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Gastronomy and traditional food in UA: the role of elderly

1. Introduction

Nowadays, Urban Agriculture (UA) is felt as an important asset especially in growing cities. In fact, cities characterised by less density than in the past, present areas in which UA can be practiced. Furthermore, we are living a time with a pressing need to feed the poor, who are not people coming from rural areas as it was in the past: they live in the cities, in worse conditions and with problems to have the adequate amount of daily food intake (Smit et al., 1996). Scholars have identified several functions and virtues related to the practice of UA, such for instance:

- to improve food intakes of people living in the cities and to foster nutritional status of the most vulnerable categories of people (Mougeot, 2000);
- to help cities to reduce problems linked to waste management and to environmental enhancement (Smit, 1996)(Mobbs, 2013), reducing packaging;
- to increase the average income (Marsch, 1998; Evers, 2000; Mougeot et al., 2000; Kortright, 2011), food from urban agriculture is cheapest respect the one from usual supply chains ;
- to co-create a collective identity (Carolan and Hale, 2016);
- to learn the skills connected with cultivation (Giacché et al., 2015)
- use of small space to produce high quantity (vertical farming)
- healthy source of food, permitting to eat fresher and organic food, using less fertilizer (Hornweg, 2008)
- low food related greenhouse gases emission
- to increase property value (Golden, 2013)
- Social inclusion and poverty reduction (Veenhuizen, 2007)
- Lowest level of food miles
- Less necessity of infrastructure
- Increase neighbourhood safety (Golden, 2013)
- To increase physical and psychological health (Heliker et al., 2001; Milligan et al., 2004; Rappe, 2005; Simons et al. 2006; Dixon et al., 2009; Senes, 2012; Giacché et al., 2015; Artmann, 2017)
- Social inclusion (McClintock, 2008)
- Poverty alleviation (Lwasa, 2014)

If it is true that, according to Smit and Nasr (1992), sustainable development means, among others, sustainable urbanization, this can exist only with the practice of urban and peri-urban agriculture. With urban agriculture, it is possible to transform urban wastes into food and jobs. Urban agriculture creates better living conditions, from the health, environmental and energetic point of view (Smit and Nasr, 1992). Anyway, together with all these benefits, the potential impact on social issues, is of utmost importance if we consider the growing population of elderly. Across the EU-28 the old-age dependency ratio was 28,2% in 2014 (it means the ratio between people older than 65years and the people in working age 20-64).

This ratio is usually lower in cities, because the educational and employment opportunities in cities attract people in working age. Nevertheless, younger people leave cities with lower opportunities, creating the premises to an increment in the old-age dependency ratio. European cities with highest old-age ratio are in Italy and in the south-east of France, where are placed the majority of European cities with an old-age

dependency ratio over 40%. The fact that old-age dependency ratio is increasing in the whole Europe could be viewed as alarming. Double digit increase in old-age dependency ratio are revealed in German and Italian cities but at the same time in cities from Eastern-European countries, too.

Thus, whilst in several literature reviews, the topic of urban agriculture has been already discussed under several nuances and perspectives, in this paper we thematise the benefits for elderly to be involved in UA, in order to disentangle challenges and opportunities related to its implementation. In this literature review, some studies selected by using pre-specified search and inclusion criteria are reasoned and organised. Particularly, search words that have been used to explore existing databases such as Google Scholar, Ebsco, ISI Web of Science and Scopus, are: “urban agriculture”, “elderly”, “active ageing”, “food miles”, “culinary practices”, “traditional products”, “organic food”.

The paper is outlined as it follows: first of all, we provide a definition of UA, then we outline the main actors involved in these programmes and projects. Policy recommendation considering the role of UA for the welfare of elderly and for the construction of collective and cultural identity are discussed and some themes have been categorised to outline the main challenges and opportunities provided by urban agriculture for the wellbeing of the elderly. In their work on guerrilla gardening, Hardman & Larkham (2016) include the “elderly person[s] merely tackling a neglected grass verge opposite your house” among the actors of the urban agriculture, taking into account the role of old adults in contributing to develop greener cities.

They do not take into account only guerrillas (i.e. informal gardening), but consider the important role of community gardens in feed with healthier foods, in particular people living in major difficulties, elderly people included. Moreover, elderly people are heralds of traditional knowledge, they used to think it is going to disappear. Elderly people, then, could aggregate people to spread their traditional knowledge, creating social opportunities for other disadvantaged citizens’ categories (Shava et al, 2010) or to young school children (Mayer-Smith et al, 2010).

