



# GRASSROOTS INITIATIVES AND MUNICIPAL POLICY

A research about the synergy between municipal food policy and grassroots Urban Food initiatives in the Netherlands.



# Urban Food initiatives and Urban Food policy

*A research about the synergy between municipal food policy and grassroots Urban Food initiatives in the Netherlands.*

**FINAL VERSION**

Master Thesis  
MSc. Sociale Planologie  
A.J. van der Haar  
Rijksuniversiteit Groningen  
21-08-2014

Supervisor: C. Parra  
Faculteit Ruimtelijke Wetenschappen  
Rijksuniversiteit Groningen

# **Urban Food initiatives and Urban Food policy.**

A research about the contribution of municipal food policy to grassroots Urban Food initiatives in the Netherlands.

**Master Thesis**

Anne van der Haar  
Groningen, August 2014

Faculty of Spatial Sciences  
University of Groningen  
The Netherlands

Supervised by:  
Dr. C. Parra

*"Urban agriculture throughout the world is transforming itself in response to political, economic, environmental, and technological changes. It's emerging role in today's urbanizing world is just beginning to be understood and quantified" (Smit et al., 2001).*

# ABSTRACT

Grassroots urban food initiatives are initiatives concerning growing food within the urban environment, started by citizens or communities. The possible motives and goals for starting an initiative seem endless and sometimes the motives and goals are not even related to food itself, but is used as a mean. The amount of Urban Food initiatives is growing fast and gaining attention from policy makers. There seems to be a growing belief of its importance and contribution towards sustainability. Although the municipalities are adapting by making new policies, the question whether these policies serve the right purposes and whether the policies contribute to the urban food initiatives arise.

This thesis is conducted to investigate the way existing municipal food policies relate to existing grassroots food initiatives and whether the existing municipal food policies and visions meet the needs of the existing grassroots urban food initiatives within The Netherlands. As a first step, existing literature about the shift from governing to governance, the Dutch governing system, grassroots initiatives, urban food initiatives and existing food policies were studied.

For answering the main research objectives, grassroots urban food initiatives were visited and the municipal food policies and visions were studied and discussed with actors involved in the policy making and execution processes. All of the grassroots urban food initiatives were located within the Groningen and Rotterdam municipalities, because they were among the first municipalities within The Netherlands that made food policy and visions, and therefore fitting cases to study the implementation of the food policy and visions in practice. The municipal food policies and visions show, at the basic, the facilitating role the municipalities aim for and their desire to stimulate and support urban food related initiatives. Another aspect that is notable from the policy and visions is the positive attitude towards urban food initiatives being a contribution to several sustainability areas.

The governing to governance shift has a major role when it comes to implementing the policies and visions in practice. Governance is about the realization that the coordination of complex systems, like the city, was never responsibility of the state alone. The state might even have less influence on the evolving of these systems than they are aware of. One thing does become clear, collective action is needed for sustainability now and in the future. In other words, for the future life of grassroots urban food initiatives, it is important they receive support from municipalities, and the other way around, municipalities need these grass-rooters in order to know what is going on in society and what society needs.

The main finding from this study is the municipal food policies and visions do not match the needs of the grass-rooters. The municipalities seem to have little knowledge about which issues are currently present within society. The grassroots urban food initiatives mainly have to goal to increase the social cohesion within the neighborhood. The municipality links all initiatives to environmental sustainability goals. This is one of the main mismatches, which sometime results in negative experiences with the municipality in practice.

Another problem showing from this study is that municipalities are not cooperating with other actors outside of the municipal structures, for example NGO's, cooperations and people from civil society. Therefore, the municipality misses out on getting to know the wishes and ideas that are alive within society. This knowledge is fundamental for municipalities for being able to implement public policy effectively and make that shift towards a more sustainable future.

Key words: governance, sustainability, communication, cooperation, grassroots urban food initiatives, municipality, policy, visions.

# FOREWORD

The main reasons why i chose to study grassroots urban food initiatives is the fascination i have for people that have the courage to take power into their own hands, and fight for their wishes. Perhaps this is related to experiences from my past, growing up and living in residential areas with many residents having low social-economical statuses for over twenty years. This has probably triggered the fascination for 'problem neighborhoods' and social interactions between neighbors and neighborhood inhabitants. Also, sustainability and sustainable development is one of my main interests. During my Engineering graduating period, I got the opportunity to study the effects of Urban Farming on social cohesion in declining areas. Within the broad, and often used concept of sustainability, Urban Farming is one way of working towards a more sustainable future. When I learned more about the concept of Urban Farming, I discovered that social initiatives often pop up in times of crises or out of necessity, and slowly fade out when the crises passes. This triggered me to think and read more about global and local food systems and social initiatives. During that period i have discovered that we live in a world with large and extreme complex food systems. Additionally, and maybe even as a consequence of this complex food world, the meaning of food has changed over time. Within developed countries we can choose to eat whatever we like, whenever we want. This is quite different from the meaning food had just a few decades ago, when food was seen as a basic need to live and made it able to do physical activities, like working on farm land. I also discovered that food production often was not the main goal for urban farmers. Insufficient education about food and its nature, unhealthy pre-packed food and sometimes shortage of healthy food within reach where the motives i found when studying multiple national and international examples.

Since graduating Engeneering, i have learned more and more about the subject and never stopped thinking about other ways and possibilities for the worldwide, in my opinion not so healthy, food systems. The ideal picture for me would be that all people would have the opportunity to eat healthy food, animals would be treated well (no animal mass production) and everybody would know how their food is made and where it comes from. What i think would contribute to this, would be to fit local Urban Food projects into the bigger food system to decrease food miles and pollution, starting from The Netherlands. This might sound like a huge challenge, and it is, so therefore, as a starting point, i have chosen to start off with researching Municipal Urban Food Policy and Grassroots Urban Food Initiatives within The Netherlands. For future development of the urban food concept, it is very important to know how municipalities deal with urban food and social innovative initiatives and how these efforts contribute (or not) to the initiatives. These outcomes can help future food policy development and improving the existing food policies van visions.

During the Master Social Planning, i developed many more fascinating aspects like citizen participation, involving non-state actors and working together with all people within society for reaching curtain goals as social cohesion, spatial quality and sustainability. The subject of grassroots urban food initiatives and municipal food policy provides the opportunity to use the things i have learned and expanding my knowledge.

# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The best way to learn about the grassroots urban food initiatives was to visit initiatives and walk through de gardens, talking to initiators and people working within the gardens, enjoying the garden or were there for another reason. I would like to thank all people who took the time to talk to me, answered questions and showed me around their gardens. It was a great experience and i have learned a lot. Also i would like to thank H. Lestestuiver and N. Berndsen for discussing the food policy and visions, and the process of making the policy.

Also a big thanks to my fellow students of Social Planning: Patrick and Rik. You have supported and motivated me during periods of struggle, which i appreciate a lot.

I would like to thank my supervisor Dr. Constanza Parra, for the enthusiastic, pleasant and helpful talks during the year, the inspiring lectures during the Planning for Quality course and for the many times you have given me feedback about the thesis, which gave me confidence about my own ability to write a master thesis.

For checking and helping me write the report i would like to thank my father, Frans, who has always found the time to talk about and advise me on the structure and inspiration for new ideas.

For mental support and the occasional time-out i would like to thank my mother, Joke. When i was about to lose a nerve, she was the one that convinced me to go on, or sometimes just let it go for a while. And thanks to my brother Thomas as well, for doing the same.

Several friends should not be forgotten in this section. My friends Myrke, Elise, Denise en Janine who make me laugh when i am stressed, and put me to work when i am holding off. My friend and colleague Helene, who helped me out by taking over my shifts and who is always there when i need some distraction.

And last, but not least, i would like to thank Vincent, for supporting me always, believing in my abilities and for his patience.

A final word to the reader: I hope you enjoy reading the thesis!

# CONTENT

<b>LIST OF FIGURES, TABLES AND BOXES.....</b>	<b>VII</b>
<b>1. INTRODUCTION.....</b>	<b>1</b>
1.1. Introducing the subject.....	1
1.2. The problem.....	2
1.3. Research questions and objectives.....	2
1.4. The structure of the Thesis.....	3
<b>2. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK.....</b>	<b>5</b>
2.1. Introduction.....	5
2.2. Governing and Governance.....	5
2.2.1. Shifting towards governance.....	5
2.2.2. Governance within The Netherlands.....	7
2.2.3. The Municipal structures and systems.....	8
2.3. Grassroots initiatives and Food Production within the Urban Area.....	8
2.3.1. Grassroots Urban Food Initiatives.....	8
2.3.2. The background and upswings.....	9
2.3.3. How can Urban Food Initiatives be Defined?.....	11
2.3.4. The characteristics.....	12
2.3.5. The underlying motives and goals.....	14
2.3.6. Actors and initiators.....	15
2.4. Contemporary Food Policies and Visions.....	16
2.4.1. Food policy and visions worldwide.....	16
2.4.2. Food Policy and Visions within The Netherlands.....	19
2.5. Conclusion.....	20
<b>3. RESEARCH DESIGN.....</b>	<b>22</b>
3.1. Introduction.....	22
3.2. Philosophical basis.....	22
3.3. Two case studies: Groningen and Rotterdam.....	23
3.4. Data collection.....	24
3.4.1. Literature study.....	24
3.4.2. Semi-structured interviews.....	25
3.5. Data Analysis.....	26
3.6. Reflecting on the research method.....	26
3.6.1. The method of semi-structured interviewing.....	26
3.6.2. The New Method: walking talks and observation.....	27

<b>4. STUDY SITES: GRASSROOTS URBAN FOOD INITIATIVES IN PRACTICE</b>	<b>29</b>
4.1. The Groningen gardens.....	30
A place filled with inspiration and possibilities.....	31
A garden for social bonding, feeling safe and having fun.....	32
A good leader enthusiasts others to join and work together.....	33
4.2. The Rotterdam gardens.....	34
Awareness, be who you are, connect and share with others.....	35
Feeling safe, opportunities for women and social bonding.....	36
Outside space, know your neighbor and grow your own food.....	37
<b>5. ANALYTICAL DISCUSSION.....</b>	<b>38</b>
5.1. Introduction.....	38
5.2. Municipal food policy and visions.....	38
5.2.1. The content of the Rotterdam municipal food policy.....	38
5.2.2. The content of the Groningen municipal food policy and visions.....	39
5.2.3. Discussing the implementations of the food policies and visions in practice.....	41
5.3. Grassroots urban food initiatives.....	45
5.3.1. The motives, goals, results and characteristics.....	45
5.3.2. The positive and negative experiences with the municipalities.....	48
<b>6. CONCLUSION &amp; DISCUSSION.....</b>	<b>51</b>
6.1. Introduction.....	51
6.2. Conclusions regarding the main research questions.....	51
6.3. Discussion.....	55
6.4. Final conclusion.....	57
6.5. Reflection.....	58
6.5.1. Theoretical.....	58
6.5.2. Methodological.....	59
<b>7. RECOMMENDATIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH.....</b>	<b>60</b>
7.1. Introduction.....	60
7.2. Recommendations for policy.....	61
7.3. Recommendations for future research.....	62
<b>REFERENCES.....</b>	<b>63</b>
<b>RESEARCH PARTICIPANTS.....</b>	<b>I</b>
<b>APPENDIX 1.....</b>	<b>II</b>
<b>APPENDIX 2.....</b>	<b>III</b>
<b>APPENDIX 3.....</b>	<b>IV</b>

# LIST OF FIGURES AND TABLES

## FIGURES

FIGURE 1	Model of the structure of the thesis
FIGURE 2	The six characteristics of urban farming
FIGURE 3	Initiators of urban gardening projects
FIGURE 4	The three P's
FIGURE 5	Conceptual model, based on existing literature
FIGURE 6	Empirical research model
FIGURE 7, 8, 9	Pictures of 'Tuin san de Maas' and 'De tuin van Jannie'
FIGURE 10	A map of the Groningen city
FIGURE 11, 12	An image of 'Tuin in de stad'
FIGURE 13	An image of 'The Herehof'
FIGURE 14	An image of 'De tuin van Jannie'
FIGURE 15	A map of the Rotterdam City
FIGURE 16, 17	An image of 'De Ghandituin'
FIGURE 18	An image of 'De krabbetuin'
FIGURE 19, 20	An image of 'Tuin san de Maas'

## TABLES

TABLE 1	Timeline of Urban Garden initiatives in the United States
TABLE 2	Motives and goals for Urban Gardening projects
TABLE 3	Number one has the most support from the municipality, and six has no support
TABLE 4	Policy areas linked to food policy
TABLE 5	Focus areas of the Rotterdam Municipal food policy
TABLE 6	The six focal point of the Groningen municipality
TABLE 7	Municipal food policy and visions: motives
TABLE 8	Municipal food policy and visions: goals
TABLE 9	Municipal food policy and visions: results
TABLE 10	Municipal food policy and visions: characteristics
TABLE 11	Grassroots urban food initiatives: motives
TABLE 12	Grassroots urban food initiatives: goal(s)
TABLE 13	Grassroots urban food initiatives: results
TABLE 14	Grassroots urban food initiatives: characteristics
TABLE 15	Positive and negative experiences with the municipalities

## BOXES

BOX 1	Motives, goals, result and characteristics of 'Tuin in de stad'
BOX 2	Motives, goals, result and characteristics of 'Herehof'
BOX 3	Motives, goals, result and characteristics of 'Tuin van Jannie'
BOX 4	Motives, goals, result and characteristics of 'Gandhituin'
BOX 5	Motives, goals, result and characteristics of 'Krabbetuin'
BOX 6	Motives, goals, result and characteristics of 'Tuin aan de Maas'

## INTRODUCTION

# 1. INTRODUCTION

*"Feeding the city in a sustainable fashion - in ways that are economically efficient, socially just and ecologically sound - is one of the quite essential challenges of the 21st century. It will not be met without great political commitment to urban food planning and a bold vision for the city"* (Morgen in Feeding the City, 2013).

## 1.1 INTRODUCING THE SUBJECT

Within the Netherlands, Urban gardens and farming-plots are popping 'out of the ground'. Some call it a hype, others believe that something is fundamentally changing in the way 'urban' people see their food. On the internet and in the newspapers, lots of articles, websites and blogs are written, some in favor of urban farming, some against. There are people stating that urban farming is the new way of living, while others do not believe urban farming contributes to issues that really matter as sustainability and health. Smit et al. (1992) states that ecologically sustainable urbanization is inconceivable without urban and peri-urban agriculture stating that it is the most efficient way to turn urban waste of water and fuels into food and jobs. Also they mention other effects of urban agriculture like an improved living environment, better public health, energy savings, natural resources savings, land and water savings and urban management cost reduction. Although not everyone sees the opportunities of urban farming, municipalities are starting to write food policy and are even starting urban food projects themselves starting from many diverse motives.

Currently, urban food initiatives are on the upswing. To most people this is a relatively new phenomenon, but America has a long history of Urban Farming and Gardening initiatives, set up by citizens and governments through the last few decades. There are many documentaries, films, studies and writings about Urban Farming, also called Urban Agriculture. 'Urban Roots' is a documentary that tells the story of the spontaneous emergence of Urban Farming in Detroit. Another documentary is the one called 'Grown in Detroit', in which focusses on the efforts of a public school for pregnant and parenting teenagers in Detroit. These are great examples of goals, besides food production, urban farming projects aim for. Many more examples can be found, large and small projects, just by searching 'Urban Farming' on You Tube. There is also a lot of academic literature about Urban Farming, mostly writings about studies in Africa, where food shortage is still a large problem. Several types of Urban Farming can be distinguished when studying the documentaries and literature. Developing countries use Urban Farms mainly for food production, while developed countries aim for social cohesion, healthy lifestyles, sustainability and organic food. Within urban food projects and policies, a distinction can be made between countries with food shortage (mostly developing countries) and countries that have not (developed countries). Because The Netherlands is a well developed country, this research focusses exclusively on food initiatives and food policies for other reasons than food security, e.g. social cohesion, sustainability and education.

As an introduction to the subject, a little information about the worlds population is given first. Today, the majority of the humanity is living in cities and increases with approximately sixty million every year (WHO, 2014). Also, our world population is still growing and is projected to grow from

## INTRODUCTION

6.1 billion in 2000 to 8.9 billion in 2050 (U.N., 2004). These two aspects cause increasing distances between a person and the origin of its food, because the distance becomes larger when cities grow. Food producers prefer low cost production locations, which are located often within less developed areas. This also results in the increasing degree of complexity in food logistics and transport and the distance between production and consumption. Large distances between the production and consumption causes environmental pollution, because of transporting the food. Pollution is just one of the many aspects what makes it more favorable to decrease food miles, but job opportunities and learning about food and its nature are just as important. One way to reduce food miles, is bringing the production of food and its consumers closer to one another. For people living in urban areas, it means bringing the food production into their urban environment.

### 1.2 THE PROBLEM

Within the Netherlands, municipalities are at the beginning of policy making for urban grassroots initiatives. Grassroots initiatives are on the rise, and municipalities are trying to adapt to this phenomenon. Although it seems to be positive that municipalities are embracing this phenomenon and making new kinds of policy and visions, only executing these policies in practice show whether this makes a positive and/or negative difference or not. Since municipalities are used to work top-down, for the citizens instead of with them, there might be a difference in what the grass-rooters need or wish for, and what the municipality thinks they need.

As a way to study whether the policies and visions match the grassroots initiatives, grassroots urban food initiatives are used for studying the synergy between the public policies and visions and the implementation in practice.

Most examples and studies about Urban Food are outside The Netherlands, this research focusses on Food initiatives located within The Netherlands. This research investigates whether the urban food policies contribute to the establishment and endurance of grassroots urban food initiatives, the possible gaps and problems between the initiatives and the municipal policy and what lays underneath. For initiators and participants within these initiatives, but also for the municipalities, it is very important that these initiatives stay 'alive'. The outcome of this study provides knowledge, reflection and possible recommendations regarding the gaps and possible opportunities found during this research for future urban (food) policy development and further research.

The definition of urban food that will be used within this Thesis is *"Urban Food initiatives captivate the growing, cultivation, processing and distribution of natural food in urban areas, set up by citizens, organizations or associations other than the state, province or municipality. The main motives of Urban Food initiatives are social benefits to the participants and/or community, healthy lifestyles and reconnecting with nature"* (Author, 2014). More existing definitions can be found within chapter 2.

### 1.2 RESEARCH OBJECTIVES AND QUESTIONS

Two main objectives guide this research. The first objective is to examine the perceptions of the effectiveness and contribution of food policies and/or food visions. Both sides will be discussed,

## INTRODUCTION

the makers of the policy and the people who the policy is made for. The second objective is about examining whether the food policy meets the needs of the users (project initiators and participants) and what improvements need to be, or can be made. In this research, the main focus is on grassroots urban food initiatives, in other words: initiatives set up by citizens or communities.

The main research questions that will guide this research are:

**How does the existing municipal food policy relate to existing grassroots food initiatives in the Netherlands?**

**Does the existing municipal food policy meet the needs of the existing grassroots urban food initiatives within the Netherlands?**

To answer these two main research questions, a total of six subquestions have been set up. The first two subquestions are answered through a literature review and will be the basis for the empirical research.

- How can grassroots urban food initiatives be conceptualized?
- In what way do municipal urban food policy meet grassroots Urban Food initiatives?

The subquestions listed below are answered through case-study analysis within the municipalities of Groningen and Rotterdam within the Netherlands.

- What are the characteristics of grassroots Urban Food initiatives that are currently undertaken in The Netherlands?
- How are these initiatives created? (By whom? When? Why? Where?)
- What role does the municipal food policy or vision have within the establishment of Urban Food initiatives? (If so, in what way? What are the effects?)
- How can municipal policy be (more) supportive to grassroots initiatives?

## **1.3 THE STRUCTURE OF THE THESIS**

The first part of the thesis started with personal reasons for choosing the subject, followed by introducing the thesis, the main objectives, subquestions and steps that will be made for finalizing this Master Thesis. The second chapter of this thesis contains the theoretical framework in which the shift from governing to governance, grassroots urban food initiatives and existing food policies are studied. The third chapter contains the research design, which is divided into philosophical considerations, the research method and analysis and a reflection on the research method. The fourth chapter presents the study sites, a total of six grassroots urban food initiatives. The fifth chapter contains an analytical discussion about the cases and municipal food policy and visions, followed by analytical discussions about the grassroots urban food initiatives. Within chapter sixth, the conclusions regarding the research questions are presented, a section is dedicated to discussing the outcomes followed by the final conclusion and a reflection theoretical and methodological part. The seventh chapter contains the recommendations for municipal policy future academic research. For the full structure of the thesis, see figure 1 on page 4.

