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Abstract

Literature suggests that incorporating urban agricultural practices into urban planning and policy making could be an effective method of improving economic and environmental sustainability, as well as increasing urban food security if adopted on a wide-spread scale. Existing urban agriculture policies, however, appear to establish enumerate programs with differing goals. This paper inventories the legislation of all 50 states for policies regarding urban agriculture. The purpose statements of all US urban agricultural policies are analyzed to understand why state legislators decided to implement such policies. These policies were compared amongst each other for commonalities in programs/initiatives established, and overall goals of such programs. Policy existence was further evaluated in terms of state demographics to understand how regional characteristics may influence viability of state urban agriculture policy. The findings of this research could be of value to policy makers looking to further understand urban agriculture's role in urban planning and the possible ways that it can be implemented within their state's existing infrastructure.

Introduction

With the pace of urbanization quickly increasing and the state of environmental health quickly declining, the sustainability of current food systems is a pertinent environmental and societal issue. As defined by US Census data, an "urban area" contains 50,000 or more people.

Approximately 6.41% of US lands are characterized as urban, with 59.89% of the population living in said urban areas (US Census Bureau, 2010). It is estimated that by 2050, “68% of the world population will live in urban areas,” a quantity of people that will place extreme stress on food-system security and infrastructure (de Amorim et. al., 2019). The demands of such rapid urbanization present a serious environmental and economic crisis, in that the amount of resources needed to sustain the growing urban population threatens the stability of global and economic health.

Due to this concern, policy makers and urban planners have been working to establish more sustainable cities and food systems. One method of doing so used throughout many regions around the world has been to implement urban agriculture (UA) policies into their urban planning framework. These policies tend to have the common goals of promoting food security and sustainability through a localized food system (Bridges & DuBois, 2019); however, each policy is defined by different urban agricultural practices and local needs, giving rise to the enumerate forms and goals of existing UA policies today.

In the United States specifically, UA is a relatively new concept in legislature. It is not clearly defined, nor are there concrete reasons as to why it is being incorporated into state policies. Regional differences (economic stability, population density, etc.) often contribute to the degree of communal UA support. These have been evaluated in municipalities that have had successful implementations of UA, whether in terms of environmental, economic, or societal benefits (Santo et. al., 2016). In states that do encourage UA in their legislation, they present a vast range of reasons as to why UA will be valuable for their state. Due to this, the aim of this research is to understand the goals of establishing UA practices in state legislation through evaluating purpose statements and characteristics of individual state policies.

Literature Review

Global literature on UA structure and policy extensively represents how different regions define UA and how it is incorporated into unique legislative and societal structures. The variety of worldwide UA implications show how different actors and purposes behind UA policies contribute to their degree of community acceptance and overall success.

Research by Contesse et al. (2018) found that the structure of UA varies by region based on current policies, available space, and community values. Furthermore, many spaces build upon their preexisting physical and social UA infrastructure to improve its efficiency. Public green spaces are a popular infrastructural component of Chilean cities. These spaces are defined by Contesse et. al. as “public goods that allow free access and represent pockets of nature for all residents,” include parks and similar areas that foster environmental health and community well-being. With how rapidly some Chilean cities—for example Santiago—are experiencing urbanization, however, the accessibility of their valuable green spaces is at risk. In order to understand how to best preserve Santiago’s green spaces, researchers investigated whether including UA in current green spaces would improve their accessibility and community benefits, despite the urbanization threatening them. Increased UA understanding and policy making were identified as crucial in order to establish “practical” UA incentives in existing Chilean infrastructure. They compared Chilean green space planning with UA policy documents and interviewed policymakers and civil society actors to understand how to best implement UA into Santiago’s definition of a green space. Case studies investigating public attitudes toward urban agriculture versus public green spaces were also conducted. These indicated mixed public acceptance of UA in green spaces. Some interviewees worried that social disparities could cause discrimination between who maintains versus enjoys the UA practices instead of green spaces

promoting societal health and equality. From these findings, researchers hypothesized that if policymakers were to amend current public land-use policies to accommodate UA initiatives, they would need to propose UA as complementary initiative to pre-existing green spaces, not a replacement. This could improve public acceptance and ensure the even distribution of green spaces throughout Santiago (Contesse et. al., 2018).

In communities without preexisting green space structure, however, developing effective UA policy must be well thought through regarding politics, business, and community involvement in order to receive sufficient support. Research performed in 2015 by Huang & Drescher inventories ten Canadian cities considered “at the forefront of urban agriculture,” investigating the differences between the UA activities and established/developing policies of each city. The purpose of the research is to explore whether regional characteristics and actors affect UA policies and the policy development processes. The research team reviewed policy documents and conducted interviews with city planners and community garden staff from all ten cities regarding their experiences in UA policy development. They found that while UA practices may differ between regions, overall UA support has been growing in many of the municipalities. Four important conclusions were made through this research: 1) UA policy is becoming increasingly popular, but is approached differently between regions 2) larger cities tend to have more documents addressing UA, possibly due to more stable finances and staffing 3) “community advocacy and municipal council support” are crucial in order to generate ample interest in UA to add it to legislative agendas 4) public education/awareness to debunk negative UA stereotypes are necessary for policy acceptance (Huang & Drescher, 2015). These four conclusions are important to consider, especially when analyzing United States’ UA policies due

to the similarities between US and Canadian societal structures. It can be assumed that UA policy can be closely compared between the two countries.

Interestingly, research by Mendes et. al. (2008) performed such a comparison between US and Canadian policies. It involved two specific case studies—from Portland, Oregon and Vancouver, British Columbia—that examined how each city used public land inventories to best understand how to improve their city’s sustainability through introducing UA within their urban planning and policymaking. The researchers’ goals were to evaluate whether Portland and Vancouver’s public land inventories incorporated UA into their urban planning and policy making, as well as if the land inventories improved social and environmental sustainability in the cities. The research involved studying land management plans and public UA support in each city by looking at regional policies and initiatives and identifying potential challenges to UA development. In both cases, political leaders and partnerships with local universities were key in advancing UA policy. In Portland, however, civic engagement in legislative planning was highly promoted. This allowed UA to be successfully integrated into their urban planning and policymaking, leading to improved social and environmental sustainability. Vancouver also was able to integrate UA into their urban planning, but the researchers found that since its basis of community involvement was less involved than Portland’s, it did not have as significant of an impact on social sustainability (Mendes et. al., 2008). Overall, this research identifies the importance of community involvement in implementing effective UA policies and creating sustainable communities.

