Urbanrooted

The main idea behind my LAC project, to which I gave the name Urbanrooted is to emphasize the importance of producing food as close to the consumer as possible. Intensive agriculture is environmental impacting (and can be socially impacting also). Food production in urban areas is an important alternative because it can guarantee food security and sovereignty, soil permeability, mitigation the heat island effect, and, especially, allow the population to have access to fresh foods. Besides these reasons, it may be said that to produce food near the place of consumption is a way of reducing CO_2 and other greenhouse gases. After all, the Ecuatorian banana which is on sale at supermarkets in Sweden traveled over 11,000 km to reach its final destination.

Adding to this the need for road, port and airport infrastructure, losses in the transportation and all energy used in the process, we have plenty of reasons to believe that growing food in urban settings is a good idea!

http://urbanrooted.blogspot.com.br/

I began by trying to learn a little more about the rural area of my city and how things worked there. I realized my collaboration wouldn't be of much help, as I found a very organized and politically active community running Porto Alegre's rural area. I thought I'd better take my project in the direction of food producing in densely urbanized areas, a totally different concept. My project is based on two proposals that go as follow.

A) Geo-referencing of fruit trees used in urban areas.

I propose collaborative work, with the combined efforts of interested people and the unification of the various sections mapped contemplate the whole city. Location via GPS (virtually all mobile phones have one nowadays) of the fruit trees in the streets we stroll. According to the person's knowledge, interest or time availability other relevant data such as pictures, seasonality, access to the fruits, can be included.

This work can be made easier with the usage of PortoAlegre.cc, a wikicity project. This is an existing digital platform that allows plotting wikispots of public interest. Any person can create a wikispot for any cause of public interest to gather attention of the population or to warn for public services. I suggest people to use this platform to plot fruit trees.

This is an initiative that besides the opportunity to eat something freshly picked, proposes to bring people into the streets and to promote the valuation, better care and usage of collective goods.

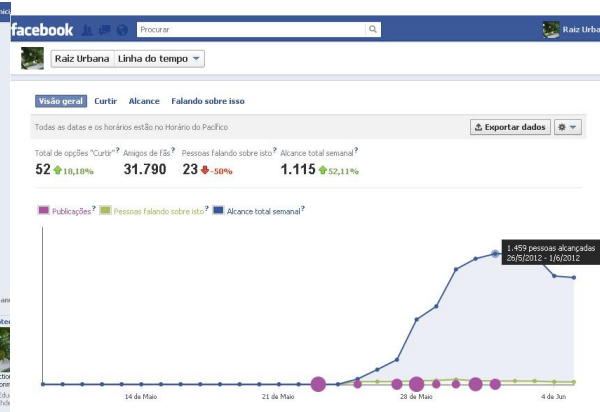2) Exchanging food produced in particular areas or patios.

Whoever has a fruit tree in the backyard knows that it is virtually impossible to consume all the production. Giving the excess to friends and neighbors is already a common practice. Imagine how nice it would be if one could exchange the surplus for other fruits that don't grow in the yard? I suggest people to register in the Urbanrooted Facebook Fanpage. People can post what they are willing to change and what interests they have.

These two proposals aims to go beyond the possibility of consuming a wide variety of fresh fruits, but also encourages community life and social contact. For the feasibility of the project I used web tools such as Blog, Twitter and Facebook. Through the development I have heartened three colleagues into the project, these people will give continuity to Urbanrooted or Raizurbana in Portuguese, in Porto Alegre.

This project aims to be an evolutionary process that will grow independent of moderator or manager. The project delivers a concept and indicates the webspaces for anyone interested in sharing information on the subject of urban food growth. Urbanrooted was designed for Porto Alegre, but all the web tools are bilingual, with slight differences in the content.

http://www.facebook.com/UrbanRooted   *http://www.facebook.com/pages/Raiz-Urbana/311596032252745*