# INTRODUCTION

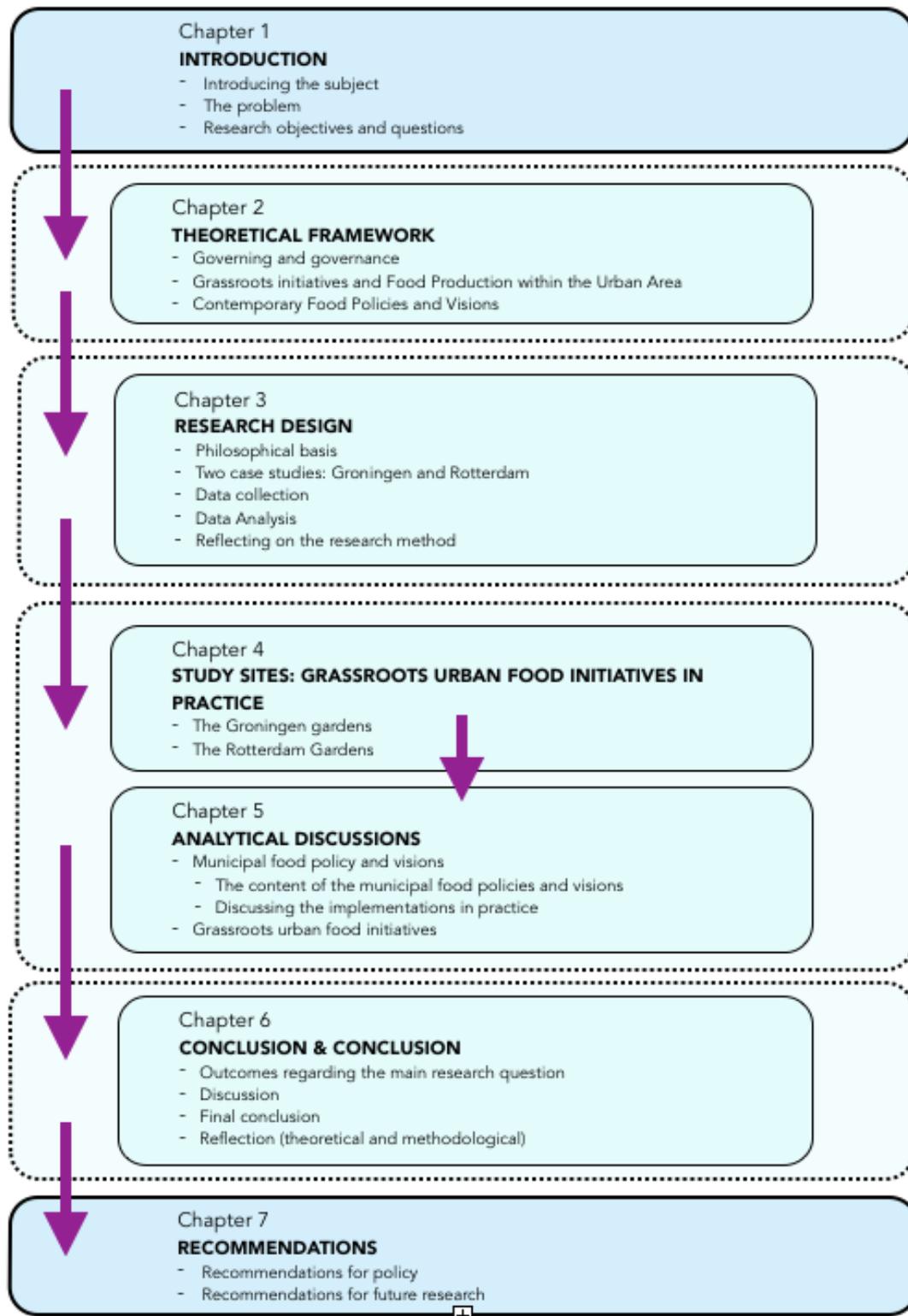


FIGURE 1: Model of the structure of the thesis (source: author)

# 1. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

## 2.1 INTRODUCTION

Within this chapter, existing literature and theory regarding governing, governance, grassroots initiatives, urban food initiatives and food policy is studied. This information provides a framework for the empirical research, the selection of the municipalities and urban food initiatives, and the most important aspects regarding the main research questions.

The main subject within this research, and therefore of the theoretical framework, is whether there is a synergy between grassroots initiatives and governance, which in this research is limited to municipalities and grassroots Urban Food initiatives. When it comes to the synergy between public policy and grassroots initiatives in The Netherlands, there is limited information available, because grassroots initiatives are starting to rise and grow fast during the last couple of years. Therefore, there is not a lot of existing research on this specific subject. In order to make research about the synergy between municipal policy and grassroots initiatives possible, knowledge about how the municipal system and other involved actors work and cooperate and what their visions are is necessary.

As a first step, literature about the shift from governing to governance, the cooperation between different governing actors, institutions and citizens and the structures within the Dutch steering system, a specially municipal structures, is studied (section 2.2). Second, urban food and grassroots initiatives are studied more in-depth on its motives, goals and characteristics (section 2.3). As a third step, literature about worldwide contemporary food policies and visions, and food policy within The Netherlands is studied (section 2.4).

## 2.2 GOVERNING AND GOVERNANCE

### 2.2.1 SHIFTING TOWARDS GOVERNANCE

The term governance, a relative new term, is used more and more. Due to globalization and border crossing problems (e.g. climate change, global warming, pollution) a new way of governing these issues became necessary (Kooiman, 2003). Jessop (1997) states that governance is *"the self-organization of inter-organizational relations"* (Gregory et al., 2009). Rhodes (1997) uses the definition of *"self-organizing, inter-organizational networks"*. Rhodes (1997) expands this definition as follows: (1) Interdependence between organizations. *"Governance is broader than government, covering non-state actors. Changing the boundaries of the state meant the boundaries between public, private and voluntary sectors became more shifting and opaque"*, (2) *"Continuing interactions between network members, caused by the need to exchange resources and negotiate shared purposes"*, (3) *"Game-like interactions, rooted in trust and regulated by rules of the game negotiated and agreed by network participants"*, (4) A significant degree of autonomy from the state. *"Networks are not accountable to the state; they are self-organizing. Although the state does not occupy a sovereign position, it can indirectly and imperfectly steer networks"* (Gregory et al., 2009). The definitions Kooiman (2003) uses in his book about Governing as Governance is *"Governing can be considered as the totality of interactions, in which public as well as private actors participate, aimed at solving societal problems or creating social opportunities; attending to*

## THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

*the institutions as contexts for these governing interactions; and establishing a normative foundation for all those activities. Governance can be seen as the totality of theoretical conceptions on governing.*" (Kooiman, 2003). Basically, a shift from government (coordination through hierarchy) to governance (coordination through networks) is what is happening (Gregory et al., 2009). The networks referred to by Jessop (1997), but also mentioned by others, means a wide variety of organizations, including state and non-state institutions as private firms, NGOs, voluntary organizations, faith- and community-based groups and grassroots initiatives. Governance is about the growing recognition that the coordination of complex social systems was never the responsibility of the state alone. It might even mean that non-state organizations have become more important than the state itself within coordination processes (Gregory et al., 2009).

Many studies have argued, that building on local knowledge within society is the key to the development of social and institutional capital. Healey (1998, in Buckingham & Theobald, 2003) writes about the need for local governments to learn about different social worlds from which the stakeholder groups and organizations come. Complementing Healey, Taylor (2000, in Buckingham & Theobald, 2003) states that local communities bring significant local knowledge to the table, and that this has been undervalued in the past. These statements can be linked to the shift from governing to governance, because of the argued importance of connecting and interacting with local society, enabling to build social learning processes (Buckingham & Theobald, 2003). Although these arguments are in favor of social learning and communication, the problem of different actors having different interests remains, and a plan, thought of by citizens, can be the opposite of what the local government had planned for a certain space (Buckingham & Theobald, 2003). Also, Buckingham & Theobald (2003) studied the way participation within decision making processes within Europe is seen. Although the level of participation is seen differently within different countries the overall outcome is that *"across Europe there is a view that greater participation is needed from the private sectors, social NGOs, and community groups"* (Buckingham & Theobald, 2003).

In addition to what is mentioned before about the shift from governing to governance, the aspect of governance processes at subnational spatial scales, 'multi-level governance' play an important role. Multi-level governance is about the relations between local, regional, national and supranational scales (Painter and Goodwin, 2000; Jones, 2001; Brenner, 2004; Bulkeley and Betsill, 2005 in Gregory et al., 2009).

A lot of these worldwide concerns are linked to the often mentioned concept: sustainability, which is basically an overarching concept, striving for a balanced, healthy and longterm condition of the environment now and for future generations. The path to sustainability is a combination of multiple factors, but collective action is necessary (Affolderbach, J. et al. ,2012). Also the involvement of non-state actors is considered to be fundamental to enable social learning, stimulate environmental consciousness and for building sustainability (Parra, 2013). From this perspective, state and non-state actors (private firms, NGOs, voluntary organizations, faith- and community-based group) need to communicate and cooperate, which suggests that the shift towards governance is inevitable, but regardless what seems to be the right way as an approach for (environmental) planning in theory, can be very difficult in practice.

## THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

### 2.2.2 GOVERNANCE WITHIN THE NETHERLANDS

If we look at the steering system within the Netherlands, we see that it currently exists out of three formal national governing layers: 1) the state, 2) the twelve provinces and 3) the municipalities (the amount of municipalities differs within each province). For decades the Dutch governing system existed out of many different different sectors, which were all using a hierarchical, top-down system. Partly, this came from the period after world war two, when in short time, many new houses and infrastructure had to be build because of the demolitions the war had left behind (De Roo, 2004). Within the 1950s, realization within planning practices recognized the restrictions of spatial management. A part of this realization was the result of autonomous factors and developments, like a rapidly changing society, the increasing complexity and dynamics of spatial developments and restrictions imposed by the government itself (De Roo, 2004). In the 1960s, academic planners still focussed on the effects of policy, including the sociological implications of spatial developments. During the following years, planning approaches shifted from a technical and results-oriented approach, to a more communicative and interactive process, with focus on the decision making process except of the outcome (De Roo, 2004). This shift happened because of the realization that *"strategic decisions appear to have only a limited effect, and do not necessarily achieve the desired goal. Factors such as the nature of policy content, available information, communication between actors and their individual knowledge and interpretations, and the degree of flexibility and responsibility among actors mean that although policy performs, it does not result in conformance between decisions and outcomes"* (Mastop en Faludi 1993, in De Roo, 2004). According to De Roo (2004) the economic situation experienced in the seventies (e.g. Oil Crisis of the Middle East and the collapse of the Fordist production method) resulted in authoritarian decisions. These decisions were no longer taken for granted and citizens became more critical, and organized themselves into multiple interest groups. At the same time government policy in countries such as France, Germany, Denmark, Sweden and the Netherlands expanded into several sectors very quickly, in an effort to keep in control of the many internal and external developments within the physical environment. In addition to spatial planning, water management, traffic and transport policy, and planning of the grey and green environment emerged as distinct fields in planning. The eighties witnessed a substantial elaboration of these policy sectors as each developed its own legal system, planning system, specialized instruments, financial structure, and professional organization, including formal and informal networks. These different sectors became highly specialized, including the development of sector-specific languages. The outcome was a sharply divided planning system, based on several strong sectors, each claiming authority over their peers. The result of this specialization of policy and physical planning was that policy-making eventually had little to do with 'controlling' the outside world through planning, as each government department struggled to further the extent of its influence and control. The result of specialization became noticeable in the nineties as dilemmas between the policy sectors emerged. There were many policy conflicts arising out of an expanding and highly specialized policy system, unable to foster cohesion within the system itself, and thus remains inconsistent in approaching the physical environment (De Roo, 2004). Because of the different and specialized sectors, as a result of the fast rebuilding after world war two, one can imagine that the shift towards decentralization and deregulation has many bumps in the road. Nevertheless, today there are worldwide concerning issues that are bigger, and go way beyond, than one sector or governing layer (e.g. air and water pollution, global warming, exhaustion of (fossil) resources). All this makes the need of a shift towards another governance system bigger than ever (De Roo, 2004). As De Roo (2004) mentioned, the municipalities within The Netherlands have a long history of working from a top-

## THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

down and hierarchical regulation and use rules and policies as controlling mechanisms to maintain their leading position.

### **2.2.3 THE MUNICIPAL STRUCTURES AND SYSTEMS**

Now the emerging of the Dutch steering system has been discussed in the previous section, the next step is to study how the municipal systems are currently set up. First, let's see how the Dutch government describes the municipalities and their roles and responsibilities.

*'Implementing national policy and strategy on environmental management is largely decentralized to municipal government. These authorities prepare local regulations and have both the legal and financial means to implement and enforce decisions and regulations (The Dutch government, 2014).*

*Municipalities may also work together with public authorities such as Water Boards on water quality and wastewater treatment. The municipalities are responsible for preparing regulations for implementing and enforcing the regulations in the national Environmental Management Act and other environmental regulations. The Environmental Management Act covers matters such as separated waste collection, disposal of hazardous waste, air quality, and noise nuisance, and environmental permits for industrial and commercial activity (The Dutch government, 2014).*

*Environmental regulations may vary from one municipality to another, for instance on separated waste collection from households and commercial and industrial activity, and the treatment, recycling and disposal of waste' (The Dutch government, 2014).*

Within this description of the roles and responsibilities of the municipalities, it becomes that the main focus is still to enforce decisions and responsibilities. Working together with public authorities is named, but there is no part about the role of citizens or communities. Basically, the whole part is about environmental issues. The aspects of governance, as discussed previously, about working together with other non-state actors, social learning and collaborative actions are not mentioned besides the water boards and wastewater treatment. The ecologic and economic responsibilities are mentioned, but the social aspect is underexposed.

## **2.3 GRASSROOTS INITIATIVES AND FOOD PRODUCTION WITHIN THE URBAN AREA.**

Now we have more knowledge about the shift from governing to governance, and the Dutch (municipal) steering systems, existing literature about grassroots and urban food initiatives is needed to understand the rise of these initiatives, together with their motives goals and characteristics. Knowledge about these aspects provides knowledge about why these initiatives exist, what their goals, needs and wishes are.

### **2.3.1 GRASSROOTS URBAN FOOD INITIATIVES**

Within the existing literature, the concept of grassroots urban food initiatives is not commonly used. The concept of grassroots urban food initiatives exists out of two combined concepts: 'grassroots initiatives' and 'urban food initiatives' (urban farming, urban agriculture and urban gardening). Middlemiss & Parrish (2010) describe grassroots initiatives as 'initiatives for change relying on

## THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

people with limited power, limited resources and limited ability to influence others. From this position, people acting from the bottom up can change their own actions, seek to influence others around them and seek to change the social structures that they inhabit' (Middlemiss & Parrish, 2010). In other words, grassroots initiatives are initiatives by people who (individually or community based) strive for something 'better' within their (living) environment. Examples of grassroots initiatives are community centers, playing fields for children, neighborhood barbecues or community gardens. Most of these grassroots initiatives are striving for something better within the social or political system or within the environment (e.g. fighting poverty, environmental decline, innovation etc.). Castells (1983) has researched the city and the grassroots, which he calls Urban Social Movements. The phenomenon of Urban Social Movement goes long back in history, because people from the urban environment have always been fighting for their rights and because of that, today, we have many social institutions world wide (Castells, 1983).

Grassroots initiatives, initiatives thought of and set up by citizens, are popping-up from the ground. This might indicate that citizens from civil society are empowering and their needs to have a say are growing when it comes to improving, changing and planning their living environment. Grassroots initiatives can be described as community based, bottom-up initiatives, which all differ in form, size and have different motives and goals. Currently, municipalities are loaded with requests for social initiatives coming from citizens. For municipalities to be able to anticipate to this upcoming phenomenon, and acting on these the right way, they need to move to another and less familiar way of working which is more communicative and cooperative, as mentioned within the previous paragraph.

Grassroots Urban Food Initiatives are grassroots initiatives specifically engaged in growing food. The concept of Urban Food Initiatives is comprehensive and therefore studied in the following sections.

### **2.3.2 THE BACKGROUND AND UPSWINGS OF URBAN FOOD INITIATIVES**

There is limited access to exact numbers, but the estimated number of people, involved in urban agricultural activities is about 800 million worldwide (Smit et al., 2001). There are examples of urban agriculture to be found, dating back from 1500 BC. Caracol and Lamanai in Belize give an idea about the food production in ancient Mayan Cities. Caracol was estimated to have had a population size of approximately 115.000 - 150.000 inhabitants. The urban areas existed out of densely build buildings, with agricultural terraces in between, representing their self-sufficient 'urban' way of life. Lamanai was less intensely investigated for urban agriculture, but suspicions were raised when multiple terraces were found closely linked to the,'urban' area (Smit et al., 2001). Laura J. Lawson (2005) writes about the history of urban gardening in the United States in the book "City Bountiful". In table 2.1 are eight upswings of Urban Gardening summarized. These upswings give information about the establishment of Gardening projects and programs. Lawson (2005) presented urban gardening from the eighteen hundreds till the present day. Today there are still urban farming projects arising. A differentiation is seen between the developing and developed countries.

## THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Period of time	Description
<b>1893 - 1897</b> <b>Vacant Lot Cultivation</b>	During the major depression in Detroit the Pingree Potato Patches were set up for the unemployed. Food was raised on vacant plots for consumption and sale. The program was so successful and led to similar projects in New York, Chicago, Boston and other cities. When the economy improved, most programs ended.
<b>1890s - 1920s</b> <b>Children's School Garden Movement</b>	The first garden school opened in Boston (1891) for pleasure, health and education for children. After World War one the interests decreased and the national movement came to an end.
<b>1890s - 1920s</b> <b>Civic gardening campaigns</b>	This movement was set up by neighborhood improvement societies, garden clubs and women's clubs. The purpose was to make neighborhoods more beautiful, not for food production.
<b>1917</b> <b>War gardens</b>	Volunteers set up gardens for food production so that it could be transported to Europe during World War one. Gardens were started in backyards, vacant lots, parks, company grounds, railroad rights-of-way or any other available land.
<b>1930's</b> <b>Depression-era gardens</b>	During the 1930s depression people went back to gardening again for food production and income. The gardens were set up by municipalities and local charities. These gardens were in backyards and community gardens.
<b>1942</b> <b>Victory Gardens</b>	These gardens were mostly backyard gardens for own food consumption.
<b>1970's</b> <b>Community Gardens</b>	These gardens first were set up as an expression of urban activism.
<b>Garden Programs Today</b>	Neighborhood community gardens, Special Constituency garden programs, entrepreneurial and job-training programs, environmental educational programs/gardens, children's gardens, public housing gardens, artistic expression, community revitalization, horticultural therapy and Urban Oases

**TABLE 1: Timeline of Urban Garden initiatives in the United States (Source: Author, based on Lawson, L. 2005).**

Lawson writes about the history is urban gardening and urban food projects, but there are contemporary examples to be found. One of these examples, that shows one of the many reasons for Urban Food initiatives is the example of Freetown, Sierra Leone. What happened there, is that the rising food and oil prices made urban life more challenging for Freetown's residents. The cost of rice rose by 300% in 2008, which brought the issue of urban food security to the forefront of policy agendas (FAO, 2008). The inhabitants are now growing their own vegetables and fruits for their own consumption, especially the poor households. But this urban food project is also providing jobs in situations with high rates of employment (Maconachie et al., 2012). In this case the upswing of Urban Farming was out of necessity, because of the rising food prices. The poor inhabitants of the city make the most use of the possibilities of growing their own food within the urban environment. Another example of urban agriculture can be found in Nakuru, Kenya. The situation is different than Sierra Leone's, because a quarter of the households in Nakuru depends on the use of urban farming for food security. There is a big difference between the poor and the non-poor people in Nakuru, because renting plots within the urban area has become extremely expensive. The non-poor often inherited plots or have the money to rent plots within the urban environment, while for the poor these are too expensive. But because Farming is an important livelihood source for the poor inhabitants, they need to farm in the rural areas and bring the grown food back to the city Therefore, most poor households commute back and forth between urban and rural, for their basic food needs (Foeken & Owuor, 2008). These are examples of developing

## THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

countries, but should also be taken into account, because food scarcity is, even today, one of the motives for urban food production.

Going back to the history of Western Europe, humanity had to deal with the 'modernization' of agriculture in the decades after World War II. Farming in and around cities lost its character, because the areas that were originally used for farming purposes, were now used for development and housing projects. This is one of the main reasons why agriculture and the city became disconnected.

Carolyn Steel has studied the history of food and food-systems for years. She wondered why the relation between food and people has faded out within the last decades. Although it was not her intention at first to write a book, she published the book 'The Hungry City', where she describes her journey of her search to the answers on her questions and about the astonishing things she discovered. Because of the mass-production of food and the upswing of large supermarket chains, people became dependent on these stores for their daily basic needs. The reason behind this is that the local, smaller stores were not able to meet the low prices of the big supermarket chains, and as a result they missed out on a lot of costumers who want the lowest prices for their foods. This is one of the main reasons for the vanishing connection between people and knowledge about food (Steel, 2011).

During more recent decades, urban agriculture has increased its importance in Western Europe again, for a variety of reasons (Smit, 2001). The Netherlands gained a lot of new Urban Food initiatives and projects over the last few years. Most initiatives are from municipalities or neighborhood communities, also called grassroots initiatives. Within The Netherlands municipalities are starting urban farming and gardening projects. Rotterdam was one of the first municipalities, closely followed by Amsterdam, to start Urban Farming projects. There are many reasons why municipalities or communities start urban food initiatives e.g. education, social cohesion within a neighborhood, eco-friendly growth, leisure time or health, and many other reasons. Carolyn Steel is one of the inspirations for municipalities to start thinking about and working on a better and more healthy food system.

### **2.2.2 HOW CAN URBAN FOOD INITIATIVES BE DEFINED?**

Urban food initiative is a container concept. Many other named concepts can be placed within this concept of Urban Food, such as: urban farming, urban agriculture, urban gardening, local food system, community farming etc. Many researchers have tried to define this phenomenon. Some definitions are mainly focussing on the farming or agricultural part, others focus more on the urban or food production process.

*“Urban agriculture is the practice of cultivating, processing and distributing food in, or around a village, town or city. It can include animal husbandry, aquaculture, agro-forestry and horticulture. In general, urban agriculture is practiced for income-earning or food-producing activities, but some urban farming initiatives are also undertaken for recreation, relaxation or to engender other community outcomes” (McGuinness et al., 2010).*

The focus within the definition of McGuinness et al. (2010) has its main focus on the agricultural part and not so much on the urban. McGuinness et al., (2010) mention the different forms in which

## THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

urban farming can occur, but are possibly a bit narrow minded by naming some specific forms and as a result automatically excluding others.

*“Urban agriculture is an industry that produces, processes and markets food and fuel, largely in response to the daily demand of consumers within a town, city, or metropolis, on land and water dispersed throughout the urban and peri-urban area, applying intensive production methods, using and reusing natural resources and urban wastes, to yield a diversity of crops and livestock (Smit et al. 1996).”*

With the definition of McGuinness et al. in mind, the definition of Smit et al. (1996) is a completely different definition of what urban agriculture is about. Smit et al. (1996) focus on the process of food production and also has a different view on the purpose of urban farming. They describe it as a food-system within the urban area. Comparing this to McGuinness et al. (2010), Smit et al (1996) do not mention the social aspects urban farming might engage in. Also, the definition is very broad, no specific forms of urban agriculture are mentioned. Peri-urban areas and towns are not included in the cases. Also, within this definition the concept of urban agriculture is explained more in a commercial way. The word industry indicates as an indicator for some sort as business.

*“Urban agriculture or food growing encompasses the production of all manner of foodstuffs, including fruit and vegetable growing, livestock rearing and beekeeping, at all levels from commercial horticulture to community projects to small scale hobby gardening” (Garnett, 1996).*

Garnett (1996) definition of urban agriculture is very wide, and mostly about the different forms and products.