A clear, structured way to involve community members in leading UA policy development is through constructing food policy councils (FPCs). Government-created FPCs have been assessed in their effectiveness of “promoting food justice in local food policies and

practices” through research by Prové et. al. (2019). They investigated this due to the variety of “practices, stakeholders, and objectives” that regulate UA governance, as well as the multiple roles of FPCs in promoting UA. Researchers performed a case study comparing the *Food Policy Advisory Council* in Philadelphia, PA, and *Gen en garde* in Ghent, Belgium—the FPCs of each municipality. Interviews of stakeholders in policy making and interest groups on both sides were conducted regarding their understanding of and expectations for UA in their city. Furthermore, researchers analyzed documents to compare UA awareness between the FPCs and how this contributes to governance. The research concludes with an emphasis of the importance of multi-scalar UA policies (meaning at a local, regional, national, and international scope) to inspire the highest level of efficiency in sustainability and civic engagement (Prové et. al., 2019). The importance of civic engagement in growing positive UA impact and support is greatly emphasized throughout literature, specifically two studies regarding the reasoning, public support, and successes behind New York City UA initiatives from Cohen & Reynolds (2014) and Campbell (2016).

First, research by Cohen and Reynolds (2014) highlights the pitfalls in New York City’s UA system and the variety of stakeholders who drive the city’s UA policies. It presents a two-year study involving a literature review of NYC policy documents and structured interviews of four stakeholder groups, being “urban gardening and farming practitioners... representatives of nongovernmental organizations that provide support or advocacy for urban agriculture... representatives of foundations that had recently funded urban agriculture programs... and municipal and statewide government officials directly involved with urban agriculture activities in New York City.” Findings from the study showed that UA is meeting its goals in initiating incentives that improve public health and safety; however, it is not integrated within the

community enough. This means that UA practitioners continued to be disconnected from policy making and the exclusion of specific races and classes from UA continued to increase. Common calls for action included the need for improved UA recognition through building political support and structure regarding the concept of UA. Identified methods to do so are through implementing plans for UA equality and networking throughout the policy-making processes (Cohen & Reynolds, 2014).

In a similar manner, 2016 research in this area by Campbell investigates the integration of New York City's food system and new UA practices. This research involved a case study of interviews to determine how activists introduced food and agriculture into NYC's legislative sustainability plan. This new plan was not easily accepted by the public, as the NYC food system was seen as too broad, community farm advocates were underrepresented, and business-wise, goals to implement UA appeared unrealistic. Ultimately, the case study found that following an expansive, top-down strategy of inspiring teamwork between city officials and the public—for example coalitions with mayors—as an efficient way to initiate action in proposing successful UA improvements throughout the NYC food system (Campbell, 2016).

The majority of literature regarding UA policy discusses municipality legislation. This literature reveals the lack of specificity and structure of current UA policies and initiatives, while still largely discussing its potential value. Although there has been a lot of recent, community-based urban agricultural activity and growth, little research has been performed on how city policies lead to successful state-wide UA acceptance. If UA policies were established in state legislation, it is possible that this could lead to developments in UA structural efficiency and agricultural/ economical sustainability. As much of the existing UA literature emphasizes the importance of community understanding and support of UA for effective implementation,

increased awareness of urban agricultural philosophies and practices may benefit state policy makers who are interested in environmental, economic, and overall health. In states that have already adopted UA policies, comparing the purpose statements and legislative support behind these statutes poses the question: What are common characteristics and purpose statements of current/emerging state urban agriculture policies?

Methods

This research inventoried the purpose statements of all state codes regarding UA. With the unit of analysis as the state, it evaluated the compiled statutes of each of the 50 states to determine whether or not the state legislation contained statutes regarding UA. If so, the statement of legislative intent of each policy recognizing UA was analyzed to understand why legislators decided to create it. A keyword search through the advanced legal search of the database Nexis Uni was performed in order to search all state codes for statutes that included select keywords/phrases. These keywords were chosen to retrieve potential policies including UA-related concepts. These keywords were 1) urban agriculture(al) 2) food policy 3) local food 4) urban farm(ing) and 5) urban/community garden(ing). For the states with legislation involving one or more of these search terms, the statements of legislative intent of retrieved statutes were deciphered in order to determine if they were applicable to the research question. Specifically, the research intended to identify an explicit purpose statement describing why the state is implementing their specific policy and how it will benefit that state. Throughout the initial research, statutes were detected that included the selected search terms, but sometimes involved topics irrelevant to the research question. For example, the term “local food” commonly brought up policies establishing farm-to-school programs, “local food” pantries, and general nutrition

advisory boards requiring an advocate for UA. These policies, however, did not provide relevant purpose statements relating to the legislative goals of UA—these goals being UA’s potential to influence environmental, economic, or human health/food security. Therefore, the scope of the research was narrowed by including only statutes with purpose statements regarding these factors in the inventory. The variables inventoried per state legislation—including the number of UA policies, each policy’s purpose statement, and specific goals/programs discussed in each policy—are detailed in Appendix I.

The study also considers, using data from Social Explorer and the US Census, demographic variables such as the percent of state land designated as “urban” by the US Census and the percent of state population living in these urban areas. These variables were included in the research to provide contextual data regarding the potential of each state to develop a stable UA infrastructure. As urban areas and populations continue to develop, analysis of these statistics was used to understand if the proportion of urban land and population of a state had a significant effect on whether or not the state found it purposeful to implement UA policies. Average state income was also collected for each state using the US Census’s American Community Service Brief data. This was included for analysis regarding whether income affects the presence of UA. Furthermore, as the regions of the United States tend to share similar characteristics in terms of urban development and economic status, each state’s region was also included as a contextual variable in the analysis of policy presence. All of these contextual variables are also included in Appendix II for comparison of state demographics and purpose statements, if applicable, of incorporating UA into their legislation. Two-sided t-tests were performed to understand potential correlations between urbanized land areas, urban populations, and state incomes on policy presence.

Results

From inventorying the codes of all 50 states, it was found that exactly 25 states (50%) include at least one policy regarding UA in their current legislation.