2. UA Definition

UA identifies the activities connected with plant cultivation and animal farming (aquaculture included) in urban areas, and the activities connected, along the whole food supply chain, from the production of inputs to the sale of outputs (Orsini et al., 2013). The exercise to define the area where agricultural activities can be considered as urban, is not simple. Mougeot et al. (2000) suggest that the concept of integration with the urban ecosystem to define the UA. In literature, agricultural activities are divided in relation to the areas in which they take place, in three different ways: urban, peri-urban and rural agriculture. Along with the three definitions there is less integration with the urban ecosystem.

Some characteristics are recognized as differentiating urban from rural agriculture: if the last is based on economy of scale, the first lay on the concept of economy of agglomeration, more focusing on the network effects; also the marketing strategies are different, with more producers and less trade in the urban agriculture case (Mougeot et al., 2000). Interrelations between the two kinds of agriculture are important, as the effects on the market supply. With a developed UA activity, agricultural products prices are more stable because the supply itself is less depending on periodicity or imports due to difficult weather conditions because the urban production could substitute part of the lacking supply (Mougeot et al., 2000).

Urban and peri-urban agriculture differ from the rural one for the land as a limiting factor and the use of human resources (Orsini et al., 2013). Many are the kinds of urban areas where UA is performed: area around the house, community gardens, areas in public spaces reserved to future expansion but not used yet, areas along roadsides, industrial areas closed to streamsides, floodplains or wetlands, water bodies and steep slopes (Smit et al., 1996).

3. UA Actors

The most important actors of the UA are the gardeners. In general, they are small gardeners, producing for self-consumption. In some case UA gardeners are big entities. It is anyway too limiting to not take into account other relevant actors. It is possible to consider the UA as a real supply chain, and actors are all along this supply chain: from producers to transporters to retailers (Mougeot et al., 2000). In fact, UA provides economic opportunities all along the supply chain, in input and output industries, assembled by different type of actors, from the individual household to big enterprises (Smit et al., 1996). One of the main problems in activating urban agriculture activities is the one of financing them. Banks and private institutions could be reluctant to finance such activities, because of the high risk to not be refund by them. Public institutions could be really useful to overcome financial problems.

Public authorities could operate as insurances or giving credits or subsidies to poor gardeners, financing activities that could help people to develop their role in the city network and growing their productivity and self-assessment. Anyway, the difficulties to some poor is to have access to public fund, then they look for financings in the informal economy agents (Cabannes, 2012).

Agricultural policies used to finance only activities in rural and peri-urban areas. In the same times urban agriculture activities conducted inside the cities' boundaries could benefit from other public resource deputed to other aim such as health, environmental or education policies (Giacché et al., 2015). Actors are of various kind, usually are women living in city from a no long time and farming or gardening for the family need and to have an income from selling cultivated goods to the community in which she lives.

On the other side, urban farmers could be wealthy producers of specialty crops for selling (Smit et al., 1996) (McClintock, 2008). The UA actor is, in fact, a hybrid in a continuum between the one gardening for self-consumption and the professional farmer. Even though urban agricultural projects are aimed by others then economic goals, this end is not secondary for the professional farmers, who could use urban agriculture programs also for connecting urban and rural areas to do a joint job (Giacché et al., 2015).

Urban farmers are of different kind: the first big difference depends on the in- come levels of the farmers. Low-income farmers are most of all people that with little investments could increase their food security and income, and frequently have started to practice urban farming in difficult socio-economic periods, they take part in an informal economy with their surpluses and barter with products of their neighbours. Middle- and high-income farmers are of different kind, farming usually to have healthier home grown food or for personal satisfaction, only in few cases for economic reasons.

In general low-income farmers produce more easy-to-grow crops while the others focusing on high-value crops. Some high-income farmers conduct real enterprises, sometimes in peri-urban areas, and with the growth of the city sell the land ad transfer to the new periphery cashing in on the land capital gain. Sometimes cooperatives are developed to reduce risks from UA activities, and in many cases there are some association created by economically disadvantaged groups or minorities (Smit et al., 1996).