By seeing the different definitions about this concept, it becomes clear that urban food, or the concept 'urban agriculture' that is used within these definitions is used for explaining different phenomena differing from growing vegetables, fruit, herbs and wheats to animal husbandry (e.g. chickens, pigs, goats, fish, cows etc.) and gardening. Also the place differs from within the city centre of an urban environment to neighborhoods and peri-urban areas. Also, it could be commercial and non-commercial. In other words, either to gain an income out of your farming efforts, or as a contribution to your own consumption or to the community (e.g. social bonding, education etc.).

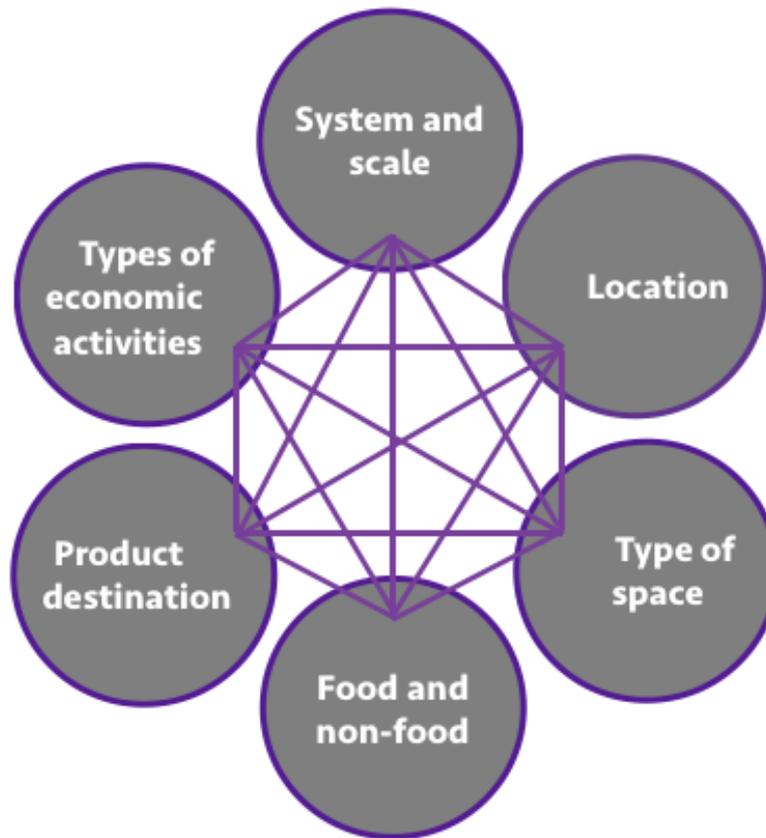
Within this research the concept 'urban food' is used as a collective term for all kind of efforts mentioned above, although the commercial part deserves some additional explanation. Because this research is about finding out the way municipalities and urban food initiators meet each others needs, and public policy is for the needs of civil society, the initiatives should fit into this category. That is why, within this research, only initiatives out of civil society are studied. It is still possible that these projects are commercial as well, but that part is not included within this research. Commercial initiatives differ on many aspects, in comparison to non-commercial initiatives when it comes to organizations and possibilities.

### **2.2.3. THE CHARACTERISTICS**

Mougeot (2009) has researched urban agriculture on definition, presence, potentials and risks. Mougeot (2009) defined six inter-related characteristics related to Urban Agriculture: system and

## THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

scale, type of economic activities, product destination, food and non-food, type of space and location. Figure 2.1 shows the interrelatedness these characteristics. Following, these six characteristics are discussed.



**FIGURE 2: The six characteristics of urban farming (Source: Author, based on Mougeot, 2009).**

Types of economic activities: all the activities during the production process. Economical urban farming activities differ from the economical activities for rural farming processes (Mougeot, 2009).

Food and non-food: the core of the production through urban farming contains products used for consumption by humans or livestock, but urban farming also has other products, either growing plants, or the use of fish for water purification (Mougeot, 2009).

Location: Urban Farming can either be within an inter-urban or peri-urban area. Meant with peri-urban areas are the spaces covering the passage from the urban to the country side (Mougeot, 2009). Within Europe these spaces, also called the 'Green Belts', are important to prevent urban sprawl and are therefore protected by governments (De Lange, 2011).

Type of space: seeing space as physical space, it is about the type of the space where urban farming occurs, which differs from project to project (e.g. a plot of land, within a building, vertical etc.). Another aspect is time. Some projects are temporarily, where others are there for the long run. Also the size of a space can differ (from one square feet to a hundred, or bigger). Also the ownership and accessibility of a space can differs from one to another, (e.g. private, public or semi-private, shared or personal, bought or rented) (Mougeot, 20009).

Product destination: grown products are mainly used for own consumption or small-scale trading (e.g. sale, barter, gift) (Mougeot, 2009).

## THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Production systems and scale: most self-grown-foods through urban farming are used within a small scale food-system and not for extensive transportation. Also, extensive transportation is often not the goal, but rather food production for own consumption, social motives or a conscious way of life resulting in less food-miles and pollution (Mougeot, 2009).

The six characteristics Mougeot (2009) has filtered, are general characteristics, and not every urban food initiative will fit precisely into this picture.

Within this research the urban food initiative cases need to be located within inter-urban area or within peri-urban neighborhoods, in other words, neighborhoods within a relatively small distance to the urban environment. The size of a city and its suburbs differs from one city to another and therefore, holding on a specific maximum distance for the case selection is not applicable. Another characteristic is the type of space. Any type of space can be used to examine the motives and goals and whether they do or do not benefit from the municipal food policy. Because this study is examining the way urban food initiatives and food policy are related, cases with food production and animal husbandry are applicable for this research. Other initiatives, like water purification by fish, are only useful as a case, when combined with food production.

### **2.2.4 THE UNDERLYING MOTIVES AND GOALS**

Lawson (2005) separated different motives and goals, based on the the historic upswings (see Figure 2.2). The difference between motives and goals, is that motives are reasons to start urban farming, because of external driving forces as economic, social or environmental problems. The main reason for these urban farms are to produce food. The goals, as you see on the right column of figure 2.2 are mainly based on people's own feelings of wanting to do something for themselves or the community. Different motives and goals can occur together, mixed to a wide range of varieties (Lawson, 2005).

Several goals can be added to the list of Lawson (2005). The documentary "Grown in Detroit" shows that education can be the goal for starting urban farming projects. Within the list of goals Lawson (2005) there is already a goal called 'skill development', but this does not cover the whole aspect of learning how to grow, produce and sell your own grown food and what food is healthy. Also social cohesion can be added to the list of goals. The University of Wageningen researched the effect of public green spaces and the effect on social cohesion, and found that the effect of allotments and gardens has a positive effect on the emergence and persistence of social cohesion (Vreke, 2010). Also the goal 'socialization' mentioned by Lawson (2005) (table 2.2), also does not include bonding between different inhabitants of neighborhood or community.

According to Hatfield (2012) developed countries face several new phenomena. Hatfield (2012) links the upswing of urban food initiative and the increasing attention of municipalities to several interconnected phenomena that are relevant for the motives and goals of food projects. Hatfield (2012) states that humanity needs to deal with obesity and other food-related chronic diseases nowadays more than ever, and many people now seeing and recognize the effects of the way we use the worldwide food system. Also people gain understanding about the impact of this food system on the natural environment. Media has a huge role in this understanding by showing documentaries and movies that people cannot ignore like, *Super Size Me*, where a man eats as much McDonalds as he can, for a whole month, while monitoring his health. Also there are

## THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

examples of American documentaries and movies, like Michael Pollan’s *The Omnivore’s Dilemma*, Eric Schlosser’s *Fast Food Nation* and *King Corn* spotlighting various facets of the North American food system.

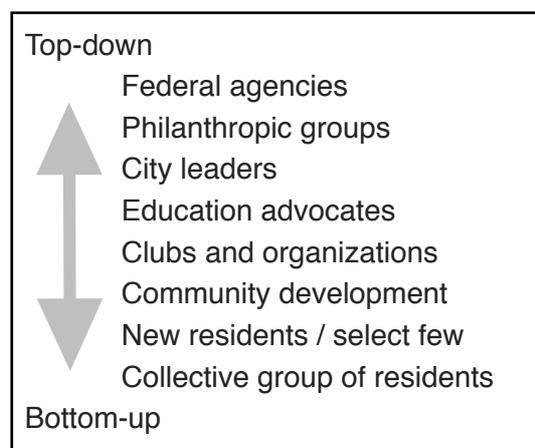
Urban Food initiatives that occur today, can have another goal or motive than previous initiatives. The growing realization about our food system is one of these new motives, but the motives and goals people had back in the days, are still motives and goals for initiatives today.

Motives	Goals
Economic depression	Food
Urban growth	Income
Educational reform	Skill development
War	Cultural Expression
Depression	Recreation
Urban decline	Relaxation
Civic unrest	Socialization
Environmentalism	Activism
Disinvestment	
Local activism	

**TABLE 2: Motives and goals for Urban Gardening projects (Source: Author, based on Lawson, L., 2005).**

### 2.2.5 ACTORS AND INITIATORS OF URBAN FOOD INITIATIVES

As explained in the previous section, Urban Food initiatives have different motivations and goals. Urban food initiatives could be established by anyone e.g. volunteers, an organization, a community or a municipality. Until the 1970’s most urban food or gardening projects were set up by organizations or government (top-down) to activate and support people in times of depression or food insecurity, but today, in developed countries, this is not an issue and other motives contribute to the establishment of initiatives (Lawson, 2005). Motives for volunteer or community based establishment, also called grassroots or bottom-up initiatives, are different than top-down motives or goals.



**FIGURE 3: Initiators of urban gardening projects (Source: Author, based on Lawson, L., 2005).**

## THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Although everyone has the possibility of starting or joining a gardening or farming project, there are projects that have specific target groups. An example of this kind of initiative is a school setting up a schoolfarm, so children can learn where their food comes from and the importance of healthy nutrition and how to grow your own food and make an income out of it. Detroit (USA) has many of these projects where children under the age of eighteen are the specific target group. According to Lawson (2005) specific target group are: specific constituencies, poor immigrants, elderly, children, general public and neighborhood communities (Lawson, 2005). Figure 2.2 shows an overview of the possible initiators of projects, with the top-down approach on top and the bottom-up down under.

## 2.3 CONTEMPORARY FOOD POLICIES AND VISIONS

### 2.3.1 FOOD POLICIES AND VISIONS WORLDWIDE

Food issues are most often regarded as rural and agricultural issues, because it is less visible within the Urban Environment. Nevertheless, *'the urban food system nonetheless contributes significantly to community health and welfare; to metropolitan economies; connects to other urban systems such as housing, transportation, land use, and economic development; and impacts the urban environment'* (Pothukuchi & Kaufman, 1999). Worldwide, there is a lot of literature about Urban Food Policy, containing visions for municipalities, studies for (possible) food policies and also actual food policies.

Hatfield (2012), a researcher at the Oregon Bureau of Planning and Sustainability, studied city food policies in the United States. According to Hatfield (2012) there is a transition in the way people and municipalities see food and food policies during the past several years, and municipalities have started to see the importance in the urban context (Hatfield, M., 2012). The first food policies, urban and rural, are drawn from the goal to minimize food insecurity. Battersby (s.d.) of the African Centre for Cities writes about urban food security and the urban food policy gap. The lack of urban food policy makes that there is no control over the existing food stores locations are and where new ones should be located. This makes some areas congested with food stores, while other areas suffer from shortage and food insecurity. According to Battersby (s.d.) urban planners should take food distribution into account. Hatfield (2012) presents a definition of Food policy programs in her research: *'A municipal program that utilizes the mechanisms of city government to monitor, assess, and manage urban food systems'* (Hatfield, 2012).

As mentioned in previous sections, urban food initiatives and food policies have gained a lot of attention over the last few years. *"The most fundamental contribution of food policy initiatives is the creation of opportunities for discussions and action that would not typically occur. These initiatives often go on to develop feasible instruments of food system thinking – strategies, action plans, and food charters"* (MacRae and Donahue, 2013).

MacRae and Donahue (2013) analyzed how Canadian cities and regional districts are involved in food system change. They filtered six forms of municipal food policy actions. Urban Food initiatives present themselves in a variety of forms. Within this research they have found six forms of municipal food policy activity (table 3). MacRae and Donahue (2013) state that when the initiatives that can be placed within number one, two or three, there appears to be at least one politically pressing local food problem (e.g. health problems) that have stimulated initial interests. Due to

## THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

multi-sectoral representation, municipalities found out that one issue was connected to other issues in the food system (table 4). Also MacRae and Donahue (2013) say that it doesn't matter whether the initiative is driver by economic or social, health or community objectives. The most important thing is that one government unit needs to get support from another unit and work together on the issue. Public health government units, followed by planning, social, and economic development units have been the most important supporters of this kind of issues. In Categories 4 to 6, food policy initiatives are linked to municipal policies that are sometimes less directly pertinent to food system change.

	Nr.	Characteristics
<b>Strong support</b>	1	Initiative financed by municipality & directed by municipal staff with external groups advising
	2	CSO / government hybrid with conduit through municipal council & municipal financing, political champions and dedicated or supportive staff to implement strategies
	3	Like 2, but without government staff and financing; or conduit through departments and government staff with in-kind financing
	4	Conduit to decision makers through "secondary" agencies and their staff, some grant financing from governments
	5	Government officials sit on CSO roundtable or project committee, limited government funding and participation in implementation
<b>Weak support</b>	6	No direct government involvement

**TABLE 3: Number one has the most support from the municipality, and six has no support (Source: author, based on MacRae and Donahue, 2013).**

Food policy focus areas	Examples
<b>Access and Equity,</b>	healthy retail initiatives, food desert mapping, senior food assistance programs
<b>Economic Development,</b>	small business marketing assistance/financing, food hubs, food employment training programs
<b>Environmental Sustainability,</b>	sustainable food sourcing, food system environmental footprinting, climate change planning
<b>Food Education,</b>	rban homesteading classes, healthy cooking demonstrations, school gardens
<b>Local and Regional Food,</b>	arm-to-table programs, institutional purchasing programs/legislation
<b>Mobile vending,</b>	enabling mobile food carts, licensing fee reductions
<b>Nutrition and Public Health,</b>	electronic benefit transfer (EBT) at farmers markets, menu labeling, early childhood nutrition programs
<b>Policy Advocacy,</b>	Farm Bill advocacy, municipal food charters
<b>Urban Agriculture</b>	Zoning code revisions, community garden programs
<b>Waste Management.</b>	food composting programs, curbside food waste collection

**TABLE 4: Policy areas linked to food policy (Source: author, based on Hatfield (2012)**

## THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

According to Pothukuchi and Kaufman (1999), the separated and sectoral approach fails in recognizing the linkages among food subsystems and between food systems and other sectors, for example housing, transportation, land use, and economic development. Also, it is not clear how local government policies and food systems affect one another. A focal point is needed at the local level, to look at the urban food system. According to Pothukuchi and Kaufman (1999) *'there are three potential places where the responsibility for creating a more holistic understanding of a city's food system can rest'* (Pothukuchi and Kaufman, 1999 p. 218). The three potential places they mention are (1) the department of food: a separate municipal department next to other departments like housing or education, (2) the food policy council: meaning a non-state organization, for studying the current food structures and being a neutral actor for improving food related issues and (3) the city planning agency as a potential partner: for a more holistic understanding of the food system and as supporting actor to the department of food. Pothukuchi and Kaufman (1999) are convinced about the importance for municipal and local governments focus more on food and see potential of how this could be established, they are skeptical about whether municipalities will also see this importance. And since food is one of the basic needs in human life, the attention municipal and local governments have for food related issues is still progressing quite slowly.

Cook & Swyngedouw (2012) argue that there are fundamental links between cities and the environment, the relationship between urban change and the environment, and social cohesion and state that socio-environmental inequalities are a fundamental part of the urbanization process. In addition they state that the environment is wrapped up in fundamentally uneven, unequal and often downright unjust social relations and a lack of social cohesiveness in societal relations within the urban environment in terms of access to healthy environments and environmental decision-making structures. Nevertheless, there has been attention for engaging citizens within decision-making structures. The role of citizens and communities in urban policy is an ongoing discussion since the 1970s. Carbon (1997), a former minister of urban regeneration, stated that *'The government places great importance on the real involvement of local communities in the whole range of regeneration activities. It is important to the success of regeneration programmes to involve as many people as possible. This can lead to better decision-making, enhanced programme delivery and improved sustainability'* (Carbon, 1997 in Raco, 2000; p. 574). Mentioning the aim of true involvement of local communities within regeneration processes, gives the impression of the willingness of shifting towards a more governance approach instead of governing. In addition, according to Middlemiss & Parrish (2010), the acts of grassroots initiatives gain increasing interest from practitioners, policy and academic circles. The grassroots are important for communities by enabling the realization of pro-environmental change. Middlemiss & Parrish (2010) point out the enthusiasm towards grassroots initiatives towards sustainable communities in academic, policy and practitioner circles. The UK government illustrates this enthusiasm by stating that *'community groups can help tackle climate change, develop community energy and transport projects, help minimize waste, improve the quality of the local environment, and promote fair trade and sustainable consumption and production'* (UK Government, 2005 in Middlemiss & Parrish, 2010 p.7560). Relating this to urban food, Perkins (1999) states that locally based food production and distribution systems are important for reducing fossil-fuel use, undercutting monocultures, increasing biodiversity, creating jobs in agriculture and food processing and encouraging of cultural variation based on local food preferences and ecological differences (Perkins in Koc et al., 1999). And in addition to the physical aspects and benefits, community

## THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

gardens are discussed in their relation to improving social cohesion and social networks within communities. *'The relationships that grow in the garden are relied upon for more than assistance with weeding and watering the garden plots. Gardeners look out for each other in the face of illness or difficult times. They unite to protect not only the garden but also the well-being of their fellow gardeners and that of the broader neighborhood'* (Teig et al., 2009).

The food policies are on a rise and are seen more frequently over the last few years within Europe and America (Morgan in Farming the City, 2013). Although food policies and visions exist now, the aims and wishes they have in theory, can in practice be quite difficult to achieve due to many implications as mentioned previously, like a top-down governing system and a variety of sectors within municipalities. In addition, Morgan (2013) writes about the multifunctional character of the food system, where he states that food systems have an impact on a variety of sectors like public health, social justice, energy, water, land, transport and economic development (Morgan in Farming the City, 2013). Morgan (2013) also refers to the American Planning Association (APA) who, together with The new food equation, persuaded the Association of European Schools of Planning (Aesop) to form the 'Sustainable Food Planning Group'. This group discusses the implications of food planning for theory, policy and practice. Events like this implicate the growing recognition of the importance of sustainability and sustainable food systems. Morgan (2013) even states that food planning might be one of the most important social movements of the early 21st century. Local governments are adapting to the new grassroots initiative situations, showing from the new policies and visions that are being created, but how the implementation in practice is handled in practice within The Netherlands is still the remaining question.

Born & Purcell (2006) argue that planners need to begin confronting questions of food safety, ecology, security, access, and distribution both in and outside the city because of the growing attention for the role of cities and urban dwellers in food systems. These food questions Born & Purcell (2006) mention, show that the issue of food (within the city) relates to many different policy sectors e.g. health, environment, traffic and transport, housing, sustainability, work and income, neighborhoods etc.

The social, economical and ecological benefits of grassroots initiatives mentioned by Perkins (1999), Koc et al. (1999) and Teig et al. (2009) together with the increasing social relevance of urban food, sustainable development in planning, and food being related to many policy fields shows the importance of cooperation between different policy fields mutually and with the grassroots (individuals and communities). This links to section 2.2 from this thesis, in which the importance of governance is discussed together with the difficulties local governments have with integral, communicative, participative and learning practices.

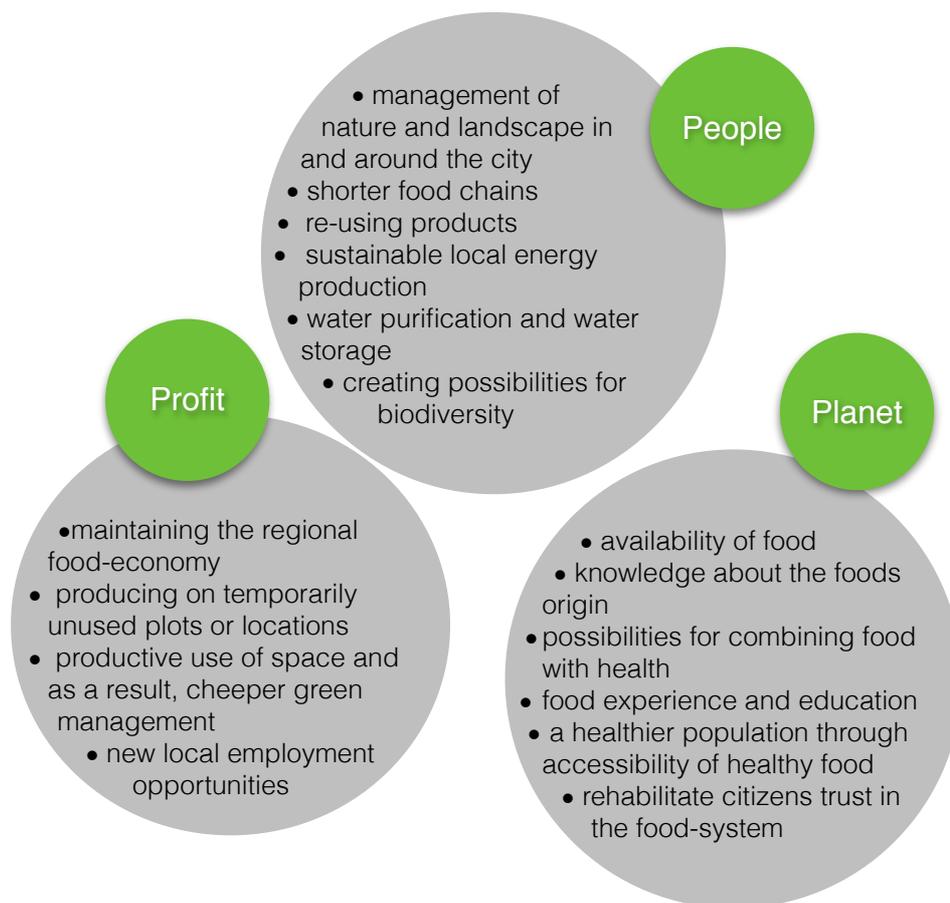
### **2.3.2 URBAN FOOD POLICY WITHIN THE NETHERLANDS**

Within The Netherlands, Urban Food projects and initiatives receive increasing attention out of many different corners like the media, government, and non-state organizations, communities and citizens showing from newspaper articles and a growing amount of websites.

