the urban  
436 nutrient loop Shrestha et al. (2020). Regarding irrigation, various types of water  
437 are used in urban agriculture depending on locations, e.g., greywater (Rodda  
438 et al., 2011), wastewater (Kurian et al., 2013), harvested rainwater (Clark et al.,  
439 2019), and advanced irrigation systems (Rodríguez-Delfín, 2011). Moreover, ur-  
440 ban agriculture also reduces stormwater and rainwater runoffs (Aloisio et al.,  
441 2016; Whittinghill et al., 2015; Kolasa-Więcek and Suszanowicz, 2021), which  
442 in return also lowers irrigation water demand (Harada et al., 2018).

443 *3.1.11. Health and other risks*

444 Consumption of urban agricultural produce might also pose health risks  
445 which depend on various factors associated with urban farming practices (Mene-  
446 fee and Hettiarachchi, 2017). The 110 relevant documents highlight these risks  
447 as their primary topic (see Topic14 in Figure 2). Broadly, these factors are  
448 soil and water contamination and air pollution. Urban soils could be contam-  
449 inated with toxic heavy metals and polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons, mainly  
450 associated with farming in previous industrial sites (Thomas and Lavkulich,  
451 2015), proximity to industry, mining zones, and roads (Kabala et al., 2009; Liu  
452 et al., 2019; Wang et al., 2011, 2021), and substrate used for farming (Meck  
453 et al., 2020; Papafotiou et al., 2016). Similarly, air pollution and rainwater  
454 irrigation could lead to heavy metal contamination in vegetables produced in  
455 urban areas (Li et al., 2012). The uptake of these contaminants by plants, their  
456 bioavailability, and health risks depend on various factors, e.g., their concentra-  
457 tions, type of contaminant, type of plant species, and species variety (Romanova  
458 and Lovell, 2021). Moreover, various measures are available to reduce health  
459 risks from such contamination, including the washing of vegetables before hu-  
460 man consumption (Schreck et al., 2012), treating wastewater before irrigation  
461 (García-Gómez et al., 2002), and using soil amendments and raised-beds in case  
462 of contaminated soils (Defoe et al., 2014). Therefore, promoting and up-scaling  
463 urban agriculture must tackle these risks to obtain social, economic, and envi-  
464 ronmental benefits.

465 *3.2. Topic evolution*

466 In recent decades, publications on urban agriculture have increased with  
467 variations in the topics they covered (Figure 3). In the 1970s, there were only  
468 a few publications on urban agriculture, which increased to 900 in the 2010s.  
469 More interestingly, we have already identified over 400 publications in the 2020s.

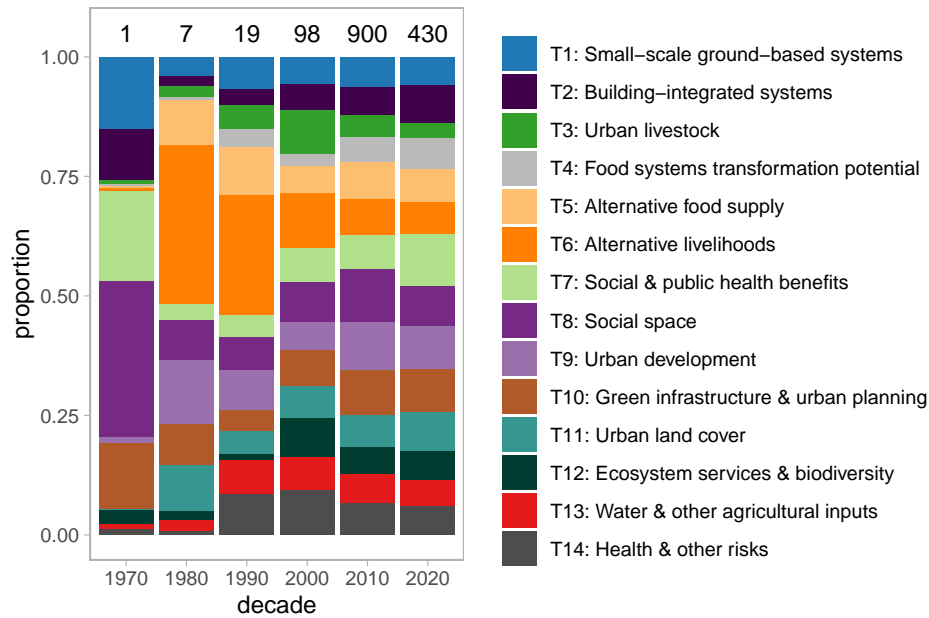


Figure 3: Distribution probability of the 14 topics (T1–T14) on urban agriculture literature across the six decades. Bar heights represent the average distribution proportions. The number on the top of the bars provides the publication count for the decade.