Figure A presents the results from the aforementioned t-tests. The data suggests that there is a statistically significant difference in average state income between states with and without UA policies. It also suggests a significant difference in the percentage of the total state population living in "urban areas" between these same groups. Both the mean income/percent of population living in urban areas tend to be higher in states that have one or more UA policies in their legislation. There appears to be an association between the percentage of total state land area defined as "urban" and policy presence as well, however less significant than the aforementioned variables.

Figure A

		% of Total State Land Area Defined as an "Urban Area"	% of Total State Population Living in "Urban Areas"	Average State Income
States without Policies	Mean	3.897%	52.636%	\$57,724.44
	Standard Deviation	4.083%	18.379%	\$7,986.90
States with ≥ 1 Policy	Mean	8.915%	67.148%	\$65,373.1
	Standard Deviation	13.207%	19.708%	\$10,839.8
p-value		0.0802 ⁺	0.0098*	0.0068*

*p < 0.05, strong significance

⁺p < 0.10, moderate significance

Amongst the 25 states with UA referenced in their legislation, there are a total of 39 UA statutes. While each of these 39 statutes is characterized in a different way by its state legislation, they can be grouped into six general categories of UA initiatives/program types that the policy is creating: Grant programs/tax incentives for establishing UA practices, Farm to Table Programs, Urban farms/Community gardens, Urban Agriculture Incentive Zones (UAIZ), Food Policy Councils (FPC), or Local Food Advocacy groups/programs (refer to Figure B).

Figure B

State	Statute	Grant/Tax Incentive	Urban Agriculture Incentive Zone	Urban/Community Garden	Food Policy Council	Farm to Table Program	Local Food Advocacy
Arkansas	A.C.A. § 15-4-38021						X
California	Cal Gov Code § 51040.1		X				
California	Cal Food & Agr Code § 49001					X	
California	Cal Pub Resources Code § 10280	X					
California	Cal Sts & Hy Code § 104.7			X			
California	Cal Rev & Tax Code § 422.7	X					
Colorado	C.R.S. 23-31-1101				X		
Connecticut	Conn. Gen. Stat. § 22-456				X		
Hawaii	HRS § 201H-4.5			X			
Illinois	65 ILCS 5/11-15.4-10		X				
Illinois	35 ILCS 200/18-165	X					
Illinois	30 ILCS 595/15				X		
Iowa	Iowa Code § 267A.1						X
Kansas	K.S.A. § 2-3805						X
Louisiana	La. R.S. § 3:4752		X				
Maryland	Md. TAX-PROPERTY Code Ann. § 9-253	X					
Massachusetts	ALM GL ch. 20, § 6C				X		
Massachusetts	ALM GL ch. 23A, § 65						X
Missouri	§ 262.900 R.S.Mo.	X	X				
Missouri	§ 262.960 R.S.Mo.					X	
Missouri	§ 137.016 R.S.Mo.	X					
Nebraska	R.R.S. Neb. § 2-302			X			
Nevada	Nev. Rev. Stat. Ann. § 278.02075		X				
Nevada	Nev. Rev. Stat. Ann. § 278.160			X			
New Hampshire	RSA 425:2-a					X	
New Hampshire	RSA 79-F:1						X
New Jersey	N.J. Stat. § 13:8C-52	X					
Oklahoma	2 Okl. St. § 5-123	X		X			
Oregon	ORS § 285A.420	X					
Pennsylvania	3 Pa.C.S. § 10701	X					
Rhode Island	R.I. Gen. Laws Section 2-25-2						X
Tennessee	Tenn. Code Ann. § 43-24-103			X			
Tennessee	Tenn. Code Ann. § 67-5-2509	X					
Texas	Tex. Agric. Code § 44A.002	X					
Utah	Utah Code Ann. § 59-2-1703	X					
Utah	Utah Code Ann. § 4-2-603				X		
Vermont	10 V.S.A. § 330	X				X	
Washington	Rev. Code Wash. (ARCW) § 35.21.192		X				
Washington	Rev. Code Wash. (ARCW) § 36.34.360			X			
Total (39)		14	6	7	5	4	6

The most common type of policy provides funding (or tax reductions) to property owners who establish urban agricultural practices on their land. This incentive is provided in 14 policies, representing the recognized potential value of establishing UA practices by incentivizing the process. The remaining policy types are represented fairly evenly throughout state legislation, with the establishment of urban farms, gardens, and UAIZs being encouraged in 13 state policies. Programs that promote public health through UA initiatives—such as Farm to Table programs, Food Policy Councils, and Local Food Advocacy groups—are also widely represented throughout 15 state policies. Some statutes established more than one program type. For example, a Missouri statute¹⁹ promoted UAIZs, offering extra grants to organizations willing to start one. An Oklahoma statute²⁸ discussed a similar policy, offering funding for creating urban farms/community gardens.

The purpose statements of these 39 policies can further be evaluated by their overall goal as to how implementation of UA would influence the state. Economic, environmental, and human health/food security improvements are the commonly discussed goals of UA legislation (refer to Figure C).

Figure C

State	Statute	Economic	Environmental	Health/Food Security
Arkansas	A.C.A. § 15-4-38021	X		
California	Cal Gov Code § 51040.1		X	
California	Cal Food & Agr Code § 49001			X
California	Cal Pub Resources Code § 10280		X	
California	Cal Sts & Hy Code § 104.7		X	
California	Cal Rev & Tax Code § 422.7	X		
Colorado	C.R.S. 23-31-1101	X	X	X
Connecticut	Conn. Gen. Stat. § 22-456	X	X	
Hawaii	HRS § 201H-4.5		X	
Illinois	65 ILCS 5/11-15.4-10		X	
Illinois	35 ILCS 200/18-165	X		
Illinois	30 ILCS 595/15	X	X	X
Iowa	Iowa Code § 267A.1	X		
Kansas	K.S.A. § 2-3805	X		X
Louisiana	La. R.S. § 3:4752		X	
Maryland	Md. TAX-PROPERTY Code Ann. § 9-253	X		
Massachusetts	ALM GL ch. 20, § 6C	X	X	X
Massachusetts	ALM GL ch. 23A, § 65	X		X
Missouri	§ 262.900 R.S.Mo.	X	X	
Missouri	§ 262.960 R.S.Mo.	X		
Missouri	§ 137.016 R.S.Mo.	X		
Nebraska	R.R.S. Neb. § 2-302		X	X
Nevada	Nev. Rev. Stat. Ann. § 278.02075		X	
Nevada	Nev. Rev. Stat. Ann. § 278.160		X	
New Hampshire	RSA 425:2-a	X		X
New Hampshire	RSA 79-F:1	X	X	X
New Jersey	N.J. Stat. § 13:8C-52		X	
Oklahoma	2 Okl. St. § 5-123	X		X
Oregon	ORS § 285A.420	X		
Pennsylvania	3 Pa.C.S. § 10701	X	X	
Rhode Island	R.I. Gen. Laws Section 2-25-2	X	X	X
Tennessee	Tenn. Code Ann. § 43-24-103		X	X
Tennessee	Tenn. Code Ann. § 67-5-2509	X		
Texas	Tex. Agric. Code § 44A.002	X		
Utah	Utah Code Ann. § 59-2-1703	X		
Utah	Utah Code Ann. § 4-2-603	X	X	X
Vermont	10 V.S.A. § 330	X	X	X
Washington	Rev. Code Wash. (ARCW) § 35.21.192		X	
Washington	Rev. Code Wash. (ARCW) § 36.34.360		X	
Total (39)		25	23	14