Agricultural land value is influenced by the potential value if the land will be used for different works. This is true for country areas near the cities where urbanization is possible (Plantinga et al., 2002). Urban farmers perform their activities in proximity of the end market, this create a selection of cultivated crops that are more perishable the production in rural agriculture because the advantage is in the delivery timing (Smit et al., 1996); this way there is a smaller production volume but with a larger margin than in rural agriculture (Mougeot et al., 2000) due to the necessity of develop farming techniques necessitating only a part of resources needed in large agricultural areas (Smit et al., 1996).

Actors are involved in UA activities for different reasons, from the one more connected to house conduction, that is part of the role of the household and the connection of the care taking of the house and the family, to reasons linked to need for food or for income Mougeot et al. (2000). Transmission of knowledge and best

practices could be the way to create a permanent urban culture of circular agricultural economy (Grichting and Awwaad, 2015).

Elderly people prefer recreational activities to the nature conservation. Then, to involve them into UA activities become necessary to intercept their wills (Payne et al. 2002). Elderly have to be careful in cultivating food in peculiar areas of the cities for the risks connected with pollutants. Areas aside the streets could be between such dangerous lots (Mok et al., 2014).

4. Urban policy, food and the elderly. Main evidences from international policy reports

Several international reports have been released by international organisations. More than 20 documents have been screened and here below some of the main outcomes about the role of elderly are depicted. In the “Food for cities” report edited by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), there is a focus on innovative techniques, such as rooftop gardening that could be legalized and regulated. Moreover, mechanisms for enabling more innovative approaches to making urban land available for agricultural production, could include imaginative approaches to land banking, creation of incentives through taxation and associated relief, and the establishment of garden plots/allotments for food growing.

In the “Active Ageing” report, the World Health Organization (WHO) offers a framework for actions addressed to policymakers. The main outcomes underline that, like younger people, older citizens need training in new technologies, especially in agriculture and electronic communication. **Older people can and do remain creative and flexible. Intergenerational learning bridges age differences**, enhances the transmission of cultural values and promotes the worth of all ages. Attaining the goal of active ageing will require a joint action within various sectors in addition to health and social services, including education, employment and labour, finance, social security, housing, transportation, justice and rural and urban development.

For what concerns sociality, risks for loneliness and social isolation must be reduced by supporting community groups run by older people, traditional societies, self-help and mutual aid groups, peer and professional outreach programmes, neighborhood visiting, telephone support programmes, and family caregivers. Intergenerational contact should be supported and housing in communities that encourage daily social interaction and interdependence among young and old people, should be provided. Lastly, full participation of older people should be enabled through education and training policies and programmes supporting lifelong learning for women and men as they age. It is also a priority to provide older people with opportunities to develop new skills, particularly in areas such as information technologies and new agricultural techniques.

In the RUAF foundation report “Cities farming for the future - Urban agriculture for green and productive cities”, it is underlined how Urban agriculture may function as an important strategy for poverty alleviation and social integration of disadvantaged groups (such as immigrants, HIV-AIDS affected households, disabled people, female-headed households with children, elderly people without pension, youngsters without a job by integrating them more strongly into the urban network and providing them with a decent livelihood so to prevent social problems (Gonzalez Novo and Murphy, 2000).

Urban farming repeatedly allows for the inclusion of women, children, the poor, the homeless and the elderly into constructive food production activities. Thus urban agriculture, in a manner consistent with the practice of conventional community (social and economic) development, can be a constructive contributor to city neighborhoods and the social networks of entire Cities. This goal is articulated in the mission statement of the American Community Gardening Association, a key non-governmental supporter of city farming in the US and Canada:

“The Association recognizes that community gardening improves **the quality of life for people by providing a catalyst for neighborhood and community development, stimulating social interaction**, encouraging self-

reliance, beautifying neighborhoods, producing nutritious food, reducing family food budgets, conserving resources and creating opportunities for recreation, exercise, therapy and education” (ACGA, 2006). Urban green areas are recognized as very important for the elderly living in care facilities. These green areas could improve elderly lives through physical activities and social interactions. It is important that these spaces could be enjoyed by the elderly. In the case elderly are not able to use the garden they could substitute outside activities with indoor plant care (Artmann, 2017).