470 Regarding topics, the focus on urban agriculture research has also evolved  
 471 during the last decades (Figure 3). Among the 14 topics, urban agriculture as  
 472 an alternative livelihood was the most dominant topic in the literature until the  
 473 2000s. Afterward, Topic5 (Alternative livelihoods) has diminished. In the 2000s,  
 474 other dominant topics were urban livestock and health and other risks associated  
 475 with urban agriculture. Currently, urban livestock is the least prevalent topic.  
 476 However, health and other risks related to urban agriculture are still a non-  
 477 negligible topic. Recently, there has been an increase in the proportion of the  
 478 topic of building-integrated systems, mirroring the gaining popularity of these  
 479 systems worldwide. Other prominent topics in recent decades are social and  
 480 public health benefits, social space, and urban development. Still, water and  
 481 other inputs for agriculture are a non-negligible topic.

482 *3.3. Topic spatial distribution*

483 Urban agriculture research is conducted worldwide, mostly with case studies  
484 at the city level, covering 96 countries (Figure 4). Some studies also investi-  
485 gate urban agriculture in more than one country or without geographical focus  
486 (Figure 5). A majority of urban agriculture research is from high-income coun-  
487 tries, namely the United States, the United Kingdom, Italy, Australia, and  
488 Spain. It shows a massive investment in research and the importance of urban  
489 agriculture in these countries. Considerable urban agriculture research is also  
490 conducted in many middle-income countries. For example, we observe at least  
491 20 publications on urban agriculture from China, Indonesia, South Africa, In-  
492 dia, Ghana, and Brazil. However, there are less than 15 publications from 76  
493 countries worldwide. Nevertheless, it highlights the global scientific interest in  
494 urban agriculture research.

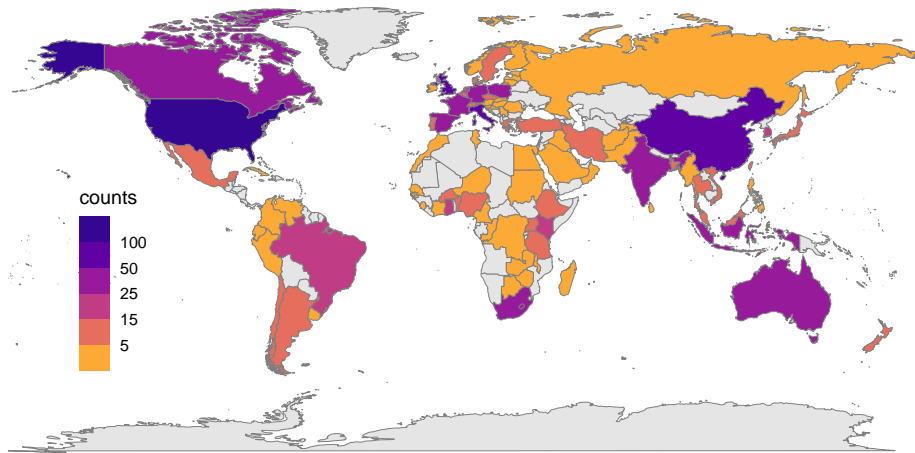


Figure 4: Spatial distribution of urban agriculture research based on publication counts at a country scale, represented by color codes. The grey color represents countries and regions where we did not identify published research on urban agriculture. The map shows only studies that focused on a single country. It excludes studies without a geographical focus, e.g., reviews.