Correlating with the most common type of policy being economic incentivization for UA, the most commonly noted state goal for establishing UA was economic development—this being

a goal of 25 policies. Many states referred to their economic goals of strengthening their local food economy or providing more jobs for farmers and community members.

Environmental goals were mentioned at a similar frequency (in 23 policies). States intended to improve the well-being of their state environment and urban areas by establishing community gardens on vacant lots, for example. Furthermore, many statutes recognized potential for improvements in food system sustainability through incorporating more UA practices in their state food system.

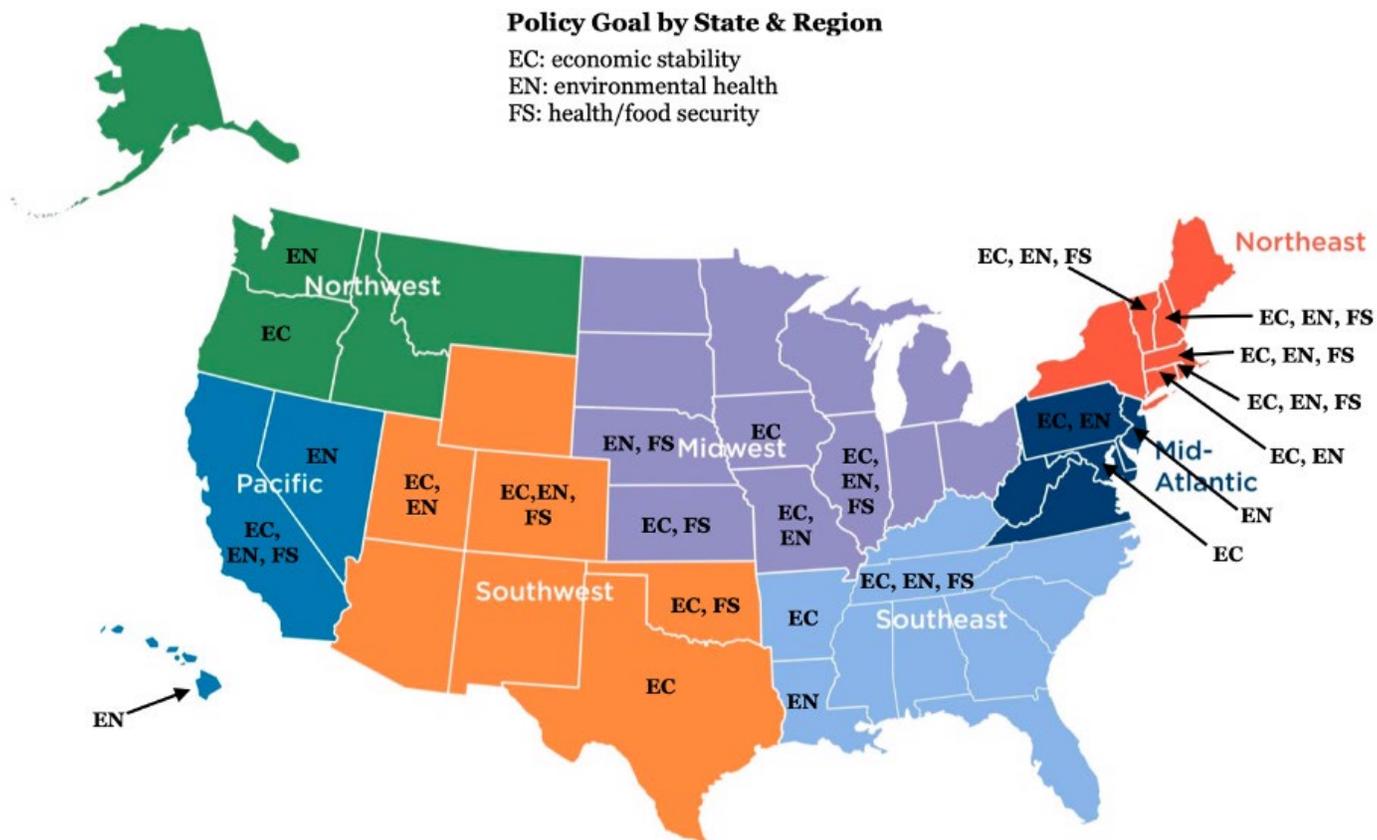
Alongside improvements in food system sustainability, many states identified improving food system accessibility would benefit its residents. Increasing access to healthy, fresh foods appeared to be an important goal of UA policies, especially in terms of making these foods more available to low income/food insecure populations. Seeing that it is widely recognized how urbanized areas tend to have larger income disparities, this was a common legislative concern addressed by the UA policies.

While each category of purpose statement refers to UA through a different type of program or initiative—often which are defined based on independent state characteristics—almost all of these policies refer to making economic improvements and supporting local agricultural practices as an essential way to do so. “Farm to Table” Programs and Local Food Policy Councils have similar goals, being that they both establish systems meant to increase access to local food throughout communities. While Farm to Table Programs focus more on economic equality by providing food and agricultural jobs to low-income residents, the goal of FPCs is mainly to provide the general population with healthy local foods in an environmentally sustainable and inclusive manner. As discussed by the research of Prové et. al. (2019) regarding FPCs, FPCs are regarded as “ideal institutions to integrate justice concerns” through their

promotion of local food for both human and environmental health, as well as being a platform for equal social participation. Community gardens have similar initiatives as Farm to Table Programs and FPCs, while also promoting active lifestyles. Together, the goals of these programs and councils are highly geared toward creating a community based upon food, health, and equality. With these similar purposes mentioned in legislation throughout every region in the United States, policy makers may be interested in looking into the effects of UA on states with similar demographics to themselves.