5. Elderly and culinary practices

In the context of UA, wittily defined as “the largest and most efficient tool available to transform urban wastes into food and jobs” (Smit and Nasr, 1992), it seems appropriate to dedicate a reflection on the role of food and culinary practices also in maintaining and promoting local identity and cultural heritage. In fact, despite the main purpose of Urban Agriculture is to represent a new development tool, useful to address the food insecurity and to preserve the environment, the cultural aspect play a crucial role for the management of related actions and policies, especially in terms of sharing knowledge and passing down of skills on traditional practices of rural areas surrounding the cities.

According to the policy brief on Food Heritage and Culture of the European ‘Riches’ Project, (<http://www.riches-project.eu/>), Gastronomy and Traditional Food has played a vital role in shaping the cultural heritage of cities and countries through the centuries. Food is at the same time part of everyday behaviour and of special moments celebration; it contributes to create and reinforce collective identities, to brand destinations and to evoke individual memories and feelings.

Furthermore, from an aesthetic and geographical point of view, as well as the production of agricultural products has shaped many Europe’s rural landscapes, urban agriculture is now modifying the look of cities, introducing roof gardens in the buildings and other special spaces reserved to the urban agriculture practices.

Urban agriculture is important in supply peculiar produce difficult to find on the markets. These peculiar produce are usually typical of the place in which they are cultivated and therefore could be used for preparing food related to the cultural heritage of the place. Giving the possibility to sustain the ethnic minorities and to help them to transmit their traditional knowledge based in food (Lovell, 2010). In the nation where cities are more connector with rural areas there is a wider sense of the connection between urban agriculture linked with cultural heritage. The traditional produces are, in fact, cultivated also in the cities, with a positive view of the maintaining the traditional practices (Daugstad, 2006). The non-material cultural heritage become material in the sense that, where cultural heritage is connected with urban agriculture, traditional culinary practices are performed, too. This fact have a positive consequence in maintaining traditional knowledge but also to attract tourism based on culinary practices (Daugstad, 2006). In a world in which the rural agriculture is uniforming their production, urban gardens are one of the means for maintaining biodiversity, then traditional food production and traditional knowledge. Association like Slow Food hare a prevalent role in defending biodiversity and traditional knowledge. (Galluzzi, 2010)

The link between UA and Cultural Heritage is expressed basically from two perspectives: initiatives focused on the material heritage and others enhancing the immaterial heritage. The direct sale of local productions in historical buildings is an example of the first type. Among initiatives improving immaterial heritage it is possible to enumerate all the ones related to the knowledge transmission: in this perspective, UA is very important in hand down traditional horticulture techniques. The approaches using human issues in horticulture (HHH) seems to offer new possibilities to bridge the gap between nature and cities. In this regard, some initiatives have been developed, for instance, in the horticultural education and research programs of the Helsinki university.

More specifically, the first studies in the HH approach have “three main themes: 1) gardening as a tool for better quality of life in homes for the elderly, 2) ecology, native plants and extensive maintenance in parks, 3) the use of horticulture in environment and science education at the lower level of the comprehensive school” (Evers, Lindén and Rappe, 2000).

As McClintock (2010) affirms, “community gardens provide access to traditional produce or nutritionally rich foods that may otherwise be unavailable to low-income families and individuals”. Plastow (2015), following the same concept, affirms that the engagement in this kind of activity is important for maintaining autonomy and the sense of identity for older people, in turn shareable with the local community and also with tourists. Further, Ovkate Zautra (2011) highlight how there are different kind of advantages in urban horticulture, considered as a promising method of furthering wellbeing and resilience on multiple levels: individual (cognitive and affective benefits), social group (social network benefits, multicultural relations, community organizing and empowerment, crime reduction, nutrition and physical activity, economic benefits), and natural environment, in terms of climate change mitigation and others.

According to Everett (2008), a big part of the current academic literature on food is mainly focused on its importance for the economic development and as a marketing tool. Today, it is impossible not to examine food through a ‘cultural lens’ or, in other words, with a social and cultural approach, since it offers a more innovative direction not just in cultural and heritage studies, but also in management and organization of activities and events related to the traditional food and local gastronomy, in a perspective of maintenance of local values and for place promotion.

Moreover, as Richards (2002: 3) claims, “it is in the inter-relationships between food, place and identity that its social and cultural impact can truly be explored, acknowledging that ‘gastronomy has become a significant source of identity formation in post-modern societies’”.