495 The most dominant topic of urban agriculture research varies worldwide  
496 (Figure 5). For example, the potential of urban agriculture to transform food

497 systems is the most dominant topic in Ghana. However, this topic is not so  
 498 prominent in studies from Spain, Indonesia, Italy, and Singapore. The health  
 499 and other risks associated with urban agriculture is the most dominant topic in  
 500 Germany and Netherlands. For Singapore, one of the most prevalent topics is  
 501 urban agriculture as a green infrastructure and an urban planning component.  
 502 A few topics are widely analyzed in many countries. Studies from developed  
 503 and developing countries show a common interest in these topics. Specifically,  
 504 provisioning social space from urban agriculture is the most dominant topic in a  
 505 few countries, mainly Spain, South Africa, Brazil, and Poland. Many countries,  
 506 such as South Korea, India, Canada, and Kenya, have social and public health  
 507 benefits from urban agriculture as a dominant topic. Surprisingly, alternative  
 508 food supply and livelihood topics are not so prominent in many countries.

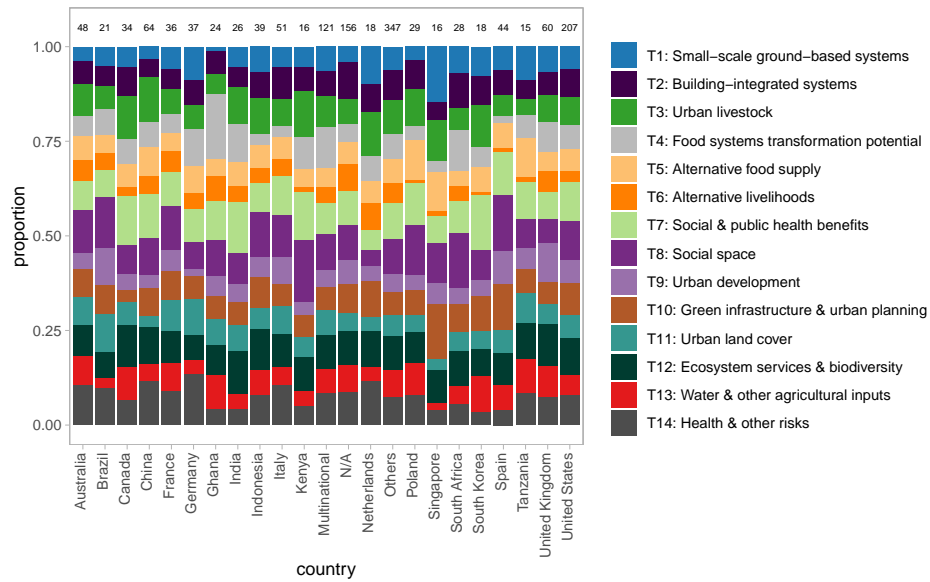


Figure 5: Distribution probability of the 14 topics (T1–T14) on urban agriculture literature worldwide at a country scale. Bar heights represent average distribution proportions. The number on the top of the bars provides the publication count. We group the countries with less than 15 publications into “Others”. “Multinational” represents studies that focused on more than one country. “N/A” are the studies without a geographical focus.



509 3.4. *Topic co-occurrence and network*

510 The 14 topics on urban agriculture are likely to co-occur in the same docu-  
511 ment, reflecting close linkages among the topics (Figure 6). For example, Topic1  
512 (Small-scale ground-based systems) is more likely to occur together with Topic12  
513 (Ecosystem services & biodiversity), Topic13 (Water & other agricultural in-  
514 puts), or Topic14 (Health & other risks). We observed these co-occurrences  
515 because many studies highlight either ecosystem services and biodiversity in  
516 the allotment and community gardens or input requirements and soil contam-  
517 ination aspects of these gardens. Similarly, Topic3 (Urban livestock) is likely  
518 to co-occur with many other topics, e.g., Topic4 (Food systems transforma-  
519 tion potential), Topic5 (Alternative food supply), Topic6 (Alternative liveli-  
520 hoods), Topic12 (Ecosystem services & biodiversity), and Topic14 (Health &  
521 other risks). These co-occurrences reflect the importance of urban livestock  
522 together with their challenges. Within a topic, the probability of top words  
523 is mostly positively correlated, with a few exceptions of anti-correlations. For  
524 example, there is an anti-correlation between the probability of the words *allot*  
525 and *communiti* belonging to Topic1. It is mainly because many studies on this  
526 topic either focus on allotment or community gardens.