The University of Wageningen (Wageningen UR) has been studying Urban Agriculture for its vision, its concept and its meaning for a city. They have connected Urban Agriculture with the three P's: people, planet and profit (figure 5).

## THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The Wageningen UR also mentions some challenges for the future for Urban Agriculture. One of the five key points is about design and research, urban agriculture is customized, because every city and space is different. Therefore, planning the environment with temporarily plots and semi-permanent plots for agriculture is important. Also connecting initiatives from civil society with social institutions, entrepreneurs and governmental actors and implementing cooperation within public policy is one of the challenges ahead according to the Wageningen UR. The last point they make is that the evaluation of changes and developments is very important for policy makers, so they are able to learn from the successes and bottlenecks for better future policy development. The aim of this master thesis is about comparing policy and visions of municipalities and the perception of initiators of urban food initiatives about the contribution of the municipal urban food policies or visions, and links up with the thought of the Wageningen University.



**FIGURE 4: The three P's (Source: author, based on the Wageningen University, Stadslandbouw).**

## 2.4 CONCLUSION

The definition of grassroots Urban Food initiatives used within this thesis is "*Urban Food initiatives captivate the growing, cultivation, processing and distribution of natural food in urban areas, set up by citizens, organizations or associations other than the state, province or municipality. The main motives of Urban Food initiatives are social benefits to the participants and/or community, healthy lifestyles and reconnecting with nature*" (Author, 2014). Grassroots urban food initiatives are initiatives are started from citizens or communities with an activity related to urban food growth. Motives, goals and characteristics of urban food initiatives can occur in many varieties and forms.

## THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

According to the literature, the main motives are related to poor environmental conditions and goals are mainly food production. Within the literature, the characteristics of Urban Food Initiatives are descriptions of location, type of space, production, economic activities, product destination and system and scale.

The literature describes that the shift from governing to governance is about the realization that coordination of complex systems is not, and was never, the responsibility of the state alone. It might even be the case that the state has less influence on the coordination of complex systems than they have realized. Social learning, sharing knowledge, communication, and cooperation with state and non-state actors are the basic elements for governance. This points out the importance of steering authorities learning from the expertise of other actors and from society about issues living within society. In other words this means, shifting from a top-down and technical approach to a communicative and cooperative approach, which enables steering authorities to adapt to social and environmental changes in a more effective way.

The subject of Urban Food gained attention during the last few years. Municipalities seem to be at the start of realizing that attention for food within the urban environment is important for its contributions to a more sustainable environment and society. Moreover, the subject of food is basically interwoven in many other municipal sectors (e.g. health, environment, traffic and transport, housing, sustainability, work and income and neighborhoods), and therefore needs an integral approach. The literature points towards positive contribution of grassroots initiatives and local food production on social and environmental aspects and sustainability goals. This suggests that a lot could be gained from cooperating and learning from these grassroots urban food initiatives. Also within the literature, arguments are made that planners need to begin confronting questions of food safety, ecology, security, access, and distribution both in and outside the city because of the increasing social relevance of urban food, sustainable development in planning and the growing attention for the role of cities and urban dwellers in food systems. In other words, urban food and sustainable development have increasing social relevance, and planners should confront these complex and cross-sectoral food and sustainability related questions. The literature point towards the positive experiences with renewed decision making processes, enhanced program delivery and improved sustainability by involving citizens and communities.

Also, an additional difficulty (but what may also come foreword as a possible opportunity) is that due to the current economical crisis, municipalities have to reduce staff members. Thereby, they no longer have all expertise within their own departments. The only way of bringing in this expertise than, is through the cooperation with others (e.g. other state departments and non-state actors as private firms, NGOs, voluntary organizations, faith- and community-based groups). What seems to be difficult and undesirable, like reducing staff members, could possibly result into processes that come together with learning and cooperation except of planning and delegating.

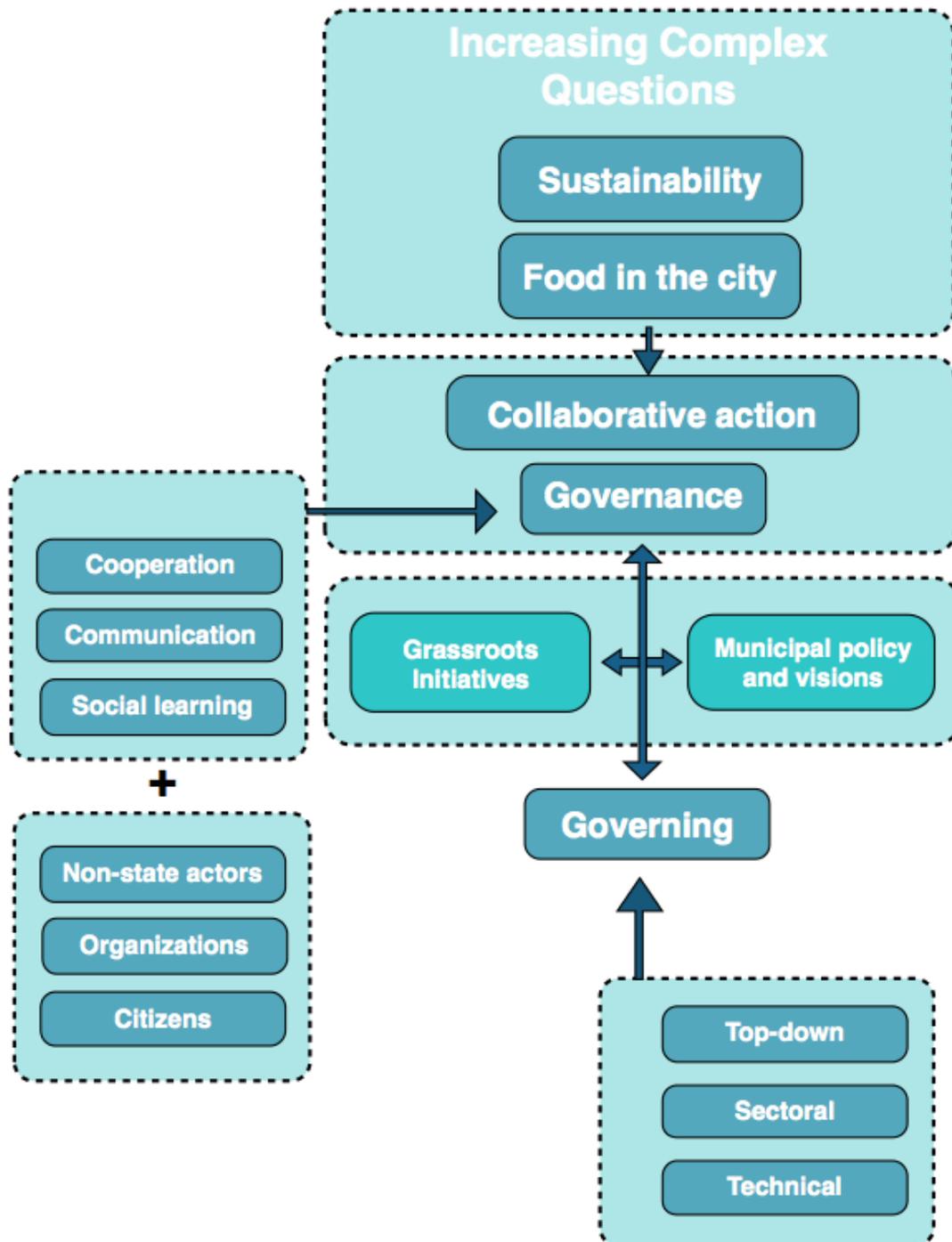


Figure 5: Conceptual model, based on existing literature (Source: Author, 2014).

## 3. RESEARCH DESIGN

### 3.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter describes the used methodology for answering the central research questions, about how urban food policy contributes to urban food initiatives and what are the successes or possible improvements, as described in chapter 1. First, the philosophical basis from which the research is grounded is explained. Second, the methodology that is used for examining urban food projects will be discussed. The third part contains the data collection: literature study, document analysis and semi-structured interviews. The fourth section covers the way the data will be analyzed and processed.

### 3.2 PHILOSOPHICAL BASIS

This section contains a discussion of the most fundamental philosophical movements. Also there will be explained what philosophical thoughts are important for the way this study is shaped.

There are two fundamental philosophical tendencies: the object oriented (modernism) and the subject oriented (post-modernism) approach. Modernism is facts based on the belief that there is an absolute truth. Post-modernism is more subject based and is based on the fundamental believes that there can not be one truth, the truth is what we make of it, one could call it an agreed reality. What is, or should be, regarded as acceptable knowledge in a discipline? Should social sciences be studied according to the same principle, procedures, and ethos as the natural sciences? (Allemendinger, 2003).

This study is focussed on the perception of people, in this case the perception of how the municipal urban food policy contributes to the establishment and life of the grassroots urban food initiatives. To gather this information, participants will be asked about what they think about the contribution of the municipality and it's policy. This way of researching matches the post-modernist way of thinking about the 'truth'. Although post modernists seem to agree about reality being a construct of subjects, this study is not explicitly based on that belief.

In addition to modernism and post-modernism, positivism was introduced by August Comte. Positivism is grounded on the rational proof/disproof of scientific assertions; assumes a knowable, objective reality (Babbie, 2010). Positivism is an epistemological position that advocates the application of the methods of the natural sciences to the study of social reality and beyond (Bryman, 2008). Bryman (2008) writes about realism sharing two features with positivism: *"a belief that the natural and the social sciences can and should apply the same kinds of approach to the collection of data and to explanation, and a commitment to the view that there is an external reality to which scientists direct their attention (in other words, there is a reality that separate from our description of it)"* (Bryman, 2008). Bryman (2008) used a passage of Schultz to explain his position.

*"The world of nature as explored by the natural scientist does not mean anything to molecules, atoms and electrons. But the observation field of the social scientist -social reality- has a specific meaning and relevance structure for the beings living, acting and winking within it. By a series of common-sense constructs they have pre-selected and pre-interpreted this world which they experience as the reality of their daily lives. It is these thought objects of theirs which determine*

## RESEARCH DESIGN

*their behavior by motivating it. The thought objects contract by the social scientist, in order to grasp this social reality, have to be founded upon the thought objects contracted by the common-sense thinking of men (and women) living their daily life within the social world” (Bryman, 2008).*

The positivistic point of view is not applicable within this research, because this research is subject based. It is not about finding the one and only 'truth', but a research aiming to find coherence or gaps in peoples perception on actions of other people. This research is about meanings of actions and perceptions of what is right in a sustain situation. Because this research is not about finding the truth, but about the perception of multiple truths, there are not a lot of connection made to research methods for the natural sciences. It is about the social reality of humans within their environment. This can be related to Interpretivism. Bryman (2008) describes interpretivism as *”Interpretivism is predicated upon the view that a strategy is required that respects the difference between people and the objects of natural sciences and therefore requires the social scientist to grasp the subjective meaning of social action” (Bryman, 2008).*

Another aspect that needs to be discussed is the researchers involvement or detachment within the research process. Is it possible for a researcher to be completely detached from the research, and if so, should this be something to strive for? From a figurational standpoint, the research process should involve a combination of involvement and detachment (Bloyce, 2004). *”it is crucial to recognize the centrality of the researcher in the process of data generation and analysis’. In other words, within a figurational approach ”recognition is given to the inevitability of involvement and detachment and the potentially significant part it can play in developing a more reality-congruent picture of complex aspects of the social world ... This, it is worth noting, is precisely why figurational sociologists prefer the concept involvementdetachment: it more accurately reflects the reality of the personal situations of social researchers than traditional conceptualizations of objectivity and subjectivity” (Perry, Thurston and Green in Bloyce, 2004).*

Within this research, personal interest plays a large role and therefore, involvement is a possible 'danger' within the conversations with the interviewees. Therefore, there needs to be a clear balance between the personal information that is shared and information shared shared during the interviews. With this in mind, only cases without personal attachment are selected and personal involvement does not have a significant role. All interviewees are unknown persons beforehand.

### **3.3 TWO CASE STUDIES: GRONINGEN AND ROTTERDAM**

There are many international studies about Urban Farming, Urban Agriculture and Sustainable Food Systems and many different research methods have been used for data collection, qualitative and quantitative. To examine wether grassroots urban food initiatives benefit from municipal food policies in The Netherlands, different Urban food projects are examined.

The case study method *”is an inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon in depth and within its real-life context, especially when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident” (Yin, 2009, p18 in Franklin & Blyton, 2011).* The empirical part of this research is conducted through the case study method. The reason for choosing the case study method is because the concept of Urban Food is a container concept, which relates to the physical environment, but also social aspects. Grassroots urban food initiatives are expressed within a context or milieu that faces multiple influences and actions that possibly influences the outcomes

## RESEARCH DESIGN

of some initiatives. Within this research, two overarching case studies, the municipalities of Groningen and Rotterdam, are used, because they already have urban food policies and/or visions (see figure 3.1). Several grassroots urban food initiatives, with a minimum of six cases in total, within the municipalities of Rotterdam and Groningen are used to answer the main objectives of this research. The six cases are selected by the criteria mentioned in chapter 2. Within the municipality of Rotterdam, the selected cases are (1) the Ghandi garden, a grassroots urban food initiative set up by three people and for everyone who would like to join them, (2) 'Tuin aan de Maas', a garden directly placed by the Maas as a community garden for surrounding inhabitants of the neighborhood (3) 'De krabbetuin', a collection of small farming plots within a neighborhood with many inhabitants with low socio-economical statuses. Within the municipality of Groningen, the cases that are selected are (1) 'De tuin van Jannie', a garden initiated by the neighborhood inhabitants themselves to improve the environment, (2) 'Tuin in de stad', an initiative of two people who wanted to create a place where people can learn about farming and enjoy life, (3) 'The Herehof garden', set up by 56 home owners within the neighborhood for educational purposes for children and social cohesion and safety.

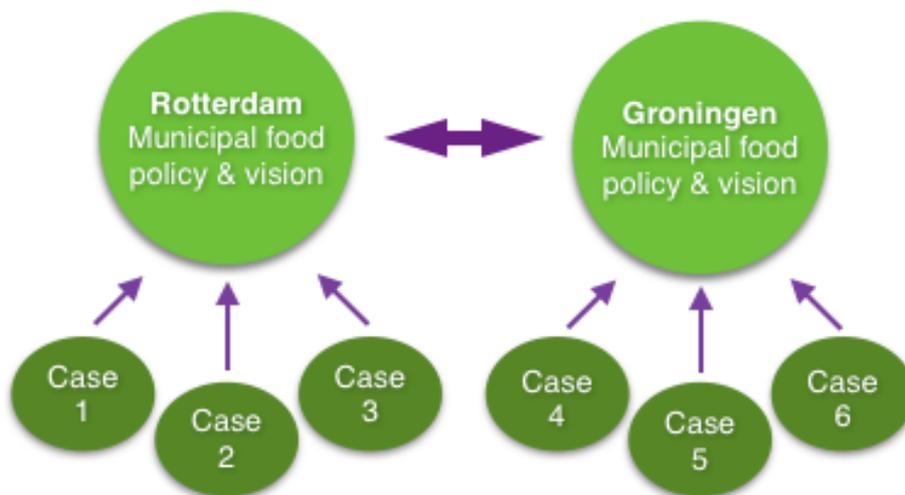


FIGURE 6: Empirical research model (source: author)

### 3.4 DATA COLLECTION

To answer the main research question of this thesis, the first step of the research is a literature study, this is described in paragraph 3.3.1. The method for the data collection first was semi structured interviewing and is explained more in-depth in paragraph 3.3.2. After the first interview, the method used for the collection of the data changed, because of the setting and the walking through the gardens and interviewing out of a list became quite difficult. A reflection and some considerations about the reasons behind this change is described in paragraph 3.3.3. The last paragraph, 3.3.4., describes the new method that is used for data collection during the research.

#### 3.4.1 LITERATURE STUDY

As a base for the empirical research, a literature research about Urban Food and Food policy has been conducted. The purpose of the literature research was to learn about grassroots Urban Food

## RESEARCH DESIGN

initiatives and municipal Food Policy. Also this literature research is used to create a theoretical framework from where out the cases can be selected.

A lot of literature about Urban Food, Urban Agriculture and Urban Farming contain case studies, historical examples and successes of projects. All the information about the history, motives, goals and participants shows a framework of what Urban Food initiatives are, the motives and goals, the current debates and the actors within urban food initiatives. These outcomes enable selecting projects that can be used as cases to answer the main objectives of this research.

The part within the literature research about food policy show the motives behind the creation of the food policies, the successes and how these policies are shaped. Also the Dutch food policies of the Groningen and Rotterdam municipality are studied as a guide for the interviews.

### **3.4.2 SEMI STRUCTURED INTERVIEWS FOR QUALITATIVE DATA**

Within this research, semi-structured interviews are used for gathering qualitative data. Babbie (2010) describes qualitative analysis as *"the nonnumerical examination and interpretation of observations, for the purpose of discovering underlying meanings and patterns of relationships. This is most typical of field research and historical research"* (Babbie, 2010).

Semi-structured interviews are somewhere in the middle of structured and unstructured interviews. The unstructured interview is closer to observation, while the structured interview is similar to some typed of questionnaire (Newton, 2010). The reason for choosing semi-structured data is because structured interviews are mostly used to gain quantitative data, while more unstructured interviews focus on qualitative data. Also semi-structured interviewing is a very flexible technique for small-scale research, which is suitable for this research, because it exists out of six small-scale cases with relatively small amounts of participants. According to Drever (1995) case-studies are only suitable for studies involving small numbers of people, and is most helpful in mini-studies and case studies (Drever, 1995).

The interview method has its weaknesses and strengths. The weakness of interviewing is the way people perceive the interviewer, also called the interviewer effect. In particular, the sex, the age and the ethnics origins of the interviewer have a bearing on the amount of information people are willing to divulge and their honesty about what they reveal (Denscombe, 2007). Also demand characteristics are implicit and explicit cues in the research setting that suggest to the participant that he/she behave in a certain way. Demand characteristics depend on the experiment setting. The implicit and explicit cues surrounding the experiment may consist of the instructions given, the questions asked, the apparatus used, the procedures, the behavior of the researcher, and almost endless variety of other cues (Lammers, W. J., and Badia, P., 2005). This is one reason to make clear at the beginning of an interview what the purpose and topics are and seek to put the interviewee at ease (Newton, 2010).

The strength of semi-structured interviews according to Newton (2010)

*"is the power of semistructured interviews to provide rich, original voices which can be used to construct research narratives that gives the method its invaluable quality"* (Newton, 2010).

Semi-structured interviews provide the ability to gain new information that might be interesting for the research. Researchers often use an interview guide containing specific topics to cover during

## RESEARCH DESIGN

the interview, but the order of topics is not fixed. To be able to answer the central research objectives, semi-structured interviews are held with grassroots urban food initiators, participants and municipal urban food policy writers. Semi-structured interviews make it possible to be flexible during the conversation, which makes it possible for the interviewees to be comfortable and more free in their story, in comparison to structured interviews. Also the semi-structured interview enables the interviewee to be more spontaneous and possibly give more information to the interviewer, which could be really important and contribute to the research (Bryman, 2008).

During the interviews, all participants are asked about the same subjects so the answers can be analyzed and compared more easily. Although the same subjects will be handled, an exact order of subjects during the interviews is not necessary, which gives the interviewee more opportunities to share their knowledge and information. There is also a difference between the interviews with the grassroots urban food initiators and the municipal food policy writers. Although the same subjects will be covered during the interview, the questions will be asked differently. On the one side, policy makers will be asked about their opinions about the contribution of the policy and how they think the initiators perceive this contribution, on the other side, grassroots urban food initiators will be asked about their perception of the contribution of the food policy. These outcomes can be analyzed to see whether the perception of the policy makers and the users of this policy match.

### **3.5 DATA ANALYSIS**

Semi-structured interviews, especially walking talks, produce a lot of data and information that needs to be analyzed and compared. To reduce the after work, the interviews are summarized and coded on subject/characteristic.

Babbie (2010) describes the way of coding qualitative data: *"Open Coding: the initial classification and labeling of concepts in qualitative data analysis. In open coding, the codes are suggested by the researchers' examination and questioning of the data. Axial Coding: a reanalysis of the results of open coding in the Grounded Theory Method, aimed at identifying the important, general concepts. Selective coding: in Grounded Method Theory, this analysis builds on the results of open coding and axial coding to identify the central concept that organizes the other concepts that have been identified in a body of textual materials"* (Babbie, 2010).

Additional ways of analyzing data are memoing and concept mapping (Babbie, 2010). This enables discovering similarities and differences and see things in different perspectives. For qualitative comparing analysis there are also many computer programs that can help ordering data (Babbie, 2010). For analyzing the gathered data of the interviews, structuring, coding and labeling the data is the first step. Second, the filtering of concepts out of the coded data and last, selective coding, which means the central concepts will be filtered out of the pile of data. Memoing and concept mapping will be used during all processes.

### **3.6 REFLECTING ON THE RESEARCH METHOD**

#### **3.6.1 THE METHOD OF SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEWING**

The first case that i had selected for visiting and interviewing participants was at the Gandhi garden in Rotterdam. When i arrived at the garden, different people told me a lot about the

## RESEARCH DESIGN

initiative while walking through the garden. My intention was to be doing semi-structured interviews and recording these interviews, but i discovered that this was not the most affective way of doing this research. When i did the first interview, i noticed that the information i got before, while we were walking through the garden, was more useful than the interview itself. People were much more open and real about the information they were willing to share during the walk. Also, because of being at the garden and walking around, i was able to see interaction between the different participants and i noticed that people were actually really enthusiastic about talking to me. I feel that when i would ask them if they wanted to participate in an interview, they would not be so helpful and open as they were now, because making it official by letting them sign a paper or asking them if everything can be recorded made people to be more selective and careful about what they tell me. This grassroots urban food initiatives are partly depending on municipal support, and with this in the back of their minds, there is a big chance they will not tell me everything when i tape it and let them sign a n official paper. When this would be the case, i would make this research not very useful, because it is about the perceptions and honesty of their opinions about the municipal contributions and efforts.