Likewise, UAIZs promote similar goals as community gardens through creating areas for UA, while also including economic incentives to encourage UA practices (Bridges & DuBois, 2019). They also often incorporate environmental goals, as many UAIZ policy purpose statements refer to establishing these zones on blighted properties.

A final variable recorded in the inventory was state region, for the purpose of analyzing policy presence by regional characteristics. Figure D represents the UA goals referred to by policies in each state, broken up by geographical region of the United States.

Figure D

Analysis

Statistical analysis of the characteristics of present UA policies (Figure A) reveals an association between states with a large urban population and high average income or having one or more UA policies in their legislation also appears to be affected by regional traits. As a common purpose statement regarding UA is to create a stable urban food system, this may make it more convenient for urban residents to access locally grown food. Furthermore, with the current concern of UA being too new of a practice to be an efficient food source, it also makes

sense that UA policies are more likely to be found in states with higher average incomes. This permits residents to invest in developing urban agricultural areas, with the future goal of turning them into community spaces, resolutions for food insecurity, and for transforming vacated urban areas. In its beginning stages, research has shown that UA requires high levels of community support and balance. The studies by Contesse et. al. (2018) and Cohen & Reynolds (2014) both show that in highly urbanized areas, one of the major concerns preventing successful UA policymaking is concern regarding how social disparities will be affected by UA. Therefore, states with a large quantity of citizens below the national average income may not be giving sufficient support for UA due to worry of inequality and the lack of resources necessary to implement a stable UA infrastructure.

However, with a prevailing statement of legislative intent of the majority of current UA statutes being to increase food security, recover blighted areas, and support economic growth by supporting farmers through offering grants/tax breaks, all of these characteristics appear as if they would benefit lower income populations. This discrepancy could be explained by the theory presented by Santo et. al. (2016) that UA only has the potential to provide significant economic and environmental relief within states if it is thoroughly developed and accepted by the community members living in such urban areas. This coincides with the research of Contesse et. al. (2018) as well, showing that in urban areas of Chile, community acceptance is crucial in order to prevent UA initiatives creating more of the social disparities than they intended to eliminate. Therefore, it may require more economically stable states to invest their time and money into supporting urban agricultural practices until these UA initiatives can develop in lower income communities. In regard to policy making, it would be critical that policy makers understand the perspectives of all urban residents in order to establish a well-accepted UA policy with the

potential to impact the state's economy in its intended manner. Policy makers in states with average incomes lower than the national average and without statutes regarding UA might look toward the states that have implemented UA into their legislation as a model of potential economic outcomes of UA policy.

As represented by Figure D, regional characteristics may also be significant in determining whether or not a state's legislation contains UA policies, and if so, what purpose it intends to serve. Some areas of the United States are much more densely populated with UA statutes than others, which could likely be due to qualities of the region such as climate, state demographics, or economic structures.

Northwest/Pacific Coast

California is the leader in US urban agriculture development, with five statutes regarding a wide variety of purposes and goals. Their legislation establishes every policy type listed in Figure B, except for a Food Policy Council. In the footnotes of many of California's statutes, California declares that local food production is vital to the state because of their vulnerability to drought and food insecurity. For this reason, the California statute purpose statements are all centered around improving healthy food access for their food-insecure communities through converting vacant lands into UA centers. Their progressiveness in UA practices has led to changes throughout their state's agricultural experience, making it more sustainable within their fragile ecosystem and inclusive for California's vast population.

Few states surrounding California have developed a similar depth of UA policies; however, UA policy presence is still common in this region, existing in 5 of the 8 states. All 5 of the states with UA policies in this region have urban populations over the national average, while states with more rural populations do not have any UA policies. This trend correlates with the

percentage of urban population having strong significance regarding policy presence, as represented in Figure A. Income does not appear to be significant in this region, however. States without policies—such as Alaska—have high average incomes but no policies, while Nevada has two UA policies but an income below the national average. Like Washington, it focuses on environmental goals within its UA legislation, both establishing UAIZs and community garden programs.

With the wide variety of demographics and climates of the Northwest/Pacific region, it makes sense that there is a lack of consistency in UA policies and goals along the western coast of the US. Differing climates, for example, make establishing UA practices in Hawaii much more viable than in Alaska, despite both states having average incomes well above the national average. Therefore, the range of climates, geographical characteristics, and proportions of urbanized land/populations could be explanatory of the broad range but high number of policies spanning the west coast. It appears that policy makers in each state with statutes have identified different ways to establish UA throughout their state, along with different goals on how it would best influence their population.

Mid-Atlantic/Northeast

The Mid-Atlantic/Northeastern region is interesting, as like the West coast, the East coast is densely populated with UA policies. The states in this region, however, tend to be much more similar in terms of population density and geographical qualities. States along the Eastern coast tend to have the smallest overall land areas, but the highest proportion of urbanized land and population located in these areas. States such as Connecticut, New Hampshire, Rhode Island, and New Jersey have around 85-90% of their population living in urbanized areas. It is likely that

these characteristics make UA an efficient and accessible method of food production, as the majority of residents live closer to a local than commercial food producer.

Along with this region containing a high number of UA policies, almost every state with policies refers to goals for UA in improving their economic and environmental health, as well as food security. This appears to be highly correlated with their aforementioned dense urban populations and UA making fresh, healthy food more accessible for these urban residents. Despite their common goals, each state identifies a variety of programs to achieve such goals. Maryland, Pennsylvania, New Jersey, and Vermont all offer economic incentives in order to promote UA practices. Vermont's grant policy specifically offers funding for individuals who establish community gardens, while New Hampshire legislation also promotes community gardens but without an economic incentive. Both states have urban land areas and populations below the national average. Interestingly, however, Vermont's average income is below the national average while New Hampshire's is above. This could explain why Vermont offers funding for UA initiatives, as policy makers recognize that residents may be less likely to participate if they do not have the money to put towards their own UA practices, contrary to New Hampshire residents who may have excess income to put toward UA. The comparison of these states demonstrates the significance of income on policy presence in the Mid-Atlantic/Northeast region.