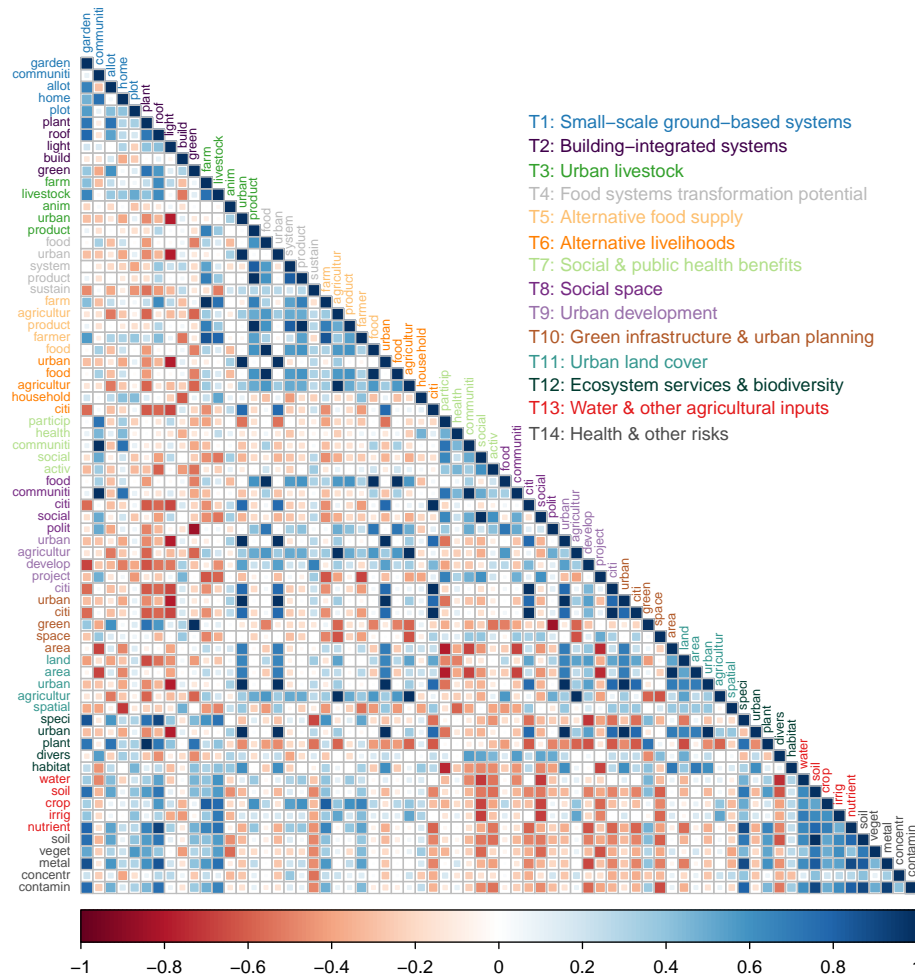


Figure 6: Heat map showing spearman correlation coefficient between occurrence from the 14 topics (T1–T14). The positive correlations reflect the co-occurrence of the words. The reddish colour represents a positive correlation, and the bluish colour shows a negative correlation. The areas of coloured squares are proportional to the absolute value of the correlation coefficient.

527 Some of the top words from the 14 topics are more connected or isolated than  
 528 others (Figure 7). The most connected words with positive correlations in terms  
 529 of occurrence probability in a topic are *urban*, *nutrient*, *roof*, *garden*, *livestock*,  
 530 and *metal* (Figure 7, left). Since *urban* appears as the top most probable word  
 531 in seven of 14 topics, it is unsurprising to see *urban* as one of the most prominent

532 words. However, the other five words appear at the top most probable word for  
533 only one topic. Nevertheless, these words are connected positively with several  
534 words in other topics. The most isolated words with a lot of negative correlations  
535 in terms of occurrence probability in a topic are *light*, *project*, *develop*, *plant*,  
536 *area*, and *space* (Figure 7, right). Using artificial light for indoor farms is an  
537 emerging topic in urban agriculture literature. Thus, we identify *light* as the  
538 most isolated words. A reason behind the other five most isolated words is also  
539 either their use in a specific context, e.g., *project* and *develop*, or their synonyms  
540 being more prominent, e.g., *garden* instead of *area* and *space*.