Discussing this issue with my supervisor Constanza Parra, we agreed on the semi-structured interviews not being the best method for this research. It even opens up a discussion about the methods used for qualitative data research. In my opinion, when researching qualitative data, there might not be one best way of gathering the data. The way of finding the information you need, can be different in specific situations. In this case, people are enthusiastic about showing me what they created and they are really proud of it. When walking around, i can use this enthusiasm to tell me things i would not think of myself. This walking through their own environment and 'chatting' makes people feel safe and comfortable and makes it easier to bond within a short period of time. Evans and Jones have studied the method of walking interviews and found that *"walking interviews have been demonstrated as a highly productive way of accessing a local community's connections to their surrounding environment. This is critical because people's relationships with place keys into contemporary policy issues surrounding sustainability"* (Evan and Jones, 2011). This finding about relating people within their surrounding environment to (contemporary) policy issues, connects strongly with the main objectives of this research.

### **3.6.2 THE NEW METHOD: WALKING TALKS AND OBSERVATION**

Within the study of Evan and Jones (2011) is said that a growing number of social scientists and geographers are using the method of walking with participants. Also literature suggests that a major advantage of walking interviews is their capacity to access people's attitudes and knowledge about the surrounding environment. *"Walking has long been considered a more intimate way to engage with landscape that can offer privileged insights into both place and self"* (Solnet, 2011 in Evan and Jones, 2011).

Within this empirical part of this thesis, a minimum of six cases are visited (three Rotterdam cases and three Groningen cases). The conversations during the 'walking talks' will be recorded (when possible) and fully summarized. People tend to give more information during walking talks, instead of when interviewing people through pre-made questions, and therefore only the parts that contribute to the research will be transcribed.

## RESEARCH DESIGN

The path of the initiative, gathered during the interview (from its establishment to the current situation) is summarized and explained. Also the most characterizing words and concepts, mentioned during the walk, are listed for analysis. In short, every case has a description of the setting, the initiatives path, the people that have been talked to, and a list of mentioned characteristics. Also the things observed during visiting the case is described.

## 4. RESEARCH LOCATIONS: GRASSROOTS URBAN FOOD INITIATIVES IN PRACTICE

The aim of this chapter is to provide the reader an understanding of the grassroots urban food initiatives. The chapter is divided in a Groningen part and a Rotterdam part. In addition to this, every initiative is presented individually, because no initiative is equal to the other and every initiative has its own character.



FIGURE 7, 8 & 9: Pictures taken during the visits to 'Tuin san de Maas' and 'De tuin van Jannie' (source: author)

4.1 GRONINGEN GRASSROOTS URBAN FOOD INITIATIVES



Enthusiastic leadership. Join and work together. When having fun, learning follows

Inspiration. Endless possibilities. Learning through discovering.

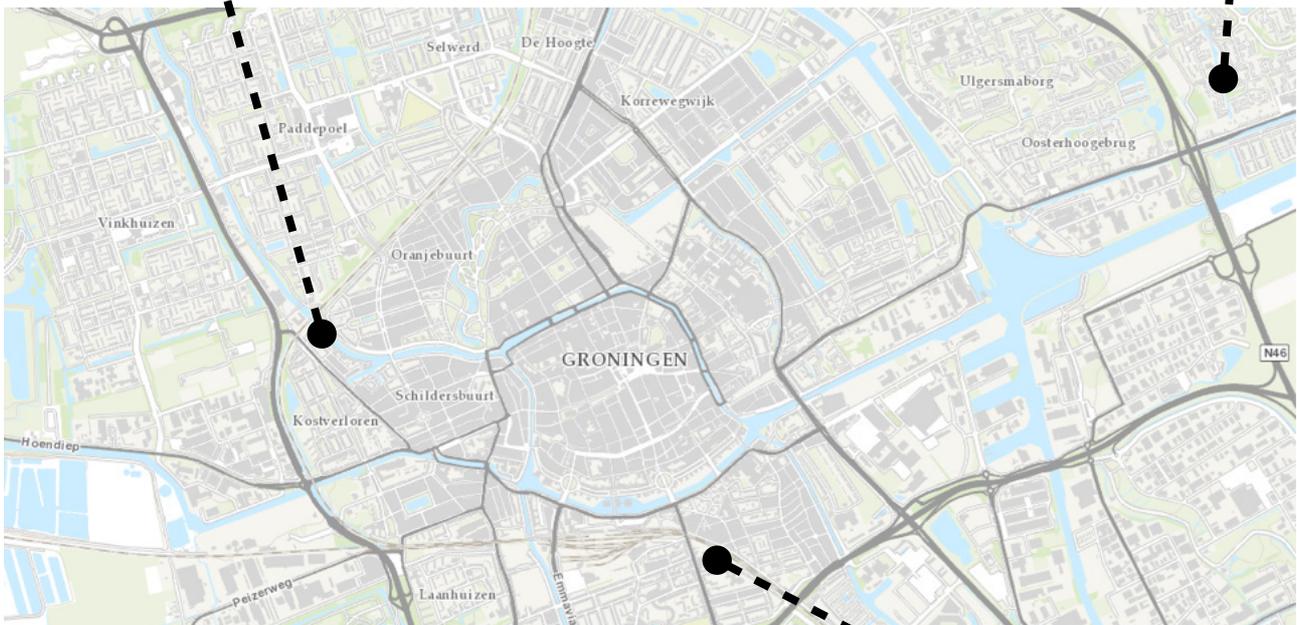


FIGURE 10: a map of the Groningen city (source: [arcgis.com](http://arcgis.com), 2014)



True community feeling. Sharing responsibilities. Positivists. Safe and neath.

# A place filled with inspiration and possibilities, without fixed boundaries.

## Tuin in de stad

### Connecting through creating opportunities

'Tuin in de stad' is located at the borders of the Groningen city. Besides the selling of plants, there are activities related to gardening or the garden itself. The initiative started in the year of 2009, and has won several prizes since. In the year of 2013, the initiative became icon for 'Groen dichterbij', a platform for green initiatives. Also in the year of 2013, they received a national first prize by 'Groen doen', a program set up by the Ministry Economic Affairs for stimulating and developing volunteering activities. In the same year of 2013, at the 10th of october, they have received a Green Ribbon for their sustainable initiative by the political party 'Groen Links'.



**FIGURE 11: chickens in 'Tuin in de Stad'**  
(source: author, 2014)

### *"Let's see what happens"*

The main motive of the initiators for this initiative was their desire for a new challenge and changing their lifestyle. The main thought behind the initiative was to see what would happen when they opened up the garden for everyone and support any kind of initiative or help from citizens, volunteers or interested people if possible. There have not been fixed plans for the garden, but their hopes were to connect people and creating a place where people can do what they are passionate about.

### The struggle

During the years the project exists the initiators faced many difficulties, but at the same time have also experienced the unfolding of the initiative as successful and valuable. The main difficulties they encountered were related to municipal rules and systems. The first two years, from 2009 to 2011, the municipality demanded commercial agricultural activity for that location, and therefore the initiative had to sell plants and flowers. This aspect troubled the evolvement of the initiative in a big way, because making money to pay the rent became the biggest issue. Making enough money took so much time, there was no time left to think about and spend time on other thoughts for the initiative. By the year of 2012, after many conversations and negotiations with the municipality, they negotiated a user agreement. From this moment on, the initiators had the opportunity to focus on their original ideas. This has resulted in the winning of multiple prizes, and the initiative is now used as an example of a successful grassroots urban food initiative within the Groningen municipality and the municipality agreed to the land being used until september 2015, and maybe even longer.

#### Motives

New way of living and lifestyle for the initiators.

#### Goals

Giving people the opportunity to create; Bonding and connecting people; Education; Fun

#### Results

Winning two prizes for being the best initiative; Doing what they love; They connect people through giving opportunities to meet and work together

#### Characteristics

Bringing people together; Creating networks; No planning on forehand

**BOX 1: motives, goals, result and characteristics of 'Tuin in de stad' (source: author, 2014)**

# A garden for social bonding, feeling safe and having fun.

## Herehof

### Growing food together as a mean for reaching other goals

'Herehof' is located within the Groningen city. The food gardens are divided on several plots, in the middle and at the borders of sixty-five houses and are shared property of the home owners. Since the year of 2008, these plots transformed into green, urban food growing plots.



FIGURE 12: 'Herehof' (source: author, 2014)

### A thought, a plan and the garden.

The idea of growing food came from the community maintenance commission. The commission gathered information about the wishes the neighborhood inhabitants had in order to make jointly supported plan. The main wishes were to connect the elderly, living in the apartments, with the other home owners within the neighborhood, creating a place for children to play and learn and reduce nuisance from others outside of the community that used the land for purposes of alcohol and drug use. The plan for urban food growth grew and became supported by the community.



FIGURE 13: 'Herehof' (source: author, 2014)

### The feeling of support

The initiators did not face many difficulties setting up the initiative. Although the municipality had officially stopped subsidizing urban food projects, they were willing to cooperate and help starting the initiative. The difficulties the initiative experienced were therefore not related to the municipality, but nuisance related. For example, the brick walls have been filled with graffiti once and because of the chemicals that needed to be used for removal, the land could not be used for food growth for a whole year. Although this was disappointing, the results of setting up a garden has been successful. Today there is a strong community feeling and inhabitants feel more safe within their living environment. Children seem to have fun to help their parents in the gardens and parents feel their children are in a safe place when they are playing. Also there are new initiatives coming from neighbors, for example someone suggested the planting of a tree in everyones front garden for more green, and now everybody has a tree before their homes.

#### Motives

Connecting neighbors, especially the elder;  
Education for children

#### Goals

Social cohesion; Less nuisance by alcohol and drug users

#### Results

Community feeling; A safe environment; New initiatives coming from neighbors

#### Characteristics

Sharing; Working together

BOX 2: motives, goals, result and characteristics of 'Herehof' (source: author, 2014)

# A good leader enthusiasts others to join and work together

## De Tuin van Jannie

*"It all happened so fast"*

'De Tuin van Jannie' is located within a neighborhood just outside of the Groningen city. The idea to improve the public garden started in October of the year 2010. Around springtime, in 2011, the work started and on the 1st of July, the garden was officially opened by Jannie Visser, the current alderman of The Socialist Party.

### Urban Food growth as the connecting factor

Changing the public garden was the idea of the initiator, who gathered three more neighbors to set up a plan. The initiator knew on fore hand about the municipal visions and policies like green participation and the eatable city. This was, besides the enthusiasm for gardening and food growth, one of the reasons to include urban food growth into the plan. Other wishes coming from neighbors were to have a place for mutual leisure activities and safe playing opportunities for children.



FIGURE 14: 'De tuin van Jannie' (source: author, 2014)

### The process

During the process of setting up the initiative, the initiator has not experienced any difficulties. The cooperation with the municipality was a positive experience for the initiator. There were limited expectations about the amount of money and help the municipality would invest, and the municipality has been willing to subsidize the basic material, as the initiator hoped. The results of the efforts from the initiator, the plan makers and the municipality is that the social contacts within the neighborhood have increased, children have a place to play now and also learn about the basics of growing food. And another positive aspect is the appearance of the neighborhood. It looks like people care about their living environment now.

#### Motives

A dirty public space, because of it being used for dog walking

#### Goals

Increasing the neighborhood's social cohesion; Education for children; A place where elderly people could come together through activities

#### Results

Connecting neighbors; Playing opportunities for kids; Educational options for kids; Other neighbors want to start small initiatives, and because of that, the garden is still changing and adapting to everyone's needs; A place where people can play jeux de boules; Spots for food growing

#### Characteristics

The initiative being a benefit for the community; No high expectations about the food production, but more for fun

BOX 3: motives, goals, result and characteristics of 'Tuin van Jannie' (source: author, 2014)

4.2 ROTTERDAM GRASSROOTS URBAN FOOD INITIATIVES

Sharing. Raising awareness.  
Freedom. Be who you are.



Women. Culture. Learning.  
Cooking. Feeling safe.

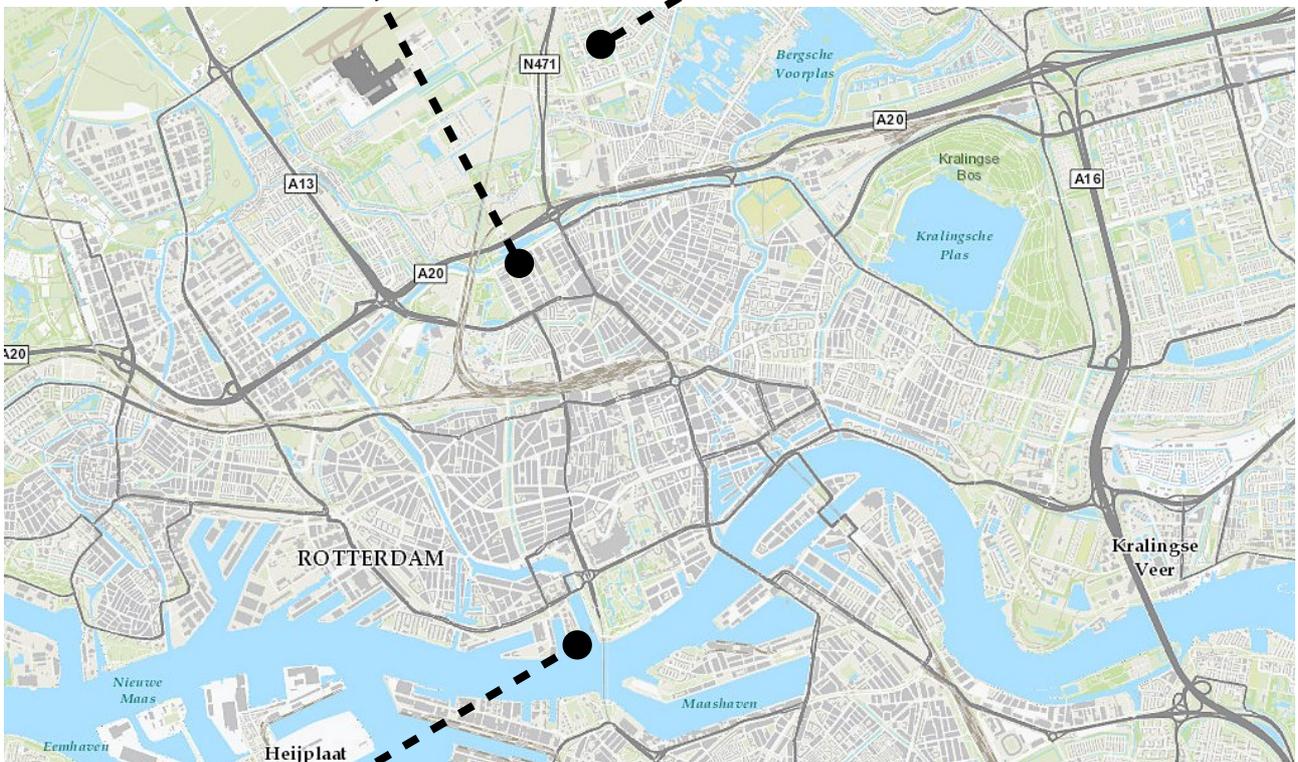


FIGURE 15: a map of the Rotterdam city (source: [arcgis.com](http://arcgis.com), 2014)

Outside space. Together  
with neighbors. Shared  
responsibility. Safe place for





FIGURE 16: 'De Ghandituin' (source: author, 2014)

**From three friends to a 'living center'**

The 'Gandhi garden' is located at the eastern border of the Rotterdam city and is part of the 2000 square meter gardening complex. The initiator has been inspired by visiting a meeting of Transition towns in the year of 2009, which was the beginning of thinking process about the Gandhigarden, together with two friends. In the year of 2011 the land for the garden became available and ever since the garden grows, in space and the amount of volunteers.

**"We did not ask for much"**

During the process of setting up this urban food garden, the initiators have not experienced many difficulties. They have had no expectations about receiving help from anyone, and therefore have not asked for anything else than using the land that belongs to the municipality for their grassroots urban food initiative. Although the initiators have not experienced any problems, they do mention the municipal hierarchy as the reason for not asking more than the use of the land.

**Awareness, be who you are, connect and share with others**  
Gandhituin

**Inspired by Gandhi**

The thought behind the Gandhigarden is the believe that our planet has enough to offer for everyones basic needs, but not for everyones greed. An economy in which exclusion, greed and overconsumption exists, scarcity, poverty exhausting natural sources and climate change arise. Whenever the land is at service of everyones basic needs, our planet will offer plenty. This grassroots urban food initiative is about growing food, but the most important aspect about the garden is that it is a centre to live, meet each other, space for talking, working together on the land, children learn where food comes from and where food is shared and life is celebrated.



FIGURE 17: 'De Ghandituin' (source: author, 2014)

<p><b>Motives</b> Desire to change life (style)</p> <p><b>Goals</b> Connecting people; Raise awareness about the food system Personal freedom and acceptance of others</p>	<p><b>Characteristics</b> Inspiration; Passion; Sharing; Connecting; Developing; Awareness; The art of living</p> <p><b>Results</b> A garden with a lot of volunteers The garden being an example for others Bees that come back to the 'bee hotel' every year</p>
--	--

BOX 4: motives, goals, result and characteristics of 'Gandhituin' (source: author, 2014)

## RESEARCH LOCATIONS ROTTERDAM

### Thinking along rather than thinking for

The 'Krabbetuin' is located within a neighborhood just outside the city of Rotterdam. This garden is part of many other gardens within the neighborhood. Originally, VESTIA had hired someone to work on several goals within the neighborhood like self-sufficiency, sustainability, job opportunities and becoming energy neutral. Except of thinking what would be a good project for the neighborhood inhabitants, they were asked what they wished for.



FIGURE 18: 'De Krabbetuin' (source: author, 2014)

### Facilitating

Most women living within the neighborhood, wished for a garden where they could grow their own vegetables and herbs for cooking their own cultural recipes. The balconies they have are not big enough for food growth and buying the ingredients is expensive. The VESTIA employee listened and took on the role of facilitator, so the enthusiastic women could ask for help and materials if they needed this.

## Feeling safe, opportunities for women and social bonding

### After hesitation there is communication

The process of starting the gardens has been a great success, but faced a lot of problems and difficulties. First of all, there is a language barrier, because a lot of women do not speak the Dutch language very well. Also, there was no feeling of safety in the neighborhood and women were afraid their gardens would be damaged by others. In addition to this, the municipality has not been supportive to the initiative. Ever since the initiative started, they have not been willing to arrange materials or support the gardens in any way. Nevertheless, even without the help of the municipality the initiative has been successful in setting up gardens and women are now growing food and herbs, exchanging their knowledge about cultures and food, sell their products (plants, herbs and prepared food) on markets and catering jobs. Also, the way the women feel has changed. They feel like, now they know one another, they are more safe. In addition to this, since the municipality has seen the initiative's success, they have been visiting the gardens and asked the women for catering jobs. The women are proud on what they accomplished and are making their own money now.

#### Goals

Increasing social cohesion within the neighborhood; Feeling more safe outside the house

Being able to be more self sufficient

#### Characteristics

The initiative being a benefit for the community

#### Results

Connecting the women within the neighborhood. Friendships have grown over the years; Cultural cooking exchanges between families; More and more women are also asking for gardening possibilities; Income through product selling on local markets and catering jobs for women; Women feeling safe on the streets has increased significantly

BOX 5: motives, goals, result and characteristics of 'Krabbetuin' (source: author, 2014)

## ANALYTICAL DISCUSSION

### A temporary garden

The garden 'Tuin aan de Maas' is located in the middle of Rotterdam, at the border of water The Maas, at the Mullerpier, near by the Euromast. In the year of 2010 the inhabitants of the neighborhood were told they could use the empty plot, until the construction work for housing start. Even today, in the year of 2014, the day the construction works begin seems to be far away.



FIGURE 19: 'Tuin aan de Maas' (source: author, 2014)

## Outside space, know your neighbor and grow your own food

### Tuin aan de Maas

### The perfect space right around the corner

The reason for starting this initiative came from the wish for outside space, and the land at the border of the water of The Maas being available for a couple of years. The idea for the garden is a place where everyone can help in the mutual garden and sharing the products they have grown.



FIGURE 20: 'Tuin aan de Maas' (source: author, 2014)

### Proof first

During the process of starting the initiative the initiators have faced some struggles, but the communication with the municipality has been mostly a good experience. The initiators did not ask for much, only the use of the land. The reason for this was the initiators felt like they had to proof they could start a successful community garden, before the municipality would support them money wise. When the municipality saw the flourishing of the garden, they were willing to subsidize the needed materials.

#### Motives

Desire for outside space and a garden;  
Esthetics of the empty plot

#### Goals

Connecting the neighborhoods inhabitants;  
Creating a nice place for leisure time

#### Results

Increased social cohesion within the neighborhood; A community feeling; Feeling safe within the neighborhood

#### Characteristics

Community feeling; Neighborhood activities

BOX 6: motives, goals, result and characteristics of 'Tuin san de Maas' (source: author, 2014)

## 5. ANALYTICAL DISCUSSION

### 5.1 INTRODUCTION

Within this chapter, the Rotterdam and Groningen municipal food policy and visions, and the findings gathered during the empirical research are analyzed and discussed.

Section 5.2 contains the content of the municipal policy and visions and the analysis and discussion about the implementation of the policy and visions in practice. Section 5.2 contains the findings regarding the urban food initiatives and the experiences the initiators have had with the municipality during the process of setting up their initiative. Together, the analysis and discussions form the basis for the final conclusions in chapter 6.

### 5.2 MUNICIPAL FOOD POLICY AND VISIONS

#### 5.1.1 THE CONTENT OF THE ROTTERDAM MUNICIPAL FOOD POLICY

The municipality of Rotterdam has created a food policy document within in the year of 2012, called 'Food & the City'. Food strategies like Toronto, Vancouver, Chicago, New York and Londen have been used as examples during the process of making the Rotterdam municipal food policy. The policy document includes three main chapters. First, they start with what they would like to achieve with urban food production. Second, their strategies to promote urban food production and the third part contains some examples.