This general shift of perspective is rather evident in many European Projects (es. Gastronomic Cities) and International Networks (e.g. Unesco Creative cities for Gastronomy), aimed to support the social, economic and environmental development of cities, regions and countries, merging cultural and food heritage values through the principles of creativity and cooperation.

Besides, it is not a coincidence that, in the tourist sector, food, identity, cultural heritage and experience are considered strictly interconnected; Bessi re (1998) affirms that the common heritage is a sort of a ‘ritual code’ thanks to which the tourist can participate ‘in consumption and celebration of a series of local rites’, reaching in this way a ‘tourist social and cultural integration in the local group by absorbing and reproducing cultural codes’ (Bessi re, 1998; 26).

Especially from the point of view of tourists, “the sentiments of belonging via food do not only include the act of classification and consumption, but also the preparation, the organisation, the taboos, the company, the location, the pleasure, the time, the language, the symbols, the representation, the form, the meaning and the art of eating and drinking” (Scholliers, 2001; 7).

All these elements, that are integral part of the tourist experience, are included in the concept of Authenticity, that refers to the feeling of genuineness and truth of the situation and also represents a very important indicator of quality and then of satisfaction.

It is interesting then to observe how, in many cities, “local food movements” (es. Slow Food) are growing and trying to “recover the ‘true’ meaning of food, restoring it to a more central role in the social and cultural lives of people and communities. In fact, in the context of rapid urbanization and the emergence of convenience culture, they have a strong commitment to reviving or defending traditional food cultures that are perceived to be disappearing or threatened” (Riches Project Policy Brief on Food Heritage and Culture, March 2016). Traditional food and consumption of good food in cities recently has become a very important task under the

light of chronic illness connected with poverty and eating habits (kato, 2013). So, we can argue that there is a link between Urban Agriculture and Cultural Heritage, and that a “mutual benefit can exist by integrating the conservation of rural heritage with urban agriculture initiatives” (Branduini et al., 2016).

In the current literature on rural destination management, there are many studies stressing the importance of the community-based tourism (Murphy, 1985) approach, who focuses on the community involvement in development projects and activities which generate benefits to local communities (Thosun & Thimoty, 2003). In this context, the involvement of elderly in urban agriculture projects, as active members of local communities, appears relevant in a double perspective: in fact, they can get from one hand individual social benefits, spending their time with the other members of the community (especially youth) and visitors. From the other hand, they can contribute to preserve traditional food activities, sharing knowledge and skills strictly related both to the agricultural sector and the cultural heritage. On the basis of this evaluation, in the last years the Urban Agriculture initiatives of cities and associations increased in Europe, in many cases attributing to the local elderly a didactic and educational role (for ex. the Legambiente social gardens - <http://www.legambienteventoinfaccia.it/orti-sociali/> ; the didactic gardens project in Tuscany - <http://www.alicecoop.it/index.php/cooperativa/p/10/171/174/> ; the Urban didactic Gardens of Slow Food – <http://www.slowfood.it/educazione/orto-in-condotta/>).

For the elderly, and for other disadvantaged people, there is the possibility to have access to food produced by urban gardeners who sell their products. Even though they are not able to afford the costs for fresh food, it could be useful for enterprises working in urban agriculture to donate edible products that have not the correct characteristics to be sold on the market (Partnership for Sustainable Communities, 2011). The elderly use to cultivate in urban agriculture programs not only for economic reasons: it could be also, sometimes, an outdoor leisure activity, and economic benefits it is just a secondary consequence (Grilo et al., 2016). In a research conducted in Milan it has been highlighted the primary importance of healthy food availability but also of social benefits in the decision of gardening in urban areas (Ruggeri et al., 2016).

Urban agriculture has not only economic but also social benefits. Through gardening activities people are able to improve their social networks of citizens. These network have better chances to be useful when have been created and supervised by NGOs or other associations (Oliver & Heinecken, 2017). The potential preventative health role of gardening is not negligible. Habitual gardeners have better physical, psychological and social health conditions respect to non-gardeners (Soga et al., 2017).

6. Discussion

One of the main challenges in the UA activities is related to access to resources, and the most important resource in this field is the land. Access to land involves diverse modalities, not always in the formal economy, but usually with the will of the land owner (Mougeot et al., 2000).

Land use could be performed under different kinds of arrangements: rent, lease, usufruct, official permission, informal agreements or unsanctioned farming (without owner permission) (Smit et al., 1996).

