



The Summit

- **This is more than a conference.**
 - The Summit is a day-long feast of 29 public policy sessions and skill-building workshops for some 1,000 participants. The objective is to engage New Yorkers in setting an agenda for the City's food system policy. The Summit will provide participants with the tools to shrink the City's "foodprint"¹ through individual and community action.
- **The Summit has been intentionally timed during the UN conference on climate change in Copenhagen as a local, national, and international call to action.**
 - It has been scheduled at the same time as the United Nations climate change conference in Copenhagen in order to capitalize on the public attention generated by these meetings and to convey the importance of urban leadership.
 - This timing will provide a forum for our nation's largest city to highlight the role of food in this important dialogue and to place New York City's current challenges within an international, national, and local context.
 - Food is not a major focus during the UN conference in Copenhagen, so this Summit also sends a clear message to world powers that it should be.
- The speakers are some of the best and brightest:

¹ **Foodprint (n):** our food system's contribution to greenhouse gas emissions and global climate change.

- Marion Nestle (renowned author and professor), Anna Lappé (author and co-founder of the Small Planet Institute), as well as Dr. Vandana Shiva (Director of the Research Foundation for Science, Technology and Ecology) and Wangari Maathai (Noble Peace Prize Winner) who will provide taped messages while overseas.
- We are hosting a food drive, with donations to City Harvest.

Summit Hosts

- **Just Food**

Since 1995 Just Food has been working to advance a more just and sustainable food system in New York City. By supporting local and urban farmers, connecting food producers and consumers and engaging the public through education and advocacy efforts, Just Food helps more than 100,000 New Yorkers shrink their foodprint each year.

- **Manhattan Borough President Scott Stringer**

This event is part of the Manhattan Borough President's ongoing work to create a sustainable food system in NYC. Our work on food policy began with the Politics of Food Conference at Columbia last year, was followed by the Food in the Public Interest report, which outlined the agenda for NYC's sustainable food system. Other projects included the foodshed proposal and the Go Green East Harlem Cookbook.

- **New York University Sustainability Task Force**

As a private university in the public service, NYU has a responsibility to embed environmental values at the core of its administrative operations and academic mission. Established in 2006, NYU's [Sustainability Task Force](#) is an advisory body composed of [students](#), [faculty and staff](#), tasked with developing recommendations for new policies and practices that advance NYU's long-term future as a sustainable university.

Food Crisis

- **We are outgrowing our current food system.**
 - The world's population is expected to grow to 9.1 billion by 2050, with the vast majority of residents living in cities. This projected population growth, coupled with climate change, rising healthcare costs tied to diet-related illnesses, and a tenuous food system has

led us to believe that cities must play a key role in improving their food system. What better city to lead the way than New York?

- **Highly processed, packaged, and nutritionally deficient foods are bad for the environment and health. We want to reduce the climate impact of our food system while promoting access to healthy affordable food and stimulating our local economy.**

- Half a million New Yorkers have been diagnosed with diabetes.
- Geophysicists have estimated that if every American reduced meat consumption by 20 percent, the greenhouse gas savings would be the same as if we all switched from a normal sedan to a hybrid Prius.²
- Data from U.S. government research show that with agriculture using chemical fertilizers and herbicides, the U.S. food system contributes nearly 20 percent of the nation's carbon dioxide emissions. On a global scale, figures from the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) say that agricultural land use contributes 12 per cent of global greenhouse gas emissions.³
- A report in Seattle showed that “locally directed spending by consumers more than doubles the number of dollars circulating among businesses in the community” and that “a shift of 20% of our food dollars into locally directed spending would result in a nearly half billion dollar annual income increase in King County alone and twice that in the Central Puget Sound region.”⁴
- New York City's PlaNYC legislation aims to reduce the city's greenhouse gas emissions by 20% by 2030, but does not address the fact that food and farming are major contributing factors to these emissions. This major omission not only weakens and limits efforts to achieve PlaNYC's targets, but shows the enormous need to raise awareness and inspire action amongst communities, media and elected officials about how our food system is both part of the problem and the solution.
- The energy and climate impact of urban agriculture require considerable explanation. Briefly, the UN Food and Agriculture Organization [UNFAO] finds that urban agriculture produces seven times as much per acre as rural agriculture world-wide. Rural agriculture today also has a major negative impact on climate. NASA has found that the urban area in the United States has ten times the potential productivity per acre as the space that is currently being farmed.

² <http://www.time.com/time/health/article/0,8599,1839995,00.html>

³ http://www.rodaleinstitute.org/files/Rodale_Research_Paper-07_30_08.pdf

⁴ <http://sustainableseattle.org/Programs/LFE%20Files/LFE%20REPORT%20FINAL.pdf>

Urban agriculture has far less energy demand per calorie of food produced than rural agriculture. Due to urban agriculture's greater productivity, proximity to market, and use of urban waste as a major production input, urban agriculture requires far less fossil fuel calories to produce food calories than does rural agriculture.⁵

○ Urban agriculture, with substantially improved technology since the 1970s, uses only one-fifth to one-tenth as much water per unit of production – while producing five to ten times more per acre or square meter as does rural agriculture. Urban agriculture has the subsidiary benefit of making use of waste water and urban solid waste as key inputs to production. In both hot and dry and warm and wet climate zones, urban agriculture can mitigate some of the negative impacts of climate change. It is already doing so in many areas. At the same time, every acre of urban farming will potentially free up to ten acres of rural areas to restore biodiversity.⁶

⁵ <http://www.jacsmit.com/21century.html>

⁶ <http://www.jacsmit.com/climatemgmt.html>