The policy document gives information about the concept of urban agriculture, social developments within Rotterdam concerning Urban Food initiatives and the worldwide shift towards sustainability within the beginning of the document. In addition to this, they show the way Urban Agriculture contribute to other policy goals. To illustrate they use a standard sustainability model with the three pillars: social, economy and ecology and separate local and global policy goals. Examples of these goals named in the document are: empowerment, recycling, more green internships for students, and norms for combining local food and catering. The main focus areas (see table 5) of the municipality, within the food policy document are: 1) improving health of the inhabitants of the city, 2) strengthen the sustainable economical development and 3) improving spatial quality. In addition to these three focus point, the policy document states that urban agriculture can also contribute to social cohesion and decreasing food-miles.

One of the most important aspects the municipality mentions within the policy document is about the municipality's wishes to maintain the spontaneous character of the urban food initiatives, concerning the grassroots initiatives both from citizens and professionals. The role of the municipality is to facilitate by thinking along with initiators and getting things started.

*"The municipality's actions will chiefly be aimed at creating good preconditions for initiatives from third parties, providing information, contributing to research, and bringing different parties together. Initiatives that contribute significantly to the municipal objectives may (if necessary and desired) expect extra assistance from the municipality. If tangible results fail to materialize for an extended period, the municipality will withdraw from the initiative." (Fontein et al., 2012).*

## ANALYTICAL DISCUSSION

The main task the municipality of Rotterdam focusses on within this policy document is *"increasing the availability of sustainably produced food of high quality for broad strata of the population. For the purpose of urban agriculture in and around the city"* (Fontein et al., 2012).

Several sectors within the Rotterdam municipality are linked to the subject of 'food production' within the urban environment. Spatial planning is one of these departments, because there needs to be a certain amount of space available for production. Also logistic networks, soil quality, health, employment opportunities and stimulating local product purchases are subjects that are linked to urban food.

During the analysis of the food policy document, it becomes clear that concrete plans or strategies are not really mentioned. Therefore, the policy document is not very concrete, and leans more towards a policy vision document.

Focus areas	
Health	Healthy nutrition New community gardens
Sustainable economy	Vital lanscape Enhancing sales Green jobs market Reduction in food miles
Spatial quality	The new green Facilitating initiatives from residents and civil organizations

**TABLE 5: Focus areas of the Rotterdam Municipal food policy (Source: author, based on 'Food & The city', 2012).**

### 5.2.2 THE CONTENT OF THE GRONINGEN MUNICIPAL FOOD POLICY AND VISIONS

The food policy of the Groningen Municipality was first thought of by an ecologist, working for the Groningen municipality. The first thoughts about the food policy came from a gut feeling, and the urge to be innovatory and renewing. One of the most inspiring people during this process was Carolyne Steel, writer of the book *the Hungry City*. Because of this the municipal ecologist, and also food policy initiator, arranged several meetings with Steel to see what the opportunities and possibilities for the city of Groningen would be. As a first step, the existing food policies within the Netherlands and outside of the Netherlands were studied. It became obvious that food policy was worldwide on a rise. Secondly, an imagination or dream for the city was thought of and presented to the steering Committee (a committee existing out of multiple sectors). Involved were the GGD, (municipal health services), ROEZ (Spatial Organization and Economical services) and Environmental protection and Social services).

The Groningen municipality has implemented green participation in the year of 2009 through a green planning policy document called 'Groene Pepers' (green peppers). Within the year of 2011, Groningen became the city of taste, which resulted in a year with many attention to food, local production of food and creative ideas for preparing food. After this, in the year of 2012, a food policy vision document was created by the Groningen municipality. Carolyn Steel, writer of the book *'Hungry City'* and the food policy city of Toronto (Canada) were the main inspirators for the start of this food policy vision. One of the resulting projects that has been established through the

## ANALYTICAL DISCUSSION

municipality is named 'De Eetbare stad' (the eatable city), set up for neighborhood inhabitants. The aim was to support people who were planning on starting community food initiatives like farming and herb gardens. The role of the municipality within this project was mainly about being helpful and facilitating. For example, allowing communities to use public spaces and sometimes providing subsidies.

The food policy vision is mainly about supporting the path to a more sustainable food system. The first move this vision mentions is to connect, support and facilitate urban food project pioneers. The second move would be to motivate and inform the people about the possibilities there are within the municipality to start urban food initiatives. Another aspect the municipality focusses on is motivating people to make self-conscious choices and demotivate behavior that is possibly threatening for the environment. Within the policy document, the municipality mentions the positive link between urban food to other aspects as improving quality of the environment and public health, social cohesion within neighborhoods, local economy and job opportunities, ecology and wellbeing within the city, aiming for integrated approaches. Originally, the idea behind the food policy vision was based on the regional document 'Foodtopia', made by Carolyn Steel, for the region of Groningen-Assen. Because of reorganization and a different direction of the region Groningen-Assen, the subject of food is not included anymore, and therefore, the Groningen Municipality is now focussing on its own environment only. This does not mean that the vision changed, but some proceedings will be implemented differently than the original idea.

The main goals the Groningen municipality state within this food policy vision, are supporting and speed up the transition to a sustainable food system and connect and coordinate urban food initiatives. The long term effect they strive for are more healthy and conscious inhabitants, improvement of the environmental quality, contributing to a sustainable city, strengthening of the social cohesion within neighborhoods and streets, strengthening of the biodiversity and contributing to the reinforcement of the regional economy. As a way towards achieving these goals, the Groningen municipality came up with six focal points, as shown in table 6.

<b>Focal points</b>	<b>Description</b>
<b>Room for initiatives</b>	The focus is maintaining and respecting current rules, but being flexible and innovative if necessary on legal and physical levels.
<b>An inspired and healthy consumer</b>	Informing the customer and creating possibilities for customers to get in contact with food, food production and inspiring, sustainable initiatives.
<b>A healthy environment to live in</b>	An environment that is safe, comfortable and experience as pleasurable, inspiring to people for healthy behavior and the least amount of pressure on the milieu as possible.
<b>Intensive cooperation</b>	To have a more easy and better contact with citizens and lowering the threshold for initiative

## ANALYTICAL DISCUSSION

Focal points	Description
<b>New communication</b>	Because of the developments of social media, original informing and contacting methods are not sufficient anymore. Young people seem to be interested and starting sustainable initiatives the most, but they cannot be reached through newsletters, community information evenings or advertising in the morning papers. This is why new ways of communication needs to be developed.
<b>Setting a good example.</b>	Good examples are followed, so that is why the municipality is setting the example of low waste of materials and food and consuming more sustainable and local foods.

**TABLE 6: The six focal point of the Groningen municipality (Source: author, based on 'De eetbare stad', 2012)**

In addition to the policy visions, the Groningen municipality has made a program for implementing the six focal points. Within this document, projects are mentioned that help to achieve This makes, that the policy vision document, together with the program for implementation, gives a proper view about what they want, and how they want to get there.

### 5.2.3 DISCUSSING THE IMPLEMENTATIONS OF THE FOOD POLICIES AND VISIONS IN PRACTICE

As a first step, the motives behind the Groningen and Rotterdam municipal food policies and visions are discussed, see table 7. It becomes clear that for the Groningen municipality the food policy and vision is not about food alone, but meant to be the beginning towards changing the relationship and communication between the municipality and citizens.

Motives	
<b>Groningen</b>	The urge for innovation and creativity; A gut feeling of the initiator; The believe of Urban Food being a contribution for sustainability; Changing the way citizens see and think about the municipality; Changing the way the municipality acts (switching from top-down to bottom-up)
<b>Rotterdam</b>	Stimulating Urban Food initiatives for future sustainability; Making it more easy for citizens to start a good initiative

**TABLE 7: Municipal food policy and visions: motives (source: author, based on information from the interviewees)**

Changing the way the municipality acts and is seen through the eyes of the citizens is seen as part of the big switch from a sectoral, top-down municipality to a facilitating, communicating, cooperating and decentralized municipality. This seems to be one of the most difficult aspects. *'What should be avoided is the power struggle between the sectors, which is not an unthinkable situation. When that happens, most of the time, the sector with the highest amount of money wins, because they have more power'* (X2, translated from Dutch to English by the author, 2014). X2 argues that the mentality of the municipality is slowly changing and this way of working is slowly spreading to other themes within the municipality. Although this is put in motion, it is not happening very quickly. The switch from government to governance is studied within section 2.2. In this section, Buckingham & Theobald (2003) mention that the communication and cooperation between

## ANALYTICAL DISCUSSION

different actors is one of the hardest aspects, because of possible opposite interests. The results point towards problems within decision making processes related to money, and as a result power.

Nevertheless, the green city policy and the regional consuming policy are seen as a first step to change behavior and systems within the municipality. First of all, the policy was made up in high speed and through participation and communication between multiple sectors within the municipality. Comparing this to the making of other new policy documents, this was highly renewing.

As for the goals, listed in table 8, it seems that the facilitating role is an important aspect for both of the municipalities. The Rotterdam municipality focusses mostly on maintaining the spontaneous character of the initiatives, and facilitating these initiatives when needed. For the Groningen municipality, it seems that they want to stimulate more by spreading information about the possibilities and motivating by setting the good example. The main vision of the Groningen municipality is the aim to be facilitating to citizens instead of being a municipality within the welfare state that arranges everything. But the reality differs from the policy and its visions. For example, the municipality wants to set a good example, but in practice, there is not enough money to execute some of the plans. In addition, the idea of sharing and spreading information is not what they had imagined. One of the aspects they thought of was a food coordination point, but this has not been set up yet. On the other hand, another thing that did come through is the food bank garden project. It has even had its first harvest already.

The Groningen municipality has the goal of sharing and spreading information, to make it more easy to start an initiative, while the Rotterdam municipality wants to maintain the spontaneous character of the initiatives. Not only does this differ from the Groningen municipalities goal, but it is also self contradictory when comparing it to their motive (and title of the policy document) of stimulating Urban Food initiatives. Moreover, the Groningen municipality has been able to make the visions concrete, by adding the implementation plan for their focal points. The Rotterdam municipality does not have this (yet), which is surprising, because where the Groningen municipality still calls the document a policy vision, the Rotterdam municipality has chosen to name it a policy. Within section 2.3, existing food policies are discussed. MacRae and Donahue (2013) state that the making of food policies often result in strategies and action plans, that otherwise would not have occurred. For the Groningen food policy this seems to be the case, but not (yet) for the Rotterdam municipal food policy.

Goals	
<b>Groningen</b>	Being a facilitator to initiators of urban food initiatives; Sharing and spreading information; Setting a good example
<b>Rotterdam</b>	Maintaining the spontaneous character of the initiative; Being a facilitator to initiators of urban food initiatives

**TABLE 8: Municipal food policy and visions: goals (source: author, based on information from the interviewees)**

As for the results (see table 9), within the Rotterdam municipality, previously there were separate parishes which are currently melted down to one large municipality of Rotterdam. Instead of the

## ANALYTICAL DISCUSSION

different municipal parts, area committees are set with the same environmental boundaries the municipal parts had. This change has had great impact on the way grassroots initiatives are handled. Before, an official mandate for grassroots initiatives existed, emanating that any initiative below ten thousand euro, fitting within the municipal 'boundaries', did not have to be discussed. As a result, the initiative could start immediately. When the municipal parts were replaced by the area committees, the budgets changed and every initiative needs to be discussed into detail with the area committee and the initiators until the committee agrees to the plan. This change is the opposite of what the municipality state they want with urban food initiatives. Their policy states they want to be facilitating and motivating urban food initiatives, but this change has made it more difficult and time-consuming for people to get their project started than before, which is not motivating at all. In other words, where the municipal part Rotterdam North had made progress towards a more communicative and cooperative approach, they are now back to the old top-down approach. The long history of Dutch governments, working from a top-down approach, coming from a period of crisis, as De Roo (2004) mentioned (section 2.2), could be related to the Rotterdam municipality falling back into their old habits when things become more difficult.

Results	
<b>Groningen</b>	The municipality is slowly adapting to the new way of integral working instead of sectoral; An urban food garden for the food bank has been set-up.
<b>Rotterdam</b>	Temporary success with the way grassroots urban food initiatives were handled. Now back to the previous state, meaning hierarchical systems and loads of administration.

**TABLE 9: Municipal food policy and visions: results (source: author, based on information from the interviewees)**

The top-down and hierarchical way of working seem to limit the opportunities to embrace grassroots initiatives. *'The opportunities to learn and share knowledge with citizens, institutions and businesses are used to little. These parties are most of the time specialized and have more knowledge than the municipality and working together and sharing ideas would be a benefit for both. The transition to a new way of working is slow, because many older workers are stuck in their old pattern'* (X1, translated from Dutch to English by the author, 2014). It seems like the problems, gaps and also future possibilities that hold back the shift to governance are well known, but there are problems when it comes to the practical side. Another problem that was mentioned during the research, is the size of the municipality. Too many employees would make that they are incapable of making the switch to governance. This reasoning is not backed up by the literature. Does the municipality truly knows where the problems lie? According to Gregory et al. (2009), governance has everything to do with the recognition that the coordination of complex social systems, for example the city, are becoming much more the responsibility of NGO's, and the influence the state has on these systems is decreasing. The reason for not being able to make the switch, could be the misconception about the municipals influences, and therefore missing knowledge about about the importance of cooperating with non-state actors.

Moreover, the municipal policy and visions are full of the contribution urban food initiative have regarding sustainability. Within their policy and visions, they do link the subject of urban food to other sustainability subjects which suggests they approach the subject of urban food cross-sectoral. For enabling the path to sustainability, collective action is needed and the involvement of non-state actors is considered to be fundamental to enable social learning, stimulate

## ANALYTICAL DISCUSSION

environmental consciousness and for building sustainability. The municipalities seem to believe that sustainability is one of the most important aspects, and therefore, one would expect collective actions and involvement of non-state actors. In practice, it seems to be more difficult to handle these issues cross-sectoral. For the Groningen municipality, the steering committee's reaction to the food policy ideas, and the integral approach were quite skeptical. Some of the participating sectors could not see the importance of the food policy and saw many problems instead of the possibilities. For example, there was a fear of an untidy street image and some people even stated that citizens can not set up such things themselves. *'During the period of the policy making, I experienced that people were mainly working for themselves, not communicating or helping without their sector. There was no feeling of servitude'* (X2, translated from Dutch to English by the author, 2014). This illustrates the negative attitude of the municipality towards the capabilities of citizens and the non-cooperative attitude towards new ideas and supporting colleagues. Citizens seem to be underestimated for their abilities and knowledge. The main problem within the municipality is the size and the separation of sectors, not connecting and communicating with the other sectors and being highly hierarchical. As mentioned before, the literature points out that governance is about the recognition that the coordination of complex social systems was never the responsibility of the state alone, and that it is even possible that the state has limited influences on the coordination of these systems. The municipality's reaction towards the integral approach implies that they are nowhere near the shift towards governance. In addition, the steering committee did not seem to understand the importance of urban food being handled in an integral way, or the importance to focus on the subject of food within the city. This seems to confirm the literature that local authorities have limited attention to the subject of food within the urban environment. This seems a bit odd, since food is a basic need and relates to many other sectors that do get a lot of attention, as stated by Pothukuchi and Kaufman in section 2.4.

During the discussions about implementing the Rotterdam and Groningen food policy, some underlying frustration was notable. These frustrations seemed to come from a feeling of powerlessness, coming from the issue of not being able to give people what they need, because of the municipal sectoral structures and hierarchy. Nevertheless, reading between the lines, there was also some pride and enjoyment notable about the projects that are supported and currently flourishing. Still, the underlying tone was that it is not enough.

<b>Characteristics</b>	
<b>Groningen</b>	Willingness to be facilitating Easy to access Not about food itself, also used as a process to change the municipal sectoral approach towards an integral approach. Focus on sustainability
<b>Rotterdam</b>	Willingness to be facilitating Focussing on the subject of food, and the connections and contribution to other sectors Focus on sustainability

**TABLE 10: Municipal food policy and visions: characteristics (source: author, based on information from the interviewees)**

## ANALYTICAL DISCUSSION

### 5.3 THE GRASSROOTS URBAN FOOD INITIATIVES

This section contains the analysis and discussion of the six different urban food initiatives in relation to the existing literature about grassroots urban food initiatives, municipal governance urban food policy and visions.

#### 5.3.1 THE MOTIVES, GOALS, RESULTS AND CHARACTERISTICS

First, the motives and goals are discussed. Table 7 and 8 provide overviews of the motives and goals of the initiatives mentioned by initiators of the grassroots urban food initiatives. As for the motives, three main types can be distinguished: (1) changing life (style), (2) changing the public space within the neighborhood for the better and (3) the desire to have outside space. When taking a closer look at the goals, it shows that one goal, connecting neighbors, is mentioned by all initiators. Additional to these findings, the motive to start the initiative, is sometimes a goal for another. For example, The Herehof has the goal to reduce nuisance by reorganizing the space, while the initiative of 'De tuin van Jannie', the motive to start the initiative was mainly the nuisance of people walking their dogs resulting in a dirty piece of land. This issue was bothering the surrounding inhabitants in such a way, that this became their motive to change it. Another notable aspect is, that a motive for setting up an initiative can either come from a negative, but also from positive point of view. Also, links between motives and goal are found. The first one is that both initiatives with the motive to actively use public space (Herehof & Tuin van Jannie), have education for children as a goal. The second link is between the two initiatives that have the desire for outside space as main motive (Krabbetuin & Tuin aan de Maas) have growing food as a goal. Whether these links are a coincidence or not is hard to say. Actively using space within the neighborhood might be more of a wish coming from citizens with younger children, while people with the desire to change their lifestyle might be thinking more about their health and the environment. The other goals as raising awareness about the food system, activities for elder people and personal freedom and accepting others seem to be initiative specific goals.

When comparing the information from the initiators to the theory about urban food initiatives, the motives and goals described by Lawson (2005) do not seem to match the mentioned motives and goals. Lawson (2005) mentions mostly poor conditions as motive for starting urban food initiatives (e.g. Economic depression, Urban growth, Educational reform, War, Depression, Urban decline, Civic unrest, Environmentalism, Disinvestment, Local activism), while the studied initiatives had relatively good environmental conditions from the start. The same goes for the goals. This suggests that when basic needs are met and desired environmental conditions are already there, other goals follow.

Case	Motive(s)
Tuin in de stad	Desire to change lifestyle
Herehof	Using the shared owned public space.
Tuin van Jannie	Using the public space, instead of it being a dog walking spot.
Gandhituin	Desire to change life (style)
Krabbetuin	The desire to have outside space.
Tuin aan de Maas	The desire to have outside space

## ANALYTICAL DISCUSSION

**TABLE 11: Grassroots urban food initiatives: motives (source: author, based on information from the initiators)**

Case	Goal(s)
<b>Tuin in de stad</b>	Connecting people
<b>Herehof</b>	Connecting neighbors (especially elderly) Education for children Reduce nuisance
<b>Tuin van Jannie</b>	Education for children Activities for the elderly Increasing social cohesion
<b>Gandhituin</b>	Connecting people Raise awareness about the food system Personal freedom and acceptance of others
<b>Krabbetuin</b>	Growing herbs and vegetables for cooking Connecting with other women in the neighborhood
<b>Tuin aan de Maas</b>	Creating a place where neighbors can come together Being able to grow their own vegetables, fruit and herbs

**TABLE 12: Grassroots urban food initiatives: goal(s) (source: author, based on information from the initiators)**

Second, the results described by the initiators, are filtered and sorted in table 9. Notable is that connecting neighbors is one of the initiatives results, mentioned by all the initiators. This has also been the goal for all the initiatives, although the initiator of the 'Tuin van Jannie' used social cohesion as a goal except of using the term 'connecting neighbors'. Also, two initiators mentioned an increased feeling of safety as a result of the urban food initiative. Nevertheless, whether the reason behind this feeling is indeed the increased contact with neighbors or truly less violence and crime within the neighborhood is hard to say. Goals and results match sometimes, but what can be seen from table 8 and 9 is that the initiators name more results than the goals they first had. The initiatives were not set up for food production alone. The initiatives mostly use urban food growth as a mean, not the result. The desired results are often related to social changes.

Case	Results
<b>Tuin in de stad</b>	Winning two prizes for being the best initiative Doing what they love They connect people through giving opportunities to meet and work together
<b>Herehof</b>	Community feeling A safe environment New initiatives coming from neighbors
<b>Tuin van Jannie</b>	Connecting neighbors Playing opportunities for kids Educational options for kids Other neighbors want to start small initiatives, and because of that, the garden is still changing and adapting to everyone's needs. A place where people can play jeux de boules Spots for food growing

## ANALYTICAL DISCUSSION

Case	Results
<b>Gandhituin</b>	A garden with a lot of volunteers The garden being an example for others Bees that come back to the 'bee hotel' every year
<b>Krabbetuin</b>	Connecting the women within the neighborhood. Friendships have grown over the years. Cultural cooking exchanges between families More and more women are also asking for gardening possibilities Income through product selling on local markets and catering jobs for women Women feeling safe on the streets has increased significantly
<b>Tuin aan de Maas</b>	Increased social cohesion within the neighborhood A community feeling Feeling safe within the neighborhood

**TABLE 13: Grassroots urban food initiatives: results (source: author, based on information from the initiators)**

As a third step, the characteristics of the initiatives, mentioned by the initiators, are listed in table 10. One of the most fascinating aspects, is the way the initiators describe the characteristics of the initiative in comparison to the way Mougeot (2009) sorts the characteristics (see appendix 1 for an overview of the initiatives sorted by Mougeot's characteristics). The initiators mostly use the results as characteristics, and are rather ideological in describing their initiative. For example, the answer to the question of what the characteristics of the initiative are one of the initiators said '*I see Urban agriculture as a transformation within society for developing consciousness. The garden is a fantastical place to work, eat and share together. Sharing is the most important aspect. And also becoming conscious of who you are, what you want to be within society and finding a place for that. We offer a platform, a bedding, where people can be who they are*' (translated from Dutch to English by the author, 2014; quote of the initiator of the Gandhi garden). Mougeot (2009) uses physical aspects to describe the characteristics of urban food projects and initiatives, while the initiators of the initiatives that are studied use more abstract and social achievements as characteristics.

When studying the characteristics, described by Mougeot, (appendix 1) it shows that, out of all the six cases there are only two, the *Krabbetuin* and *Tuin in de Stad* that involve economic activities.