Other states in this region promote UA through Food Policy Councils (Connecticut and Massachusetts) and local food advocacy groups (New Hampshire, Rhode Island). The variety of UA initiatives throughout the legislation of this region is highly representative of US UA policies as a whole. Although they all share common goals, individual UA policies are vastly different

depending on state demographics and what policy makers/residents find their state would be most viable within their current infrastructure.

Midwest/Southeast

The Midwest and Southeastern regions of the United States are known for their large-scale, traditional agricultural practices. These regions are largely made up of farmland and their economies rely heavily on farming. From referring to Figure D, it is apparent that states in this region are far less likely to contain UA policies than the aforementioned regions. Of the 22 states included in the Midwest and Southeast, only 8 states have current UA policies existing in their legislation. This could be due to concern of policy makers and residents that replacing commercial farming with local food production could be detrimental to midwestern and southern economies.

Of the states in this region that do have UA policies, only Illinois, Louisiana, and Tennessee have urban populations above the national average. Illinois is the only state with an income over the national average. Illinois and Missouri, however, have the second most policies of any state, following California with 3 statutes per legislature. Illinois's policies establish UAIZs, grant programs, and an FPC. These initiatives most frequently discuss economic goals for the state, but also cover environmental and food security goals as well. Likely because of Chicago being such a popular urban area in Illinois, this could be explanatory of their interest in UA.

It is unclear why Missouri legislation contains such a high number of UA policies as well. Missouri only has 56.6% of its state population living in urban areas, compared to Illinois's 80%, and an income below the national average. Aligning with trends in other lower-income states, however, Missouri's policies establish two grant programs for UA practices. Its third

statute, interestingly, creates a Farm to Table program. Between these three policies, environmental and economic goals are referenced. As Missouri has a lower urban population, it appears that food security is less of a concern to policy makers. Based on the purposes and goals of their policies, it appears instead that establishing stable local farming practices are a priority of Missouri legislation. This draws a connection between traditional midwestern farming practices and the introduction of urban agriculture. Further investigation of Missouri's legislation could be of interest to policy makers of other states in this region for this reason.

Amongst the rest of the 8 Midwest/Southeastern states with UA policies, local food advocacy groups (Arkansas, Iowa, and Kansas) and community gardens (Tennessee and Nebraska) are commonly discussed programs, with regarding all three common goals--economic, environmental, and food security. The frequency of these types of programs is interesting, as their descriptions detailed in the policies themselves tend to be more supportive of "local food" distribution than establishing more progressive urban agricultural practices.

The variety of UA goals throughout this region, however, shows a growing interest in economic and environmental stability of Midwest/Southeastern food systems, as well as an interest in improving access to fresh foods throughout the state.

After the analysis of all 39 UA policies in US legislation, despite each statute being described in a unique manner, many of the policies share common characteristics and goals that align with the intended purposes of UA to improve food system sustainability. These common characteristics are the six similar programs established amongst all 39 policies. Furthermore, all 39 policies reference their UA program influencing economic, environmental, or food system stability. These commonalities create connections between individual state UA policies that

policy makers interested in establishing new policies may be interested in reviewing in order to best structure a policy that will be widely accepted by state residents.

Conclusion

With currently half of the United States participating in state-legislated UA practices, it is clear that UA is a new concept increasing in popularity. As existing literature (Santo et. al. 2019) has justified the potential of a nationally developed UA infrastructure to strengthen communities, economies, and environmental health, there is considerable room for improvement regarding the understanding and standardization of UA policies throughout the US. This research aimed to evaluate the common purpose statements of the United States' UA policies, with the purpose of informing legislators why states with current UA statutes in their legislation chose to pass such policies. Especially for policy makers interested in creating change in their state's environmental and economical situations, they may want to observe how states with similar demographics have incorporated UA into their state policies.

A significant limitation of this research process includes the restricted keyword search. It is possible that some policies were not identified using the controlled number of keywords used to streamline the research process, thus excluding some policies that may exist in state legislation. Furthermore, as demonstrated by the examples of existing literature and research on UA, it appears that UA is currently established more through city-based legislation than state. While this does emphasize the lack of UA structure and potential to improve such structure through state policymaking, this research does not account for the many significant UA initiatives currently being practiced throughout US cities. For instance, while the state of Michigan does not have any state UA policies, the city of Detroit has a developing UA

infrastructure with the potential to be a significant, sustainable urban food source with further understanding of urban gardening and expansion (Colasanti, 2010).

In conclusion, with UA being a relatively new and progressive concept in legislation, there is still much research to be done. An area for future investigation noted through this specific research was the large quantity of “Farm-to-School” programs brought up by the keyword search. While the policies establishing these programs were not included in the inventory—as their purpose statements did not respond to the research question—it is interesting that they were mentioned so frequently throughout legislation. With UA being the growing industry that it is, along with the continued urbanization of the United States, it is possible that inspiring future generations to learn about farming and specific UA practices will allow increased community acceptance of UA throughout younger generations, as well as preserve food production to ensure communities are receiving proper nutrition. With improved access to local foods in schools and education programs to teach children about the benefits of UA, this is a valuable way to inspire future UA leaders.

