

BOOK OF ABSTRACTS

FIRST URBAN AGRICULTURE INNOVATIONS DAYS

URB *Agr'inn*

FIRST URBAN AGRICULTURE INNOVATIONS DAYS

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19–21 MAY 2025
LIEGE, BELGIUM



RESOURCE-SMART FARMING | SUSTAINABLE PROFITABILITY | INNOVATIVE UA GOVERNANCE
| RESILIENT TERRITORIAL POLITICS | COLLABORATIVE ECOSYSTEM

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URBAgr'Inn DAYS

ABSTRACTS



RESOURCE SMART FARMING

**Innovative solutions for
optimizing resource
use in urban food
production**



SUSTAINABLE PROFITABILITY

**Ensuring economic
viability while
promoting
environmental
sustainability**



INNOVATIVE UA GOVERNANCE

**New governance
models to scale urban
farming**



RESILIENT TERRITORIAL PLANNING

**Fostering urban resilience
through strategic agricultural
integration in territorial
planning**



COLLABORATIVE ECOSYSTEMS

**Discover the role of living labs
and clusters in fostering
innovation and collaboration**



The Gardens of 'Coin de Terre': Social, Environmental and Cultural Benefits

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Community gardens, transdisciplinary research, Sustainable agriculture, Urban gardening, Social integration & cohesion

Community gardens have existed since the 19th century, with the first worker gardens created in England and Germany. In the 1890s, similar initiatives appeared in France and Belgium. During the World Wars, “victory gardens” encouraged personal cultivation in response to food shortages. Since the late 1990s, shared gardens have spread across Europe, inspired by North American models. Despite the competition for land use in urban areas, community gardens still arouses interest from urban and rural dwellers today, in particular to adress contemporary challenges such as environmental sustainability, participatory democracy, and the creation of social connections.

The “Coin de Terre” community garden in Bressoux is the largest collective garden in Wallonia, covering nearly 6 hectares with around 290 cultivable plots, one per family. Established in 1925, it promotes sustainable and inclusive food practices, bringing together local actors to encourage healthy, environmentally respectful gardening. Located in the urban Bressoux district, it offers affordable yearly plot rentals to local amateur gardeners. The garden also serves as a socio-cultural laboratory, with partnerships from various organizations like La Bobine, the Centre d'Action Laïque de la Province de Liège, Arsenic2, the Adoc theater company, the Maison de l'Alimentation durable et inclusive de Liège (MAdiL), the Ceinture Aliment-Terre Liégeoise (CATL) and the University of Liège. Additionally, there are two community plots for shared gardening and social integration.

Participant observation was used in a scientific study. It emerges first and foremost that community gardens promote interactions between neighbors and create a sense of belonging. Gardeners share advice, seeds, and harvests, which strengthens social cohesion. Furthermore, it appears that for many socially vulnerable families, growing their own vegetables provides access to fresh and healthy produce. Additionally, community gardens are places of learning where both children and adults can discover gardening techniques, biodiversity, and the importance of sustainable agriculture. Finally, many retired individuals highlight that gardening is a beneficial physical activity for their health, helping to reduce stress and promote an active lifestyle.

To preserve this remarkable site from real estate pressure, the partners secured the inclusion of the “Coin de Terre de Bressoux” in the regional heritage inventory of Wallonia in early 2025.