Land in UA is also a challenge for administrators and urban planners. On one side the legislation in some cases assesses the UA as an urban industry, frequently supports disadvantages citizen groups in these activities, on the other side structure for implementation are frequently inadequate. Urban planner, for instance, usually prefer to set agricultural activities outside the urban boundaries (Mougeot et al., 2000).

Rural actors opposing UA because their thought is in the fact that UA could take part of the agricultural products demand. In reality UA works in two different ways, from one side the productions are different, from the other side many people involved in UA could not afford to buy rural productions, but UA will heightening their disposable income, permitting the growth of rural agriculture products demand. Promoting

urban development, UA promotes rural agriculture (Smit et al., 1996). "The relationship between urban and rural agriculture and their purposes is changing, with each producing those products at which it is most efficient (considering all cost factors) and for which proximity to market is most vital (rather than simply where the best conditions exist for production). Urban demand for food is satisfied from both urban and rural supplies." (Smit et al., 1996, pag.21).

Health and hygiene problems due to urban pollutants, but also environmental problems (Smit et al., 1996). Social challenges for the women role (Smit et al., 1996).

Problems related to urban management (tax, potable water use, cost-opportunity for some land areas) (Smit et al., 1996).

Need for governmental support in regulations and policies for these activities. Need for acquisition mechanisms or agreements for cultivate unused land. Need to use the market system as a mean to achieve a sustainable future for the cities instead that thinking at it as a limit (Indraprahasta and Agustina, 2016).

UA need to be financed and politically recognized to contribute in feeding the cities, the second si growing, for the first there are many limits (Cabannes, 2012).

Microcredits exists for small-scale urban farmers in many cities, but generally are limited in scope and number (Cabannes, 2012).

If the credit sector have some lack in financing UA, mainly due to the fear in crop failure for climatic reasons and the high rates of this kind of loan defaults, the public sector sometimes have an active role in financing UA ad in offering services and support to poor urban farmers. Need to be better developed the system of credit to increase UA productivity (Cabannes, 2012).

Poor people usually lie in the informal economy, and they finance their UA activities through various way such as loans or remittances from relatives, credits from suppliers, rotating saving systems or cross-subsidies and from non- institutional local moneylenders (Cabannes, 2012). Innovative financing instruments and insurances for urban farmers are being developing, the most exotic one is the creation of local and regional currencies(Cabannes, 2012). One group of people have to be socially, culturally and politically active in the food system, at least for one reason, as to create new organizational and individual values through the experience of working together (Carolan and Hale, 2016).

Urban farmers are reluctant in asking for loans and subsidies. Problems are of various nature: loans disposable could be not adapted at agri- cultural activities due to the production time and cycle or because loans are offered at an overly high quantity or an overly high interest rate for a farmer, sometimes problems are connected with information spreading or bureaucracy connected with the requests (Cabannes, 2012).

Urban farmers usually need infrastructure, more openness to input market and technical support in the production and output phases to stenghten their capacities. The problem is that they are not able to quantify their needs, and for public and private institution is difficult to help them without a specified monetary request. Moreover, the farmers' capacity to repay is not sufficient to access the loans, and this fact is more clear in the case farmers intend to shift from self-consumption aim to a production for partially sell their goods (Cabannes, 2012).

7. Conclusions

To sum up, in the light of the literature and of the empirical cases, we can argue that the phenomenon of Urban Agriculture incorporates on one hand social and economic factors, in terms of benefits for the cities and for the people involved, on the other hand cultural elements related to the knowledge and the skills on agriculture, traditional food production and culinary practices. In this context, the figure of elderly can assume a strategic, didactic and educational role. In fact, according to the community-based approach (Murphy, 1985), the involvement of elderly in urban agriculture projects results relevant since they can contribute to preserve

traditional food activities, sharing knowledge and skills strictly related both to the agricultural sector and the cultural heritage. They are also able to transform neglected areas in cities into community gardens in which create a sense of citizenship. It means that, when people evaluate the place in which they have been living, they are able to transform the places in more liveable ways involving other residents and local associations. (Middling et al, 2011; Buffel et al., 2012). In other words, the challenge of Urban Agriculture and the involvement of elderly in this field could represent a real opportunity of development in a cultural perspective and for the supply side, since they are integral part of the local tourist service and they can sactively contribute to create a unique and authentic experience proposal.

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