Appendix 1: Inventory of All Policy Characteristics and Goals

State	Statute	Program Established						Goal Discussed		
		Grant/Tax Incentive	Urban Agriculture Incentive Zone	Urban/Community Garden	Food Policy Council	Farm to Table Program	Local Food Advocacy	Economic	Environmental	Health/Food Security
Arkansas	¹ A.C.A. § 15-4-38021						X	X		
California	² Cal Gov Code § 51040.1		X						X	
California	³ Cal Food & Agr Code § 49001					X				X
California	⁴ Cal Pub Resources Code § 10280	X							X	
California	⁵ Cal Sts & Hy Code § 104.7			X					X	
California	⁶ Cal Rev & Tax Code § 422.7	X						X		
Colorado	⁷ C.R.S. 23-31-1101				X			X	X	X
Connecticut	⁸ Conn. Gen. Stat. § 22-456				X			X	X	X
Hawaii	⁹ HRS § 201H-4.5			X					X	
Illinois	¹⁰ 65 ILCS 5/11-15.4-10		X						X	
Illinois	¹¹ 35 ILCS 200/18-165	X						X		
Illinois	¹² 30 ILCS 595/15				X			X	X	X
Iowa	¹³ Iowa Code § 267A.1						X	X		
Kansas	¹⁴ K.S.A. § 2-3805						X	X		X
Louisiana	¹⁵ La. R.S. § 3:4752		X						X	
Maryland	¹⁶ Md. TAX-PROPERTY Code Ann. § 9-253	X						X		
Massachusetts	¹⁷ ALM GL ch. 20, § 6C				X			X	X	X
Massachusetts	¹⁸ ALM GL ch. 23A, § 65						X	X		X
Missouri	¹⁹ § 262.900 R.S.Mo.	X	X					X	X	
Missouri	²⁰ § 262.960 R.S.Mo.					X		X		
Missouri	²¹ § 137.016 R.S.Mo.	X						X		
Nebraska	²² R.R.S. Neb. § 2-302			X					X	X
Nevada	²³ Nev. Rev. Stat. Ann. § 278.02075		X						X	
Nevada	²⁴ Nev. Rev. Stat. Ann. § 278.160			X					X	
New Hampshire	²⁵ RSA 425:2-a					X		X		X
New Hampshire	²⁶ RSA 79:F.1						X	X	X	X
New Jersey	²⁷ N.J. Stat. § 13:8C-52	X							X	
Oklahoma	²⁸ 2 Okl St § 5-123	X		X				X		X
Oregon	²⁹ ORS § 285A.420	X						X		
Pennsylvania	³⁰ 3 Pa.C.S. § 10701	X						X	X	
Rhode Island	³¹ R.I. Gen. Laws Section 2-25-2						X	X	X	X
Tennessee	³² Tenn. Code Ann. § 43-24-103			X					X	X
Tennessee	³³ Tenn. Code Ann. § 67-5-2509	X						X		
Texas	³⁴ Tex. Agric. Code § 44A.002	X						X		
Utah	³⁵ Utah Code Ann. § 59-2-1703	X						X		
Utah	³⁶ Utah Code Ann. § 4-2-603				X			X	X	X
Vermont	³⁷ 10 V.S.A. § 330	X				X		X	X	X
Washington	³⁸ Rev. Code Wash. (ARCW) § 35.21.192		X						X	
Washington	³⁹ Rev. Code Wash. (ARCW) § 36.34.360			X					X	
(25 states)	(39 statutes)	14	6	7	5	4	5	25	23	14

Appendix II: Policy Presence and Demographics by State
(Guzman,2019) (US Census Bureau, 2010)

State	Region	# of policies	Average income	Urban population	Urban land area
ALABAMA	Southeast	0	\$49,861	48.70%	3.37%
ALASKA	Northwest	0	\$74,346	44.50%	0.02%
ARIZONA	Southwest	0	\$59,246	80.10%	1.60%
ARKANSAS	Southeast	1	\$47,062	39.50%	1.40%
CALIFORNIA	Pacific	5	\$75,277	89.70%	4.69%
COLORADO	Southwest	1	\$71,953	76.90%	1.21%
CONNECTICUT	Northeast	1	\$76,348	84.80%	35.88%
DELAWARE	Mid-Atlantic	0	\$64,805	68.70%	14.67%
FLORIDA	Southeast	0	\$55,462	87.40%	12.74%
GEORGIA	Southeast	0	\$58,756	65.40%	6.87%
HAWAII	Pacific	1	\$80,212	71.50%	3.52%
IDAHO	Northwest	0	\$55,583	50.50%	0.41%
ILLINOIS	Midwest	3	\$65,030	80%	5.99%
INDIANA	Midwest	0	\$55,746	59.20%	5.59%
IOWA	Midwest	1	\$59,955	41.70%	1.04%
KANSAS	Midwest	1	\$58,218	50.20%	0.77%
KENTUCKY	Southeast	0	\$50,247	41%	2.16%
LOUISIANA	Southeast	1	\$47,905	61.30%	3.58%
MAINE	Northeast	0	\$55,602	26.20%	0.77%
MARYLAND	Mid-Atlantic	1	\$83,242	83.50%	18.96%
MASSACHUSETTS	Northeast	2	\$79,835	90.30%	37.12%
MICHIGAN	Midwest	0	\$56,697	66.40%	5.38%
MINNESOTA	Midwest	0	\$70,315	58%	1.54%
MISSISSIPPI	Southeast	0	\$44,717	27.60%	1.30%
MISSOURI	Midwest	3	\$54,478	56.60%	2.19%
MONTANA	Northwest	0	\$55,328	26.50%	0.09%
NEBRASKA	Midwest	1	\$59,566	53.80%	0.47%
NEVADA	Pacific	2	\$58,646	86.50%	0.55%
NEW HAMPSHIRE	Northeast	2	\$74,991	47.30%	5.80%
NEW JERSEY	Mid-Atlantic	1	\$81,740	92.20%	37.69%
NEW MEXICO	Southwest	0	\$47,169	53.80%	0.40%
NEW YORK	Northeast	0	\$67,844	82.70%	7.42%
NORTH CAROLINA	Southeast	0	\$53,855	54.90%	7.37%
NORTH DAKOTA	Midwest	0	\$63,837	40%	0.16%
OHIO	Midwest	0	\$56,111	65.30%	8.77%
OKLAHOMA	Southwest	1	\$51,924	45.80%	1.22%
OREGON	Northwest	1	\$63,426	62.50%	0.78%
PENNSYLVANIA	Mid-Atlantic	1	\$60,906	70.70%	9.03%
RHODE ISLAND	Northeast	1	\$64,340	90.50%	38.35%
SOUTH CAROLINA	Southeast	0	\$52,306	55.80%	6.47%
SOUTH DAKOTA	Midwest	0	\$56,247	29.90%	0.15%
TENNESSEE	Southeast	2	\$52,375	54.40%	5.33%
TEXAS	Southwest	1	\$60,629	75.40%	2.76%
UTAH	Southwest	2	\$71,414	81.20%	0.92%
VERMONT	Northeast	1	\$60,782	17.40%	0.67%
VIRGINIA	Mid-Atlantic	0	\$72,577	69.80%	5.78%
WASHINGTON	Northwest	2	\$74,073	75%	2.96%
WEST VIRGINIA	Mid-Atlantic	0	\$44,097	33.20%	1.76%
WISCONSIN	Midwest	0	\$60,773	55.80%	2.57%
WYOMING	Southwest	0	\$61,584	24.50%	0.07%
TOTAL US		39	\$61,549	59.89%	6.41%

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²⁸ § 5-123. Promulgate rules—grants, 2 Okl. St. § 5-123 (This document is current with legislation through Chapter 4 of the 2020 Legislative Session.). Retrieved from <https://advance-lexis-com.proxy.lib.umich.edu/api/document?collection=statutes-legislation&id=urn:contentItem:8NCT-6BT2-D6RV-H425-00000-00&context=1516831>.

