CULTIVATE PROJECT - EIP AGRI PRACTICE ABSTRACTS

THE FOOD SHARING MAP

AN AI-SUPPORTED, INTERACTIVE MAP OF FSIS

Data on **urban and peri-urban (UPU) food system actors** and organisations is incomplete. An essential prerequisite for transitioning UPU food systems towards sustainability is comprehensive information about the food initiatives which operate within them. While online directories of commercial food businesses exist in many UPU areas, **food sharing initiatives** (FSIs) such as community gardens, kitchens and food redistribution initiatives rarely appear in these. The CULTIVATE project has developed an **automated mapping tool** to help close this knowledge gap. The **Food Sharing Map** developed in CULTIVATE uses AI queries to identify, classify and map FSIs in specific UPU areas.

The European Food Sharing Dictionary was used to ensure correct terminology in native languages for this process. The resulting map is **interactive**. Users can search for FSIs by location, food sharing activity - growing, cooking, eating, redistributing - and by the mode of sharing used, e.g. gifting, bartering, collecting and selling. The CULTIVATE project will map **200 UPU** by the end of the project globally. The Food Sharing Map is **open access** and **free to use**. It can be used by: citizens looking for opportunities to get engaged in food sharing; FSIs who wish to connect with other FSIs in their UPU; food supply actors looking for recipients for food donations; and municipalities wishing to know the type and distribution of FSIs across an UPU area to help inform and evaluate their policies. Adding new FSIs to mapped cities is easily accommodated. Functionality for UPU expansion is being incorporated within the AI tool and can be requested for a fee.

GEOGRAPHICAL LOCATION

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

The Food Sharing Map is underpinned by a **novel AI tool** which uses the European Food Sharing Dictionary to generate bespoke queries for searching online for FSIs. It is not entirely automated. The AI tool still requires manual checking to ensure only eligible FSIs are mapped. AI technology is moving fast and this can be both a **challenge** and an **opportunity**. A challenge because the Food Sharing Map has been built and tested with the available technologies which are rapidly evolving over time. Access to, and costs of, AI technologies also remain uncertain and may become prohibitive for non-commercial use or if open access tools are removed. The Food Sharing Map functionality can be combined with other CULTIVATE tools. For example Sharing Solutions services, part of the Food Sharing Calculator tool in CULTIVATE can combine UPU mapping with sustainability impact assessment data which may be of interest to municipalities seeking to understand the impacts of their investments in FSIs. Expansion of the Food Sharing Map to cover additional UPU is possible but will incur costs.

ADDITIONAL MATERIALS

CULTIVATE Briefing note - Food sharing landscapes in Hub city locations: zenodo.org/records/11030355

Food Sharing Landscapes in CULTIVATE Hub Locations: Utrecht City Profile: zenodo.org/records/10887560

Food Sharing Landscapes in CULTIVATE Hub Locations: Milan City Profile: zenodo.org/records/10887498

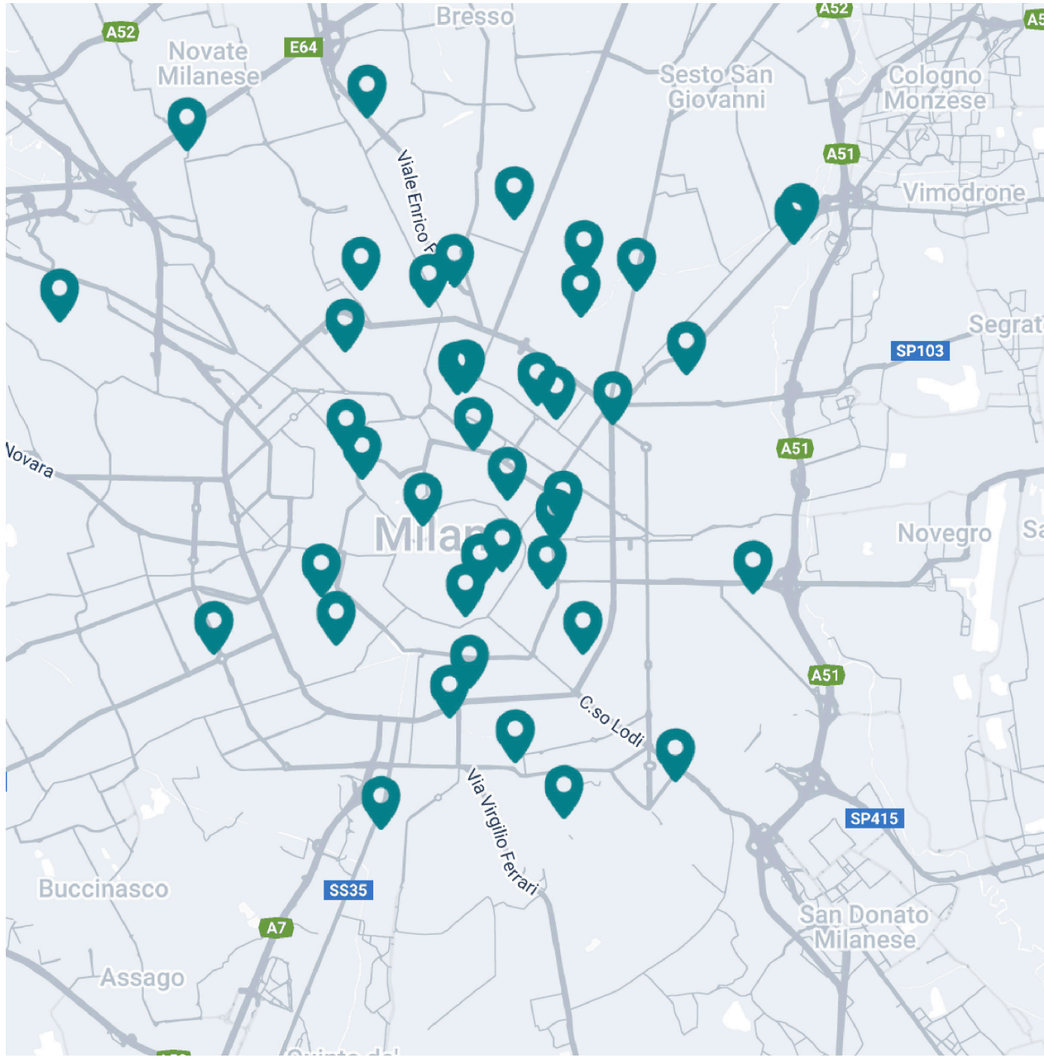
Food Sharing Landscapes in CULTIVATE Hub Locations: Barcelona City Profile: zenodo.org/records/10887346

The Mapping, Tracking and Monitoring of FSIs: Manual Mapping Protocol: zenodo.org/records/10887637

The European Food Sharing Dictionary: zenodo.org/records/10160274

Manual for categorising FSIs, including the European Food Sharing Dictionary: zenodo.org/records/8249602

Evolving foodscapes: Tracing trajectories of urban and peri-urban food sharing initiatives for just food transitions: sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0016718525001186?via%3Dihub



A screen from Food Sharing Map, highlighting the FSI in Milan.

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