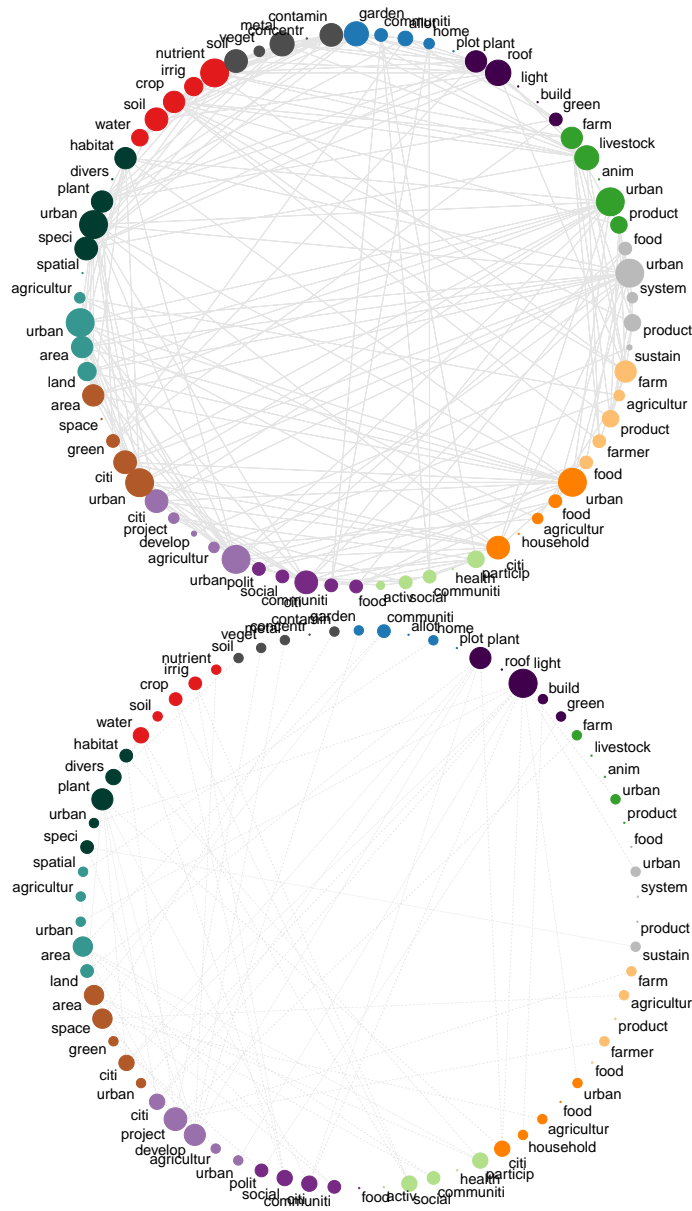


Figure 7: The networks of the top five words from the 14 topics with positive (top) and negative (bottom) correlations in terms of occurrence probability in a topic. The larger bubbles in the network based on positive correlations are the most connected words among the topics (top). In contrast, the most isolated words among the topics are reflected by the larger bubbles in the network based on negative correlations (bottom). The bubble size represents the connections based on positive or negative correlations presented in Figure 6. We plot the networks considering the absolute correlation coefficient greater than 0.6 to avoid over-interpretation of correlation analysis. 26

#### 541 4. Discussion

542 Our systematic literature review identified multiple aspects of urban agricul-  
543 ture, grouped into 14 topics. These topics highlight urban agriculture’s social,  
544 economic, and environmental benefits and associated risks. We documented in-  
545 creased publications on urban agriculture in recent years. This increase shows  
546 that urban agriculture is becoming a part of scientific discourse on various topics  
547 based on its multi-functionality. Our review brings several novelties and insights  
548 compared to the existing studies on urban agriculture.

549 First, we provide a holistic review of urban agriculture literature compared  
550 to its limited aspects highlighted by most studies. Our broad keyword search  
551 strategy enables us to cover an extensive body of literature on urban agriculture,  
552 i.e., around 76,000 records for initial screening. It is essential to provide robust  
553 evidence of urban agriculture benefits and limitations, which are increasingly de-  
554 bated. As a contribution to this debate, we found a high agreement among the  
555 literature on the multi-functionality of urban agriculture. These functionalities  
556 include food, livelihoods, income, biodiversity, education, and health. However,  
557 several publications also highlight the constraints of urban agriculture. For ex-  
558 ample, urban agriculture can supply city inhabitants with fruits and vegetables,  
559 an essential part of healthy diets. Still, it cannot provide their total calorie  
560 and nutrient demands (De Simone et al., 2023). Urban agriculture is a multi-  
561 functional infrastructure in or around cities, which offers several socioeconomic  
562 and environmental benefits but requires various inputs and might pose health  
563 risks.