Case	Characteristics
<b>Tuin in de stad</b>	Bringing people together Creating networks No planning on forehand
<b>Herehof</b>	Sharing Working together
<b>Tuin van Jannie</b>	The initiative being a benefit for the community No high expectations about the food production, but more for fun

## ANALYTICAL DISCUSSION

Case	Characteristics
<b>Gandhituin</b>	Inspiration Passion Sharing Connecting Developing Awareness The art of living
<b>Krabbetuin</b>	The initiative being a benefit for the community No high expectations about the food production, more for fun.
<b>Tuin aan de Maas</b>	Community feeling Neighborhood activities

**TABLE 14: Grassroots urban food initiatives: characteristics (source: author, based on information from the initiators)**

### 5.3.2 THE POSITIVE AND NEGATIVE EXPERIENCES WITH THE MUNICIPALITIES

Forth, the positive and negative experiences with the municipality with the communication and cooperation (table 11) are discussed. All the initiators are asked about their perception about the communication and cooperation with the municipality and about their perception of the municipal's contribution to the initiative. Within the two municipalities of Rotterdam and Groningen, there were positive and negative perceptions. Nevertheless, there is a difference notable between the two municipalities.

Case	Positive experiences while communicating and cooperating with the municipality	Negative experiences while communicating and cooperating with the municipality
<b>Tuin in de stad</b>	The initiators are lucky they are supported by one of the municipal ecologists, so they say.	The municipal systems are too tight and 'rusty'. Cooperation within the current municipal system is not possible according to the initiators.
<b>Herehof</b>	The municipality has been nothing but supportive. The cooperation and communication was very good, the initiator had no negative remarks.	
<b>Tuin van Jannie</b>	Positive reaction of initiator about communication and cooperation with the municipality. They were not hindered, but fully supported from the start.	
<b>Gandhituin</b>	The initiator is positive about the municipality, because they have been supportive and cooperative by letting them use the plot of land.	Other volunteers were less positive about the municipal efforts. They did not invest anything, but do use the garden as example for success.
<b>Krabbetuin</b>	Positive about the communication of the municipality is the way they speak to the citizens and offer them job opportunities by catering.	The municipality is not helping and facilitating. They refuse to help by giving the project used goods, because that does not fit their system.

ANALYTICAL DISCUSSION

Case	Positive experiences while communicating and cooperating with the municipality	Negative experiences while communicating and cooperating with the municipality
Tuin aan de Maas	The positive aspect, according tot the initiator, is the municipality lets them use the land until the land is build on.	The municipality was not very cooperative at first, better during the last few years this improved and they even received subsidies.

**TABLE 15: Positive and negative experiences with the municipalities (source: author, based on information from the initiators)**

The initiatives within the Groningen municipality seem to be more positive. Two of the initiators, from the 'Herehof' and the 'Tuin van Jannie' even state that they have had no negative experiences at all. Within the Rotterdam Municipality, all initiators had both positive and negative experiences. The initiators within Groningen feel supported by the municipality, and received help in different ways. All three Groningen initiatives have received subsidy and felt comfortable when communicating with the municipality. The 'Herehof' initiative felt as if they were truly cooperating and striving for the same goals during the contact with the municipality. The negative perception about the municipality was not so much about the communication with the municipality, but about cooperation and the difficulties the initiator of 'Tuin in de Stad' faced were because of hierarchy and the lack of communication within the municipal system. Many times there has been information shared with the initiator, and when they were asked about this, nobody knew anything, because it was not send from their department. The initiator told he received a letter from the municipality, that he needed to leave the plot within a month, because building work on new houses was starting. When he asked for more information it became clear that because of wrong information within the municipal departments the letter was send. This matches the literature about governance and the difficulties of adapting to this new approach. The top-down and sectoral approach stands in the way of true cooperation and facilitation. Another aspect mentioned by the same initiator is the hierarchical way and financial importance within decision making processes. *'When some politician decides that a specific location is meant to build houses or companies on, they can do it because it brings money to the table. But they do not think about the value this initiative has for society'* (translated from Dutch to English by the author, 2014; quote of the initiator of Tuin in de Stad). This relates to what Buckingham & Theobald (2003) mention, and what is also mentioned before, that there seem to be problems regarding money and power issues that are part of decision making processes. Also related to this is the feeling of being supported by the municipality or not. Insecurity about the future of the initiative on the same spot. In the case of temporary use of the plot, the length of the period in which they can use a certain plot depends on the municipal plans for that specific area. For instance, the social value of the initiative and the wishes of the neighborhoods inhabitants does not seem to have the same value as building new houses or industrial sites. This sometimes causes frustration and feelings of powerlessness.

The initiators within the Rotterdam municipality tell that they have no negative perception about the way the communication between them and the municipality has been. Nevertheless, they did not always feel supported, rather as their initiatives were tolerated. Also, facilitation has not been one of the strongest aspects of the Rotterdam municipality. In the case of the Krabbetuin, they have refused to cooperate by not wanting to donate products they would not be using themselves anymore. The Tuin aan de Maas case, has had the most positive experiences with the municipality.

## ANALYTICAL DISCUSSION

They have received subsidy for materials, but only after they have shown them for many years that they would be able to pull it off with or without them.

Although all six initiatives name positive experiences, there was only one initiative, The Herehof within the municipality of Groningen, that seemed to be truly satisfied and happy with the municipal support. The initiator of De Tuin van Jannie mentioned only having positive experiences, but the tone of voice and some mumbled sentences, implied unhappiness. The initiator of Tuin in de Stad states that with the current municipal hierarchy, sectoral structures and over-regulated policies, people are happy with everything they get.

## 6. CONCLUSIONS & DISCUSSION

### 6.1 INTRODUCTION

Growing food is becoming increasingly popular within The Netherlands. The Groningen and Rotterdam municipalities noticed this upcoming attention and have made their efforts to enable the municipality to adapt to the situation of grassroots urban food initiatives by setting up municipal urban food policies and visions.

The current study was conducted, to find out if, and how these policies and visions match and influence grass-rooters during the process of setting up their urban food initiative.

Within section 6.2, all the conclusions regarding the research questions are presented. Section 6.3 contains the questioning and discussing of the outcomes, and last, in section 6.4 the final conclusion based on the findings and my opinion regarding food in the city, the municipalities and the problems discovered during this study.

### 6.2 CONCLUSIONS

First of all, due to the nature of this research, the results can not be generalized. Nevertheless, the results provide insight about the gaps between municipal food policy and visions, and the implementations in practice, which can be helpful for the making of future food policies.

First, lets take a look again at the original main questions leading this study:

**How does the existing municipal food policy relates to existing grassroots food initiatives in the Netherlands?**

**Does the existing municipal food policy meet the needs of the existing grassroots Food initiatives in the Netherlands?**

In order to set up the theoretical framework and the empirical research, the main research questions are divided into subquestions. Before answering the main questions, the subquestions will be answered first.

The first two subquestion '*How can grassroots urban food initiatives be conceptualized?*' and '*In what way do municipal urban food policy meet grassroots Urban Food initiatives?*' are used to find existing literature and theory about grassroots urban food initiatives and municipal urban food policies, as a framework for the empirical research and the analysis of the findings. In order to answer the first two sub-questions, a brief overview of what has been found within existing literature, and what has been studied in-depth in chapter 2, is presented first.

As a start, the definition of grassroots Urban Food initiatives that is used within this thesis is "*Urban Food initiatives captivate the growing, cultivation, processing and distribution of natural food in urban areas, set up by citizens, organizations or associations other than the state, province or*

## CONCLUSIONS & DISCUSSION

*municipality. The main motives of Urban Food initiatives are social benefits to the participants and/or community, healthy lifestyles and reconnecting with nature"* (Author, 2014). Grassroots urban food initiatives are initiatives are started from citizens or communities with an activity related to urban food growth. Motives, goals and characteristics of urban food initiatives can occur in many varieties and forms. According to the literature, the main motives for urban food initiatives are related to poor environmental conditions: economic depression, urban growth, educational reform, war, depression, urban decline, civic unrest, environmentalism, disinvestment and local activism. The goals are: food, income, skill development, cultural expression, recreation, relaxation, socialization, activism. Within the literature, the characteristics of Urban Food Initiatives are descriptions of location, type of space, production, economic activities, product destination and system and scale.

The literature argues that grassroots initiative have social, economical and ecological benefits and together with the increasing social relevance of urban food and sustainable development in planning, and food being related to many policy fields, shows the importance of cooperation between different policy fields mutually and with the grassroots (individuals and communities). Another argument that is made is that the multifunctional character of the food system has an impact on a variety of sectors like public health, social justice, energy, water, land, transport and economic development. The American Planning Association (APA) who, together with The new food equation, persuaded the Association of European Schools of Planning (Aesop) to form the 'Sustainable Food Planning Group'. This group discusses the implications of food planning for theory, policy and practice. Events like this implicate the growing recognition of the importance of sustainability and sustainable food systems. Within literature there are even statements that food planning might be one of the most important social movements of the early 21st century.

Now the brief overview regarding the first and second sub-questions is presented, the third subquestion *'What are the characteristics of grassroots Urban Food initiatives that are currently undertaken in The Netherlands?'* can be answered. The motives of the studies urban food initiative do not match the motives found within the literature. The motives of the studied grassroots urban food initiatives are 1) changing life (style), 2) changing the public space within the neighborhood for the better and 3) the desire to have outside space. The goals show similarities with the existing literature. The main goals found within this study are: education for children, activities for the elderly, increasing social cohesion, connecting people, raising awareness about the food system, personal freedom and acceptance of others, growing food, reduce nuisance and a place for neighbors to come together. The studied urban food initiatives have good environmental conditions, and have mainly motives that contribute to their quality of life, not out of necessity. Also, not all the initiatives have food related goals, and growing food is used as a mean, not the ultimate goal. Regarding the characteristics, the literature and practice show significant differences. Within the literature the characteristics of urban food initiatives are descriptions of mainly the physical and economical aspects (e.g. size and scale, products, economical activities etc.). The results of this study show that what characterizes the grassroots urban food initiatives are more abstract, and describe mainly social achievements and social aspects like sharing, working together, social engagement with neighbors and having fun.

Additional findings regarding the grassroots urban food initiatives are: 1) connecting neighbors as a goals was mentioned by all initiators 2) connecting with neighbors has also been the results for

## CONCLUSIONS & DISCUSSION

all the initiatives, 3) both initiatives with the motive to actively use public space, have education for children as a goal, 4) the two initiatives that have the desire for outside space as main motive have growing food as a goal. Regarding the results, all the initiatives seem to have more results than there were goals at the beginning of the initiatives. Moreover, two initiators mentioned an increased feeling of safety as a result of the urban food initiative.

The fourth subquestion is *'How are these grassroots urban food initiatives created? (By whom? When? Why? Where?)'*. Because this study focusses on grassroots urban food initiatives the persons that created these initiatives differ from one citizen that initiated the starting of an urban food related plan to a group of citizens that came up with the plan together. There are some similarities between the initiators. They all seem to be very motivated, enthusiastic, open minded and searching for something 'better'. Most of the initiators are passionate about food related aspects, like gardening, food, cooking or have experience already with growing their own vegetables, herbs or fruits. Additionally to the initiators, there are other people involved within the initiatives that had no gardening or food growing experience before, but became enthusiastic by seeing other neighbors or friends working in the gardens. The initiatives were set up separately, but all started their plans about five to three years ago, in the years of 2009 to 2011. The motives (also mentioned before) can be divided into three main motives: 1) changing life (style), 2) changing the public space within the neighborhood for the better and 3) the desire to have outside space. The initiatives are all located within urban or peri-urban areas within the municipalities of Groningen and Rotterdam.

The fifth subquestion is *'What role does the municipal food policy or vision have within the establishment of Urban Food initiatives? (In what way? What are the effects?)'* The specific role of the municipal food policies and visions is difficult to determine, because the results of this study point towards the existence of a gap between the policies and visions and the implementations in practice. Therefore, more important are findings about the role of the municipalities' actions and attitudes towards the grassroots urban food initiatives in practice. The municipal policy and vision document show the belief that urban food initiatives contribute to sustainability and that the municipality want to support, motivate and facilitate these initiatives. Within practice, this support and facilitation the municipalities seem to aim for, does not always come through. The study shows mixed results about the contributing role of the municipalities during the establishment of the initiatives. Regarding the Groningen municipality, two of the three (The Herehof & De Tuin van Jannie) initiatives state they have had no negative experiences at all. Regarding the Rotterdam municipality, all three initiatives had both positive and negative experiences. As for the Groningen and Rotterdam municipality, one out of the three initiatives has had more negative than positive experiences regarding the amount of support and cooperation with the municipality. Some of the initiatives have received financial support, in the form of materials that were arranged by the municipality, like fencing, tiles or a sandbox for the children.

The sixth subquestion is *'How can municipal policy be (more) supportive to grassroots initiatives?'* The municipalities already have the policies and visions in which they state to be supportive towards urban food initiatives. There are some fundamental problems laying underneath that need to be tackled first, regarding the municipal's sectoral structures and technical, top-down system. The results show that the problems regarding the implementation of the policies and visions are related to food in the city needs integral approaches, because of its cross-sectoral nature. The

## CONCLUSIONS & DISCUSSION

current municipal structures do not allow this integral approach. Moreover, the motives and goals of the municipal food policies and visions so not match the needs and wishes currently alive within society. The municipal food policies are supportive when it comes to grassroots urban food initiatives contributing to sustainability, but the grassroots urban food initiatives tell us they need more social cohesion and social safety within their living environment. Although in my opinion social cohesion and social safety are part of sustainability, the municipalities refer to economical and ecological sustainability. To answer the question of how municipalities can be more supportive towards grassroots urban food initiatives is that they first need to know what kind of support is needed in society.

Additional findings regarding the municipal food policies and visions are that the goals the municipalities have with their food policies and visions are the municipality having a facilitating and motivating role regarding grassroots urban food initiatives. Rotterdam specifically has the wish to main the spontaneous character of the initiatives. This is somehow confusing when comparing it to their motive (and title of the policy document) of stimulating Urban Food initiatives. The Groningen municipality has a food policy vision, the Rotterdam municipality has chosen to name it a policy. The Groningen municipality has been able to make their vision concrete by adding an implementation plan regarding their focal points. Surprising is that the Rotterdam municipal policy document does not contain a program or list of implementing the policy.

Now all the subquestions have been answered, the first main research question '**How does the existing municipal food policy relates to existing grassroots food initiatives in the Netherlands?**' can be answered as well. The answer to that question is that the municipalities have made food policies and visions to stimulate and motivate citizens to set up urban food initiatives, because they belief these initiatives contribute to the municipal's environmental sustainability goals. The second main question is '**Does the existing municipal food policy meet the needs of the existing grassroots Food initiatives in the Netherlands?**' The answer to that question is that currently, the municipal food policy does not meet the needs of the grassroots urban food initiatives that are studied. As said before, the municipal food policies and visions are for stimulating and motivating citizens to become active and participate or set up urban food initiatives. The problem we find here, is that there is a mismatch between the food policy and visions and the municipal actions and attitude in practice, and the motives and goals within the policies and visions do not match the motives and goals the grass-rooters have. The studied grassroots urban food initiatives are not set up for environmental sustainability, but mainly because they need social contacts between neighbors and want to feel safe within their neighborhood. In addition to this finding, both parties, as well the municipalities as the grass-rooters, seems to have little confidence in one another. Also, grass-rooters experience feelings of powerlessness, because when it comes to decision making, for example the decision about what to do with a specific area or piece of land, the grass-rooters are bound to lose out.

In addition to answering the main research questions, other aspects that were found and relate to the study need to be mentioned. The Rotterdam municipality has had a period in which the municipality was able to support and facilitate grassroots initiatives in a more effective and efficient way by using a mandate which allowed municipal workers to give a go to grassroots initiatives, without having to check every detail. This way of handling grassroots initiatives turned back to the old, difficult, time-consuming and regulated system when the separated municipal parishes melted

## CONCLUSIONS & DISCUSSION

together as one large municipality. This links to the issue of shifting towards governance, which both municipalities seem to have troubles with. From the information received during this study, the size of the municipality, the large amount of employees and the employees attitude towards communicating and cooperating with other municipal sectors were mentioned as reasons that hold back this shift.

And last, but not least, is the feeling of powerlessness the initiators seem to carry. This seems to be related to the aspect of initiators depend on the municipal decisions about how, and how long they can use the land for their initiatives. The initiatives are not involved when it comes down to decision making about spatial and environmental issues, even when they are using the space the decision is about. Also the positive effects on the neighborhood or community does not seem to have any influence on the decisions made by the municipalities. Since the municipality seems to benefits from the initiatives because of their contribution to the municipal's sustainability goals, they need the grass-rooters to keep up their urban food initiatives.

### **6.3 DISCUSSING THE OUTCOMES**

The previous section contains the outcomes of this study. Some of the outcomes were as expected on forehand, and some even match the existing literature, but some findings were surprising, or leave behind questions.

To start off with, the motives behind the grassroots urban food initiatives do not match the motives that were found within the existing literature. One of the reasons they do not match might be that currently we have a different environmental situation. Although there is no food scarcity or environmental pressure that forces people to grow their own food, urban food initiatives are popping up in fast growing numbers. This suggests that when the basics needs in life are met, other issues become more important and become also reasons to start urban food initiatives. However, the goals do seem to match the goals mentioned within the literature. Perhaps this means that the motives are not as important as the goals? Or are people always, no matter what their circumstances are, aiming for something better?

Furthermore, another notable aspect is the wish to increase social contacts within the neighborhood. Some call is connecting or bonding with neighbors or increasing the neighborhood's social cohesion. This aspect suggests that within society, social contacts within a neighborhood is not self-evident, but the desire for connecting with others is present and is possibly a bigger issue than expected.

When taking a closer look at the other two additional findings regarding the grassroots urban food initiatives namely that connecting with neighbors has also been the result for all the initiatives, both initiatives with the motive to actively use public space, have education for children as a goal and the two initiatives that have the desire for outside space as main motive have growing food as a goal. Wether these findings are a coincidence or not is hard to say. Possibly, actively using space within the neighborhood might be more of a wish coming from citizens with younger children, while people with the desire to change their lifestyle might be thinking more about their health and the environmental conditions. The other goals as raising awareness about the food system, activities for elder people and personal freedom and accepting others seem to be initiative specific goals.

## CONCLUSIONS & DISCUSSION

In addition to what has already been discussed as a goal and mentioned to be a result for all the initiatives, the initiatives all experience increased amount of social cohesion within their neighborhood. Since there were also two initiatives that had problems with feeling safe within their neighborhood, now experience increased feelings of safety within the neighborhood, there might be a relation between these two results. Whether the increased social cohesion is reason for feeling more safe is hard to tell. It could also be that there truly is less violence and crime within the neighborhood. This situation reminds me to what Jane Jacobs mentions in her book 'The dead and life of great American cities' about social safety. She states that when there is more activity on the street, there are more eyes watching the street. Simply because there are more people around, but also because of the everyday 'street ballet', which makes it more interesting for people to sit in front of their window and just watch the everyday street life. These eyes on the street do not stay unnoticed, which makes the street a safer place. It could be that the initiatives have that same effect. In that case, social bonding is less important to feel safe or not. Although this could have the same effect, because getting to know your neighbors, could probably also make you feel more comfortable within your neighborhood.

The making of municipal policy and visions for urban food initiatives seems to be made out of their own perspectives, without knowing the wishes and needs that are currently present within society. The results of this study show that there was not one initiative that had environmental sustainability as a main goal. The goal that all of the initiatives had is social bonding, also referred to as social cohesion or connection with neighbors. These issues are not referred to within the municipal food policies and visions, while this seems to be one of the main needs within society. Citizens use urban food initiatives to claim what they need, even if this needs are not related to food at all. The contribution of the urban food initiatives towards sustainability can therefore be seen as a coincidence municipalities can benefit from. For maintaining or expanding this benefit, they need to make sure these initiative stay alive. Without proper support these initiatives will not be able to start, or stay 'alive' for the long term.

As for the municipal food policies and visions, both municipalities seem to have the desire to be facilitating and supporting to grassroots urban food initiatives. From the documents it seems that both municipalities agree about urban food being related to many other municipal sectors, and should therefore be handled by an integral approach. As showing from the results, within reality this integral approach is not easy. The reason of too many employees make it impossible to shift to governance is not backed up by the literature, but this as one of the problems is not that odd. There are too many municipal employees being there for a long time, used to these sectorial approaches. Every sector had as many employees as needed, so they had all knowledge within their own municipal sector. The result of having all the knowledge within the walls of the municipality could be seen as the reason that there is no need to cooperate with other non-state actors. But linking this to the amount of employees might be too simplistic. Perhaps, the comfort of the current system, and the associated mindset is what is holding things back. In addition, there seems to be little confidence in citizens about their abilities and knowledge. Why would anyone cooperate with someone they are not confident about? Another aspect hindering the shift to governance is the municipalities misconception about their influences on complex social systems is limited. This could influence their perception about the necessity of cooperating with non-state actors.

## CONCLUSIONS & DISCUSSION

Remarkable is also, that during this study, initiators did not seem to be critical towards the municipalities about the municipal actions and the amount of support they have had. Perhaps this is related to the attitude of not expecting much from the municipality from the start, and therefore anything they do receive feels like a bonus. Still the question remains, if the low expectations have something to do with their uncritical attitude, why the initiators had no, or low expectations. Finding out the reason for their low expectations and lack of critical attitude could be helpful for the municipalities, and eventually also for the initiators. After all, without knowing that there is something wrong, there is no need for change.

And as a last addition, regarding decision making processes both parties, the municipalities and the grass-rooters, seem to need one another, and therefore the municipal attitude towards the grass-rooters needs to change. Both parties need to be equal within decision making processes, otherwise cooperation and long term benefitting from one another, could turn out to be quite difficult.

### **6.5 FINAL CONCLUSION**

Looking at the findings discovered during this study, i belief that there are deeper underlying problems for why there is a gap between policies and visions and the implementations in practice. The main issue is the increasing complex questions that steering authorities are facing. Within complex social systems, which cities are, there are multiple small systems, linked to other systems, which on their turn are also linked to other bigger systems, and together, all these systems form this large and complex social system, the city. Because in The Netherlands, we have this history with top-down regulation, a hierarchical sectoral system and a technical approach regarding handling problems, we now discover that these systems are not made to deal with extreme complex questions. These kind of questions, like the issue of food in the city, affect a lot of different sectors and actors which, in addition, all have different interests. In my opinion, the idea of making a policy vision to stimulate and motivate people to set up initiatives that contribute to sustainable goals is not a bad idea at all, but municipal policy alone is not enough to grasp the whole issue regarding food in the city. I belief that the municipalities (and not municipalities alone, but also provinces and the state) need to start recognizing the changes within cities regarding the increasing complexity and the municipal's decreasing influence on how these complex systems will evolve. Recognizing their limited influence could possibly allow them to look beyond the fixed sectors, and enable them to reshape the system for focussing on issues that matter, regardless to which sector the issue 'belongs'.

