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A growing city: agriculture and food security in the growing urban context

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A Growing City

Agriculture and Food Security in the Growing Urban Context

There are different kinds of growth, some of which are beneficial to life and some not. Sometimes it may look good on the surface but underneath the surface the roots are rotten and diseased. Physical growth is often related to food and resources, while mental health is related to stress. What can be found is that often different types of growth are in competition with one another. This is what is happening between our urban industrial systems and our food systems. They are competing for the same land at the expense of each other.

This thesis delves into the various systems that affect urban growth and agricultural growth in the South African context. When looking at food security in the South African context, one finds that even though the country as a whole is food secure, a large portion of the population are still hungry and malnourished. One finds further that food insecurity is not an isolated problem – there are numerous issues of concern which share the same roots. These issues and concerns are in fact linked to the stresses that can affect wellbeing.

Thus this thesis explores how physical health and mental wellbeing can come together in the production of a farm which heals a scar in the inner city landscape. Through considering the effects that urban conditions have on humans in contrast to the effects that the natural environment has on humans, this thesis addresses a design problem which seeks to unite the two extremes. It seeks to join the city with agriculture, allowing the city to continue expanding without losing arable land, and agriculture can improve the quality of the inner city. The design is formulated through response to context and climate, using biomimicry as a tool to create conditions conducive to life.



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