

MLA Vilnius Tech

Assignment Foodscapes



agroecology Alternative
urbanism climate change
commons conference food justice food planning
food sovereignty food
strategies heterodox economics
permaculture post-carbon city resilience
resourcefulness solidarity economy
sustainable food
planning

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Introduction

This assignment is related to module Productive Landscape of MLA Vilnius Tech in the fall semester of 2024

The subject is a local or regional food system. The scope of this food system will be defined during the course and can be related to the area of Energy Landscapes or the study area of the Planning and Design Studio.

An analysis of a local or regional food system can take a lot of time, depending on the scope and level of detail it might take many months. In this light the assignment should be seen as an exercise in mapping, evaluating and future outlook.

Learning objectives

For the assignment the following learning objectives are formulated, the learner:

- a. Understands the concept of food systems in their cultural, local and regional setting.
- b. Is aware of contemporary challenges to sustainable food systems in context of spatial planning.
- c. Develops an understanding of the multiple dimensions of food systems: social, environmental, economic and spatial.
- d. Can map and evaluate a concrete situation of a food system, making use of a transparent method, to define the most relevant challenges.
- e. Can formulate an approach and/or a possible solution for a selected challenge that is related to his/her own competences and role in the system.
- f. Can define her/his own position and values regarding sustainable food planning
- g. Is able to reflect on his/her own process, using feedback from others reflecting on cultural, social and economic differences.

Results

1. Uploading a written report of 3-4 pages on the assignment containing the following sections:
 - a. Scope and location of the food system,
 - b. Own position and role in the system,
 - c. Methods of mapping and evaluation,
 - d. Result of the mapping,
 - e. Evaluation of the system,
 - f. Selection of the main challenge to address
 - g. Approach for the selected challenge
 - h. Self-reflection on process, the results, own values and position.
2. Uploading a presentation (PowerPoint or other multimedia presentation mode) of the elements of the assignment.
3. Uploading a short log on your process (can be notes, schedule, schemes)
4. Giving an online presentation of 15 minutes to the teacher and another staff member of Vilnius Tech. It is expected that colleague students are present during the presentation. Someone else of our own choice also can be present.

Guiding information and questions for the assignment

Scope and location of the food system

This assignment relates mainly to the spatial and organisational aspects of food systems. Depending on your role, experience and position you can define the scope of the food system you want to evaluate. The first part of the assignment can be carried out in small groups, this will be defined during the course. Students can jointly collect the available data of the mapping of your food system.

The guiding question is: How does your local food system look like: consumers, retailers, processors, producers?

We would like to see on a map the location and a geographical representation of your food system.

If you are dealing with the scope of a small region, the City Region Food System Toolkit of FAO, RUAF and Wilfrid Laurier University (FAO,2018) and Community-Based Food System Assessment and Planning - Facilitator's Guidebook of Virginia Tech can help.

Own position and role in the system

In your local food system you can have different roles at the same time: consumer, planner, researcher. As a student you can choose a future role, you may position yourself as a landscape architect, a spatial planner or an urban planner.

Method of mapping and evaluation

For this assignment we propose that you select qualitative methods from the City Region Food System Toolkit: <http://www.fao.org/in-action/food-for-cities-programme/toolkit/introduction/en/> or the toolkit of the Countryside Charity (CPRE – UK) <https://www.cpre.org.uk/resources/mapping-local-food-webs-toolkit-2/>

It might be a matrix or a graphical scheme with stakeholders, element and their relations in the food system (producers, processors, distributors, retailers, consumers).

For the analysis you can make use of the SWOT method or a comparable method you think is more suitable.

Result and evaluation of the mapping

Based on your overview of the food system, and your analysis you can define the main challenges.

- What are the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats of the system?
- Which aspects of sustainability are the most important from your position?
- What do you consider as the most important challenge for the sustainability of this system?
- Which challenge do you choose to address from your (future) role or position in the system?

Approach of the challenge

The challenges can be defined in a (small) group. After this each student can, depending on his/her ambition select a main challenge and define an approach or strategy to provide a solution of an improvement regarding the selected challenge. Please describe your vision, goals and the general steps for this.

Self-reflection on process, the results, own values and position.

When you look back on your activities for carrying out this assignment, how did the process work out? What would you do different for a future mapping assignment? Did your perceptions and values change in the process?

Assessment of the assignment

The teacher will assess the results of your assignment based on the defined learning objectives. Depending on the regulations of Vilnius Tech there will be an oral examination.

The assessment consists of:

- Evaluation of the written and graphic material
- Evaluation of the online presentation.

You will receive a short feedback report and a grading for completing the assignment.

For further information and questions please contact by email: office@ln-institute.org.

References

Reports

FAO. (2018) City Region Food System Toolkit, Assessing and planning sustainable city region food systems, publication of FAO, RUAF and Wilfrid Laurier University.

Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University. (2011) Community-Based Food System Assessment and Planning - Facilitator's Guidebook, publication 3108-9029.

University of California, Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education Program. What Is a Community Food System? Community Food Systems. Defining Community Food Systems.

Websites

FAO. (2018) City Region Food System Toolkit: <http://www.fao.org/in-action/food-for-cities-programme/toolkit/introduction/en/>

Countryside Charity (CPRE – UK) <https://www.cpre.org.uk/resources/mapping-local-food-webs-toolkit-2/>

General information for the subject

<https://wiki.landscape-portal.org/index.php?title=AESOP4FOOD>