564 Second, our study systematically covers various topics the existing urban  
565 agriculture literature raises. For this, we apply topic modeling to identify top-  
566 ics based on machine learning instead of manual selection to minimize manual  
567 biases in choosing the topics. For example, we identify urban livestock as a  
568 separate topic. This topic is not widely covered by the existing reviews (Palma  
569 et al., 2015). Moreover, our study uses the full text of the relevant document  
570 for topic modeling instead of using only their abstracts. Our 14 topics represent

571 a wide range of discussions on urban agriculture, including its forms, multi-  
572 functionalities, and potential risks. Notably, we could identify ground-based  
573 and building-integrated systems as separate topics in the literature. These dif-  
574 ferent urban agriculture forms have their own strength and limitations. For  
575 example, building-integrated indoor systems, e.g., vertical farming, require ar-  
576 tificial light and other agricultural inputs. This form of urban agriculture could  
577 provide food on a commercial scale. However, its benefits would be undermined  
578 without an efficient system. In contrast, small-scale ground-based systems could  
579 provide other social, economic, and environmental benefits and produce food on  
580 a less commercial or non-commercial scale. Still, urban agriculture could pose  
581 health risks and demand intensive agricultural inputs depending on its manage-  
582 ment and surrounding environment. Therefore, raising awareness of sustainable  
583 practices is essential while promoting and up-scaling urban agriculture to ob-  
584 tain its multi-functional benefits. The sustainability aspects should be further  
585 explored with more in situ observations, such as resource-saving and climate  
586 mitigation effects.

587 Third, we bring attention to the spatio-temporal distribution of 14 ur-  
588 ban agriculture topics. We found that certain topics are more co-occurring  
589 in the same literature than others. Studies from developed and developing  
590 countries didn't show differences in prioritizing specific topics. A few topics  
591 (e.g., Social space and Social & public health benefits) are common interests  
592 for all. Building-integrated systems are becoming increasingly popular world-  
593 wide (Van Delden et al., 2021). It might be due to the technological readiness  
594 of various forms of building-integrated systems for a broader implementation  
595 (Herrero et al., 2020). Regarding urban agriculture benefits, social, environ-  
596 mental, and urban development aspects are becoming more prominent in recent  
597 decades. This shift indicates that the function of urban health, a feature of  
598 the urban society as a whole, now dominates the interest in urban agriculture  
599 for particular social groups. An increased proportion of the topic on the food  
600 system transformational potential of urban agriculture also hints in the same  
601 direction. It may also indicate a decrease in the interest in urban agriculture as

602 an expression of alternative livelihoods but the mainstreaming of green ideology.  
603 It might be becoming less critical what urban agriculture does with those who  
604 practice it. More important would be how this form of agriculture transforms  
605 the city. This finding highlights the increasing multi-functional role of urban  
606 agriculture in providing other social benefits besides food. Thus, we argue that  
607 promoting urban agriculture requires accounting for its social, economic, and  
608 environmental benefits besides food provisioning.

609 We acknowledge several limitations to our study. First, our review does not  
610 include grey literature on urban agriculture because of limiting our search to  
611 only two databases. Since our aim is a systematic analysis, it is a challenge  
612 to cover grey literature systematically, including its quality control. Our re-  
613 view was also restricted by our keyword search strategy, selection of English  
614 publications, and full-text availability. We could have used various synonyms of  
615 urban agriculture during the keyword search. Despite these limitations, we were  
616 able to cover a substantial amount of literature, including studies from different  
617 countries worldwide. We assumed that information provided in the non-English  
618 language is also somewhat reported in those publications. Nevertheless, liter-  
619 ature assessment based on English articles generally has a problem. It misses  
620 non-English publications, including much grey literature, as highlighted by the  
621 recent study on national biodiversity assessments (Amano et al., 2023). Ad-  
622 ditionally, we tried our best to collect the full text of the articles. Mainly, it  
623 was challenging to obtain the full text of some recent articles due to paywalls.  
624 However, we could include much of the older literature in our analysis because  
625 we did not find full text for only nine publications before 2000. This hurdle  
626 highlights the need for open science for sound evidence synthesis.