### **6.6 REFLECTION**

#### **6.6.1 THEORETICAL**

This study started from the question how municipal food policies and visions match and meet the needs of existing grassroots urban food initiatives. During the study, it became more clear that there are underlying problems that are part of the process of effectively implementing the municipal urban food policies. This has resulted that the focus shifted towards focussing more on the switch towards governance. Knowledge about this aspect on fore hand, would have made it more easy to focus on the right aspects during this study and perhaps some questions would have been framed differently. I personally think the reason behind not seeing the most important aspects at first, is

## CONCLUSIONS & DISCUSSION

related to this being the first thesis i have ever written. Over the last year, i have learned a lot about the most important aspects of setting up a research. The way of preparation and 'diving in' the subject, before thinking about the main questions is something i would do differently in the case of writing another thesis. Another thing i have learned a lot about is how a research needs to be build. I have followed a few classes on how to write a thesis, and have had really great support and feedback from Dr. C. Parra during the past year.

What i would do differently, with the knowledge i now have is perhaps focus on the shift from government to governance more from the beginning, and not focus on the policies and visions as much. In my opinion the implementation of the policies and visions within practice, and the interaction between citizens or communities and the municipalities is the most interesting part. This would have enabled me to go a little bit 'deeper'. Although i have tried and perhaps managed to add this also within this thesis, i would like to research that part more.

### **6.6.2 METHODOLOGICAL**

As also handled within chapter three, methodology of semi-structured interviewing has changed to 'walking talks'. During the fist visit at the Ghandigarden located in Rotterdam, the method of semi-structured interviewing did not work properly. The main reason for this, was that the persons, showing me through the garden, seemed more open, and willing to share information compared to the situation of sitting down to ask questions. Also, the natural evolvement of the conversations during walking through the gardens, which provided more information than compared to the semi-structured interview method. Also, this new method gave me the opportunity to talk and observe at the same time, which provided me to discover aspects i would not have seen otherwise.

When i had an appointment to talk about the thesis with Dr. C. Parra, i explained the problem and made the proposition to use the 'walking talk' method. Dr. C. Parra's reaction was positive, and since that moment i have used this method for the continuing visits of grassroots urban food initiatives. In my opinion, this method gives researchers the opportunity to see beyond the surface, space for new information and a more open attitude from the participants during the conversations. Another aspect, i found to be a benefit, was the interested reaction of other people present at the gardens during the walks. Also these people were willing to join in the conversation and this also provided some helpful information. For the full reflection on the method, see chapter three, section 3.6.

## 7. RECOMMENDATIONS

### 7.1 INTRODUCTION

Because of the nature of this study, the outcomes can not be generalized. Nevertheless, the outcomes seem to point towards possibilities for improvements regarding the municipal urban food policy and visions implementation in practice and municipal structures. First in section 7.2, the recommendations for municipal policy following from the results are presented and explained. Second in section 7.2, the recommendations for future academic research are presented.

### 7.2 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR MUNICIPAL POLICY

Within this section, the possibilities for improving municipal food policy and visions, and the recommendations for better implementation in practice are presented. These recommendations come forth out of the results found within the process of this study. Because the results suggest the presence of many similarities within the two municipal policies and visions, the recommendations are not handled separated for each municipality, but presented as one. The recommendations start with explaining the problem, followed by the recommendations.

The following recommendations are based on belief that the shift towards governance is a necessity for handling increasingly complex issues and maintain a coordinative role within complex social systems like the urban environment, also called the city.

#### Recommendation A

*There seems to be a problem regarding the knowledge about the amount of influence the municipality has on its own, on the coordination of complex social systems, like the city.*

As a start, the municipality needs to find out its current abilities on handling complex issues and the actual amount of influences they currently have on their complex social systems. This provides insight about their current shortcomings, and at the same time shows the possibilities for cooperate with other influential actors. The only way to find out their abilities is through monitoring processes of handling complex questions, using feedback methods and follow up the amount of effect their efforts lead to.

#### Recommendation B

*The municipal employees' negative attitude and opinions towards integral approaches and cooperation with non-state actors, for example citizens, is one of the problems holding back the shift towards governance.*

For eventually being able of making the shift towards governance, it is important to involve municipal employees in the process, but at least equally important, and maybe even more important, is making clear the reasons behind the shift. Understanding about the changing nature of problems, and the decreasing influence they have on the coordination of the urban environment, makes it more likely to create a solid and supportive base, which is one of the first steps towards being able to make the necessary adaptations.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

### Recommendation C

*The municipal top-down regulation together with the sectoral system and technical approach obstructs social learning, communication and cooperation, which is needed for handling the increasing complex issues.*

Reorganizing the municipal structures in a way that cross-sectoral issues, with many involved actors can be handled more easy and effective. This involves the reorganization of regulations and decision making processes. This process must not be seen as a short term change, because changing and adapting to new systems is time-consuming, costly and takes a lot of efforts and energy. The recommended approach is to first map the current situation. The second step would be to and work, one step a the time, towards the new situation, in cooperation with all municipal employees. It is important to involve all actors in the plan making process for the new structures, for creating a supportive basis.

### Recommendation D

*Implementation of policy and visions not matching the wishes and needs of the people the policy and visions are made for. The consequence of this is that policy makers put a lot of efforts, time and money in to the municipal policy or vision, without knowing whether this is what people wish for or need.*

Use knowledge that is available within society through social learning, as a way to improve the effectivity of policy and visions. By actively involving non-municipal actors, confidence and a supportive basis are more likely to grow. Although not everyone shall be interested in participating within municipal discussions, policy making and decision making processes, find the ones that are and would like to have a say regarding the subjects of their interest and important issues.

## **7.3 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH**

The outcomes of this study bring up new discussions and questions that can be interesting to study more in-depth. The recommended subjects for further academic research are presented point-wise, with some additional possibilities for research directions.

- A) The motives for starting urban food initiatives do not match the motives found within this study. Because of the nature of this study, the outcomes can not be generalized. It would be interesting to know whether the motives are different due to the different environmental situation, or whether there are other reasons.
- B) The goals did match the goals found in the literature. It would be interesting to find out whether the goals of the grassroots urban food initiatives are related to their motives or not.
- C) Grass-rooters are not critical towards the actions of the municipality. It would be interesting to know what lays underneath this attitude, and how this turned towards this uncritical attitude.
- D) Both the municipality and citizens seems to have little confidence regarding each other's abilities. As a first step, it would be interesting to know whether this is correct or not. And if this is correct, it would be helpful to know the reason why.
- E) Further research regarding the method of 'walking talks' as a new method for gathering qualitative data as a combination of talking and observing at the same time.

## REFERENCES

# REFERENCES

Affolderbach, J. et al. (2012) Reinforcing Governance: Perspectives on Development, Poverty and Global Crises. Bruxelles: Peter Lang.

Allemendinger (2009). *Planning Theory*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan

Amar-Klemesu, M. (sd). *URBAN AGRICULTURE AND FOOD SECURITY, NUTRITION AND HEALTH*. Recalled on January 28, 2014, from RUAF:  
<http://www.ruaf.org/sites/default/files/Theme4.PDF>

Azarian, R. (2011). Potentials and Limitations of Comparative Method in Social Science .  
*International Journal of Humanities and Social Science* , 1 (4), 113-125.

Basiago, A.D. (1999). *Economic, social, and environmental sustainability in development theory and urban planning practice*. The Environmentalist 19, 145-161 (1999). The Netherlands: Kluwer Academic Publishers, Boston.

Battersby, J. (sd). *academia.edu*. Urban Food Security and the Urban Food Policy Gap. Recalled on February 5, 2014, from: [https://www.academia.edu/2494671/Urban\\_Food\\_Security\\_and\\_the\\_Urban\\_Food\\_Policy\\_Gap](https://www.academia.edu/2494671/Urban_Food_Security_and_the_Urban_Food_Policy_Gap)

Bloyce, D. (2004). *Research is a messy process. A case study of a figurational sociology approach to conventional issues in social science research methods*. GJSS, 1 (1). Recalled on April 24, 2014, from <http://www.gjss.nl/vol01/nr01/a07>.

Bryman, A. (2008). *Social Research Methods*. New York: Oxford University Press Inc.

Castells, M. (1983). *The City and the Grassroots. A Cross-Cultural Theory of Urban Social Movements*. Londen: Edward Arnold Ltd.

Cohen, L., Manion, L., & Morrison, K., (2007) *Research Methods in Education* London: RoutledgeFalmer

Cohen, N. (sd). *URBAN FOOD POLICY policies, plans, and programs for sustainable urban food systems*. Recalled on January 27, 2014, from *Urbanfoodpolicy*: <http://www.urbanfoodpolicy.com>

Denscombe, M., (2007). *The Good Research Guide: For Small-scale Social Research*. Buckingham: Open University Press

Diepen, A. van & Raats, K. (2011). Stadslandbouw moet mainstream zijn. *Rooijlijn* , 44 (5), 376-379.

Drever, E. (2003). *Using Semi-structured Interviews in Small-scale Research*. Glasgow: SCRE centre.

## REFERENCES

- Dutch Government (2014). Roles and responsibilities of provincial government, municipal governments and water authorities. Recalled on the 2nd of August 2014, from <http://www.government.nl/issues/environment/roles-and-responsibilities-of-provincial-government-municipal-governments-and-water-authorities>.
- Freudenberg and Silver (2013). *JOBS FOR A HEALTHIER DIET AND A STRONGER ECONOMY: Opportunities for Creating New Good Food Jobs in New York City*. New York: New York City Food Policy Center at Hunter College, 2013.
- Foeken, D., & Owuor, S. (2008). Farming as a livelihood source for the urban poor of Nakuru, Kenya. *Geoforum* , 39 (6), 1978-1990.
- Fontein et al. (2012). *Food & The City*. Rotterdam: Municipality of Rotterdam
- Foster. (1992). *The world food problem*. Boulder, Colorado, USA: Lynne Rienner Publishers, Inc.
- Garnett, T., (1996). Farming in the City: The potential of Urban Agriculture. *The ecologist* 26 (6): 299-307.
- Hatfield, M. (2012). *City Food Policy and Programs: Lessons Harvested from an Emerging Field*. Portland: Bureau of Planning and Sustainability.
- Koc, M. et al. (1999). *For Hunger-proof Cities: Sustainable Urban Food Systems*.
- Kooiman, J. (2003). *Governing as Governance*. London: SAGE publications Ltd.
- Lammers, W. J., and Badia, P. (2005). *Fundamental of Behavioral Research*. California: Thomson and Wadsworth.
- Lawson, L. (2005). *City Bountiful - A century of community gardening in America*. London, England: University of California Press, Ltd.
- Maconachie, R., Binns, T., & Tengbe, P. (2012). Urban farming associations, youth and food security in post-war Freetown, Sierra Leone. *Cities - The International Journal of Urban Policy and Planning* , 29 (3), 192-200.
- Macnaghten, P. & Urry, J. (1998). *Contested natures*. London: SAGE Publications.
- MacRae and Donahue (2013). *Municipal food policy entrepreneurs: A preliminary analysis of how Canadian cities and regional districts are involved in food system change*. Canada: publisher unknown.
- McGuinness, A., Mahfood, J., & Hoff, R. (2010). *Sustainable benefits of urban farming as a potential brownfields remedy*. Bridgeville: The Mahfood Group.
- Middlemiss & Parrish (2010). *Building capacity for low-carbon communities: The role of grassroots initiatives*. *Energy Policy* Volume 38, Issue 12, December 2010, Pages 7559–7566.

## REFERENCES

- Newton, N. (2010). *The use of semi-structured interviews in qualitative research: strengths and weaknesses*. Recalled on January 30, 2014, from academia.edu:  
[https://www.academia.edu/1561689/The\\_use\\_of\\_semi-structured\\_interviews\\_in\\_qualitative\\_research\\_strengths\\_and\\_weaknesses](https://www.academia.edu/1561689/The_use_of_semi-structured_interviews_in_qualitative_research_strengths_and_weaknesses).
- Parra, C. (2013) Social sustainability: a competitive concept for social innovation? in Moulaert F., McCallum D., Mehmood A. and Hamdouch A. (eds), *The International Handbook on Social Innovation: Collective Action, Social Learning and Transdisciplinary Research*, Cheltenham, Edward Elgar pp. 142-154.
- Pothukuchi, K. and Kaufman, J., (1999). *Placing the Food System on the Urban Agenda: The role of municipal institutions in food systems planning*. *Agriculture and Human Values*. (16), 213–224. The Netherlands: Kluwer Academic Publishers.
- Raco, M. (2000). Assessing community participation in local economic development — lessons for the new urban policy. *Political Geography* 19 (2000) 573–599. Recalled on July the 28th, 2014, from [http://ac.els-cdn.com/S0962629800000044/1-s2.0-S0962629800000044-main.pdf?\\_tid=a16fb962-1686-11e4-a6d5-00000aab0f6c&acdnat=1406573001\\_b3ff8367d0cfa75ce7076b9013419f1b](http://ac.els-cdn.com/S0962629800000044/1-s2.0-S0962629800000044-main.pdf?_tid=a16fb962-1686-11e4-a6d5-00000aab0f6c&acdnat=1406573001_b3ff8367d0cfa75ce7076b9013419f1b).
- Roo, G. de (2004). *Environmental Planning in the Netherlands, Too Good to be True*. From command-and-control planning towards shared governance. Ashgate, Aldershot, UK.
- Smit, J. and J. Nasr, 1992. “*Urban agriculture for sustainable cities: using wastes and idle land and water bodies as resources*”. *Environment and Urbanization*. 4( 2): 141-152. Recalled on 12 Februari, 2014, from <http://eau.sagepub.com/content/4/2/141>
- Smit, J., et al. (1996). *Urban Agriculture: Food, Jobs, and Sustainable Cities*. New York: United Nations Development Programme.
- Steel, C. (2011). *De hongerige stad*. Rotterdam, The Netherlands: NAI Uitgevers.
- Tiihonen, S. (2004). *From governing to governance*. Tampere: Tampere University Press.
- Teig et al. (2009). Collective efficacy in Denver, Colorado: Strengthening neighborhoods and health through community gardens. *Health & Place*. Volume 15, Issue 4, December 2009, Pages 1115–1122.
- United Nations. (2004). *World population to 2300*. New York: United Nations.
- WHO (2014). *Urban Population Growth*. Recalled on February 12, 2014, from [http://www.who.int/gho/urban\\_health/situation\\_trends/urban\\_population\\_growth\\_text/en/](http://www.who.int/gho/urban_health/situation_trends/urban_population_growth_text/en/)

# LIST OF INTERVIEWEES

Initiative	Name	Type
Tuin in de stad	Frans Kerver	Personal
Herehof	A. Jorna	Personal
Tuin van Jannie	G. Bosma	Personal
Gandhituin	J. Peper C. de Gier	Personal
Krabbetuin	C.Zeevat	Personal
Tuin aan de Maas	J. Kuipers	Personal

Municipality	Name	Type
Groningen	H. Lestestuver	Personal
Rotterdam	N. Berndsen	Personal

**APPENDIX 1: Characteristics based on theory (source: author, based on Mougeot (2009))**

	<b>System and scale</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Types of economic activities</b>	<b>Product destination</b>	<b>Food and non-food</b>	<b>Type of space</b>
<b>Tuin in de stad</b>	The initiative can be seen as a small scale system. The food, plants, flowers and herbs are not meant for extensive transportation, but local sale.	The initiative is located at the borders of the urban area.	The sale of plants, flowers and herbs is the basic income for the initiative. Also they received money by winning some contests.	The grown food is mainly used for own consumption and small scale trading.	This initiative both grows food and non-food (plants and flowers). There are also activities not related to food, (building tree houses for kids and make things out of clay).	The space is quite large, about the size of a soccer field. The garden is placed at the shore of the canal called the Winschoterdiep.
<b>Herehof</b>	The initiative can be seen as a small scale food-system. It is not meant for people outside the community.	The initiative is located within the urban area.	There are no economic activities linked to this initiative. The initiative does not bring money.	The grown food is used for community and personal consumption.	This initiative grows food	Separate plots, within the middle of a group of houses. The size for food growth in total is about twenty square meters.
<b>Tuin van Jannie</b>	The initiative can be seen as a small scale food-system. Consumption is meant for people within the community.	The initiative is located within the peri-urban area. The neighborhood is located outside of the city centre of Groningen.	There are no economic activities linked to this initiative. The initiative does not bring money.	The grown food is used for community and personal consumption.	This initiative grows food, but also has a bee-hotel	The initiative is located on a plot, surrounded by houses. The space for food growth is about thirty square meters.
<b>Gandhituin</b>	The initiative can be seen as a small scale food-system. It's not meant for people outside of the community.	The initiative is located within the urban area.	There are no economic activities linked to this initiative. The initiative does not bring money.	The grown food is used for community and personal consumption.	This initiative grows food.	The initiative is divided into separate plots, all within the middle of the houses. The space for food growth is rather small. About twenty square meters.
<b>Krabbetuin</b>	The initiative can be seen as a small scale food-system. The grown products are used for own consumption, but also for small-scale trading on local markets.	The initiative is located within a neighborhood, in a peri-urban area.	This initiative has a few economical activities. The women browning food in their gardens sell their products on local weekly markets, but they also use the food for catering jobs.	The grown food is used for community and personal consumption.	This initiative mainly grows food like vegetables, fruit and herbs. There is also a small garden with flowers and plants, because one of the neighborhood inhabitants asked for a garden like that.	The initiative is divided into separate plots, most of them within the middle of the houses, others whose house is directly linked to the field have a garden attached to their own garden. The space for food growth in the middle of the field is rather small, about thirty square meters. The other food gardens, attached to personal gardens are approximately 10 square meters
<b>Tuin aan de Maas</b>	The initiative can be seen as a small scale food-system. It's not meant for people outside of the community.	The initiative is located within the urban area.	There are no economic activities linked to this initiative. The initiative does not bring money.	The grown food is used for community and personal consumption.	This initiative grows food.	The initiative is divided into a few separate areas, one is mainly for food growth, the other for herbs and plants and the biggest is filled with picknick tables and a barbecue and fireplace.

**APPENDIX 2: Characteristics based on participants (source: author, 2014)**

	<b>Motives</b>	<b>Goals</b>	<b>Results</b>	<b>Characteristics</b>	<b>Positive experiences with municipality</b>	<b>Negative experiences with municipality</b>
Tuin in de stad	Desire to change lifestyle	Connecting people	<p>Winning two prizes for being the best initiative</p> <p>Doing what they love</p> <p>They connect people through giving opportunities to meet and work together</p>	<p>Bringing people together</p> <p>Creating networks</p> <p>No planning on forehand</p>	The initiators are lucky they are supported by one of the municipal ecologists, so they say.	The municipal systems are too tight and 'rusty'. Cooperation within the current municipal system is not possible according to the initiators.
Herehof	Using the shared owned public space.	<p>Connecting neighbors (especially elderly)</p> <p>Education for children</p> <p>Reduce nuisance</p>	<p>Community feeling</p> <p>A safe environment</p> <p>New initiatives coming from neighbors</p>	<p>Sharing</p> <p>Working together</p>	The municipality has been nothing but supportive. The cooperation and communication was very good, the initiator had no negative remarks.	
Tuin van Jannie	Using the public space, instead of it being a dog walking spot.	<p>Education for children</p> <p>Activities for the elderly</p> <p>Increasing social cohesion</p>	<p>Connecting neighbors</p> <p>Playing opportunities for kids</p> <p>Educational options for kids</p> <p>Other neighbors want to start small initiatives, and because of that, the garden is still changing and adapting to everyone's needs.</p> <p>A place where people can play jeux de boules</p> <p>Spots for food growing</p>	<p>The initiative being a benefit for the community</p> <p>No high expectations about the food production, but more for fun</p>	Positive reaction of initiator about communication and cooperation with the municipality. They were not hindered, but fully supported from the start.	

	<b>Motives</b>	<b>Goals</b>	<b>Results</b>	<b>Characteristics</b>	<b>Positive experiences with municipality</b>	<b>Negative experiences with municipality</b>
Gandhituin	Desire to change life (style)	<p>Connecting people</p> <p>Raise awareness about the food system</p> <p>Personal freedom and acceptance of others</p>	<p>A garden with a lot of volunteers</p> <p>The garden being an example for others</p> <p>Bees that come back to the 'bee hotel' every year</p>	<p>Inspiration</p> <p>Passion</p> <p>Sharing</p> <p>Connecting</p> <p>Developing</p> <p>Awareness</p> <p>The art of living</p>	The initiator is positive about the municipality, because they have been supportive and cooperative by letting them use the plot of land.	Other volunteers were less positive about the municipal efforts. They did not invest anything, but do use the garden as example for success.
Krabbetuin	The desire to have outside space.	<p>Growing herbs and vegetables for cooking</p> <p>Connecting with other women in the neighborhood</p>	<p>Connecting the women within the neighborhood. Friendships have grown over the years.</p> <p>Cultural cooking exchanges between families</p> <p>More and more women are also asking for gardening possibilities</p> <p>Income through product selling on local markets and catering jobs for women</p> <p>Women feeling safe on the streets has increased significantly</p>	<p>The initiative being a benefit for the community</p> <p>No high expectations about the food production, more for fun.</p>	Positive about the communication of the municipality is the way they speak to the citizens and offer them job opportunities by catering.	The municipality is not helping and facilitating. They refuse to help by giving the project used goods, because that does not fit their system.
Tuin aan de Maas	The desire to have outside space	<p>Creating a place where neighbors can come together</p> <p>Being able to grow their own vegetables, fruit and herbs</p>	<p>Increased social cohesion within the neighborhood</p> <p>A community feeling</p> <p>Feeling safe within the neighborhood</p>	<p>Community feeling</p> <p>Neighborhood activities</p>	The positive aspect, according to the initiator, is the municipality lets them use the land until the land is built on.	The municipality was not very cooperative at first, better during the last few years this improved and they even received subsidies.