²⁹ 285A.420 Legislative findings., ORS § 285A.420 (The Oregon Annotated Statutes is current through the 2019 and 2020 Regular Session. Some sections may have multiple variants due to amendments by multiple acts. Revision and codification by the Legislative Counsel are updated as available, see ORS 173.111 et seq. For sections pending codification by the Legislative Counsel, see Newly Added Sections in the Table of Contents.). Retrieved from <https://advance-lexis-com.proxy.lib.umich.edu/api/document?collection=statutes-legislation&id=urn:contentItem:5HC4-37D1-DXC8-04MB-00000-00&context=1516831>.

³⁰ § 10701. Legislative intent., 3 Pa.C.S. § 10701 (Pa.C.S. documents are current through 2020 Regular Session Act 9, 11-13; P.S. documents are current through 2020 Regular Session Act 9, 11-13). Retrieved from <https://advance-lexis-com.proxy.lib.umich.edu/api/document?collection=statutes-legislation&id=urn:contentItem:8VWP-1G72-D6RV-H395-00000-00&context=1516831>.

³¹ Section 2-25-2. Legislative findings, R.I. Gen. Laws Section 2-25-2 (This document is current through Chapter 6 of the 2020 Session.). Retrieved from <https://advance-lexis-com.proxy.lib.umich.edu/api/document?collection=statutes-legislation&id=urn:contentItem:5YK4-M5C1-FBV7-B2GR-00000-00&context=1516831>.

³² 43-24-103. Legislative intent — Local governments authorized to establish community gardening programs — Use of vacant public land — Use of private property — Priority in allotment of public land — Private property exempt from certain requirements., Tenn. Code Ann. § 43-24-103 (Current through Chapter 600 of the 2020 Regular Session. The commission may make editorial changes to this version and may relocate or redesignate text. Those changes will appear on Lexis Advance after the publication of the certified volumes and supplements. Pursuant to TCA sections 1-1-110, 1-1-111, and 1-2-114, the Tennessee Code Commission certifies the final, official version of the Tennessee Code. Until the annual issuance of the certified volumes and supplements, references to the updates made by the most recent legislative session should be to the Public Chapter and not TCA.). Retrieved from <https://advance-lexis-com.proxy.lib.umich.edu/api/document?collection=statutes-legislation&id=urn:contentItem:4X8M-3250-R03M-T4J1-00000-00&context=1516831>.

³³ 67-5-2509. Exemption from taxation — Land purchased, resold or rented by state or political subdivision. , Tenn. Code Ann. § 67-5-2509 (Current through Chapter 600 of the 2020 Regular Session. The commission may make editorial changes to this version and may relocate or redesignate text. Those changes will appear on Lexis Advance after the publication of the certified volumes and supplements. Pursuant to TCA sections 1-1-110, 1-1-111, and 1-2-114, the Tennessee Code Commission certifies the final, official version of the Tennessee Code. Until the annual issuance of the certified volumes and supplements, references to the updates made by the most recent legislative session should be to the Public Chapter and not TCA.). Retrieved from <https://advance-lexis-com.proxy.lib.umich.edu/api/document?collection=statutes-legislation&id=urn:contentItem:4WT8-XYM0-R03K-5260-00000-00&context=1516831>.

³⁴ Sec. 44A.002. Creation of Urban Farm Microenterprise Support Program., Tex. Agric. Code § 44A.002 (This document is current through the 2019 Regular Session, 86th Legislature, and 2019 election results.). Retrieved from <https://advance-lexis-com.proxy.lib.umich.edu/api/document?collection=statutes-legislation&id=urn:contentItem:5DDJ-B3H1-6MP4-010X-00000-00&context=1516831>.

³⁵ 59-2-1703. Qualifications for urban farming assessment., Utah Code Ann. § 59-2-1703 (Current with legislation effective through March 6, 2020). Retrieved from <https://advance-lexis-com.proxy.lib.umich.edu/api/document?collection=statutes-legislation&id=urn:contentItem:8V63-7NX2-8T6X-712H-00000-00&context=1516831>.

³⁶ 4-2-603. Duties., Utah Code Ann. § 4-2-603 (Current with legislation effective through March 6, 2020). Retrieved from <https://advance-lexis-com.proxy.lib.umich.edu/api/document?collection=statutes-legislation&id=urn:contentItem:8RC8-C592-D6RV-H1F2-00000-00&context=1516831>.

³⁷ § 330. The Farm-to-Plate Investment Program; creation; outcomes; tasks; methods, 10 V.S.A. § 330 (Statutes current with legislation through Act 85 of the 2019 Session (Adj. Sess.)). Retrieved from <https://advance-lexis-com.proxy.lib.umich.edu/api/document?collection=statutes-legislation&id=urn:contentItem:5YPT-2SP1-FC1F-M40H-00000-00&context=1516831>.

³⁸ 35.21.192. Urban agriculture zone., Rev. Code Wash. (ARCW) § 35.21.192 (Statutes current with legislation from the 2020 Regular Session effective through June 10, 2020). Retrieved from <https://advance-lexis-com.proxy.lib.umich.edu/api/document?collection=statutes-legislation&id=urn:contentItem:5X5P-V643-CH1B-T0GG-00000-00&context=1516831>.

³⁹ 36.34.360. Community garden., Rev. Code Wash. (ARCW) § 36.34.360 (Statutes current with legislation from the 2020 Regular Session effective through June 10, 2020). Retrieved from <https://advance-lexis-com.proxy.lib.umich.edu/api/document?collection=statutes-legislation&id=urn:contentItem:5X5R-5X53-GXJ9-30BF-00000-00&context=1516831>.