627 Second, our method also has some limitations. The topic modeling approach  
628 requires a pre-defined number of static topics. We tackle these limitations by  
629 identifying an optimum topic number and analyzing topic evolution across the  
630 study period. Further, we applied a qualitative method for our study based on  
631 vast literature instead of qualitative approaches based on stakeholders. Nev-  
632 ertheless, our review also included qualitative studies covering stakeholders'

633 perspectives. Nevertheless, combining quantitative, qualitative, and knowledge  
634 co-creation approaches would be a way forward for a holistic understanding  
635 (Pradhan, 2023).

636 Third, the topic modeling approach does not model sentence structure and  
637 provides the distribution of topics over documents and the distribution of words  
638 over topics. Therefore, it may miss nuances in the meaning of the text. Fourth,  
639 a topical analysis does not account for semantics and conclusions, i.e., concrete  
640 positions or findings within one topic. We attempt to overcome these limitations  
641 by interpreting each topic by having a closer look at the literature for which  
642 it is the primary topic. Overall, these limitations are common in large-scale  
643 literature reviews, and we acknowledged these limitations in a comprehensive  
644 and rigorous analysis of the literature.

645 With the application of a systematic approach, we believe that our study pro-  
646 vides a robust foundation for promoting urban agriculture considering its multi-  
647 functionalities and limitations. For example, as the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable  
648 Development envisioned, urban agriculture could contribute to ending hunger,  
649 mainly by providing fresh fruits and vegetables. In the meantime, it could syn-  
650 ergise with other Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), e.g., no poverty (SDG  
651 2) and life on land (SDG 15). However, a more detailed study is required to  
652 understand the interlinkages between SDGs and urban agriculture. The ade-  
653 quate improvement in urban agriculture to alleviate the trade-offs among SDG  
654 targets remain unknown as well. Nevertheless, our review highlights that ur-  
655 ban agriculture could help urban transformation towards sustainable cities and  
656 communities (SDG 11). Thus, we would argue that sustainable urban planning  
657 and development needs to consider urban agriculture as an essential component,  
658 which is also a part of green spaces and infrastructures. Moreover, our findings  
659 are also crucial contributions to the upcoming report on urban and peri-urban  
660 food systems by the High-Level Panel of Experts on Food Security and Nutri-  
661 tion. The report is planned for 2024. We synthesise robust evidence, discussed  
662 and highlighted above, based on an extensive body of literature, which could be  
663 used in this upcoming report.



## 664 **5. Conclusion**

665 We conducted a semi-automated systematic review of the existing literature  
666 on urban agriculture based on the topic modeling approach. Our review high-  
667 lights that urban agriculture is multi-functional, providing more than food. In  
668 recent years, the literature increasingly emphasizes urban agriculture’s social,  
669 economic, and environmental benefits. These benefits include urban agriculture  
670 as a component of the city’s green spaces and infrastructures. Urban agriculture  
671 can potentially produce a share of food demands, mainly vegetables. However,  
672 there might also be health risks from consuming food from urban agriculture  
673 grown in polluted and contaminated soil, water, and air. Additionally, the en-  
674 vironmental benefits of urban agriculture could be offset when it is practised  
675 unsustainably based on inefficient use of agricultural inputs and energy. Urban  
676 agriculture may not always be associated with lower carbon, energy, or water  
677 costs. Only judicious management strategies identified from a whole life-cycle  
678 assessment of the existing and planned projects could ensure these benefits of  
679 urban agriculture. It may be impractical for all forms of urban agriculture to  
680 perform better than traditional agriculture in all environmental domains. Trade-  
681 offs may occur. For example, improving management for irrigation would be  
682 a priority in arid cities to maintain residential water requirements instead of  
683 promoting water-intensive ground-based urban agriculture systems. Therefore,  
684 promoting urban agriculture should encourage efficient and sustainable prac-  
685 tices and incentivise urban agriculture for its multi-functionality besides food  
686 provisioning.

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