

## **EQUI-FOOD: ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY IMPACT ON URBAN FOOD GROWING FOR BETTER HEALTH AND WELL-BEING**

Dr Felicity Crotty (PI; Royal Agricultural University) Dr Louise Neilson (Co-I, BIC Innovation) Dr Rachel Clarke (Co-I, Newcastle University) Dr Bethan Mead (Co-I, University of Liverpool) Chloe Mellor (Research Assistant, BIC Innovation)







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Environment Research Council

# Background

- Urban food growing identified as beneficial for physical and mental health, diet, sustainability and environment.
- Ample potential in the UK urban areas could grow up to 8x domestic production.
- Greater soil carbon in urban areas sensationalising headlines.
- What about roof vs ground level growing?



#### 😵 INDEPENDEN'I



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#### Britain has only 100 harvests left in its farm soil as scientists warn of growing 'agricultural crisis'

Study shows soil in urban areas is actually much more fertile on average than the intensively over-farmed UK counterside

### **Research Questions**

- RQ1: How do we *simply* measure quality of soil and water in urban ecosystems?
- RQ2: How do we compare perceived quality over measured quality?
- RQ3: How does an understanding of soil quality relate to nature connectedness and benefits to health and wellbeing

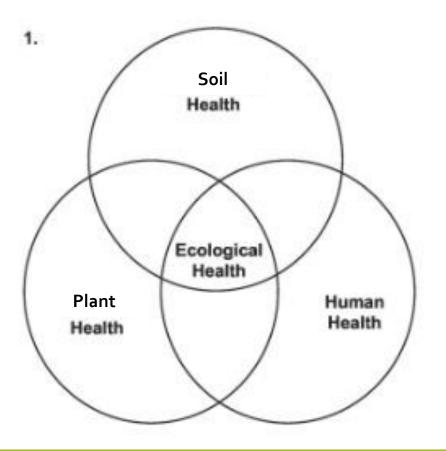
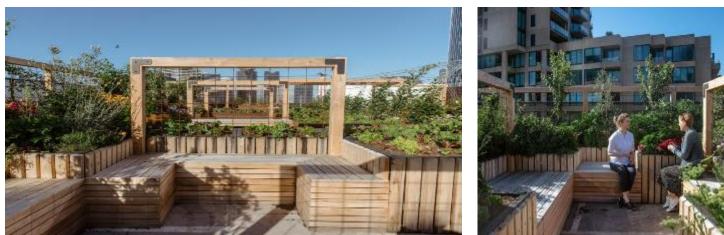






Image credit: SkyGarden, Melbourne



### WP1 – Soil Quality

- Systematic literature review.
- Experimental measurement of soil quality at rooftop/vertical and ground-based growing sites.
- Sites welcome please get in touch!

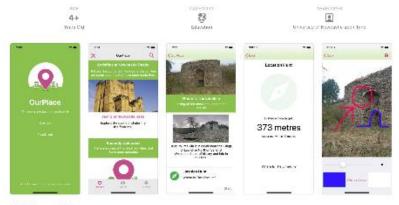
### WP2 – Citizen Soil Scientists

 Citizen Science approach to assess the results and feasibility of providing experienced and novice growers with a kit that allows them to simply self-assess and report measures of soil quality at allotment/home food growing sites.









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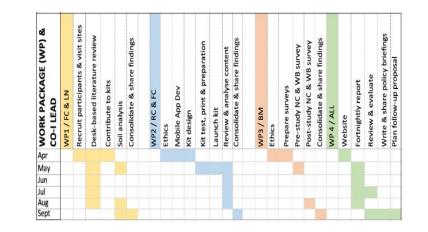
#### WP<sub>3</sub> – Health and well-being impact

 Use validated psychometric assessments to measure how engaging with nature via ecosystem quality assessment (WP2) impacts on nature connection, health and well-being.



#### WP<sub>4</sub> – Synthesis

• Evaluate the feasibility of this methodological approach (WP1-3) to determine its use and scaling approach in a larger-scale study of urban rooftop growing and disseminate findings to key practitioner networks.



# Progress

- Website live equifood.uk
- Email live EQUI-food@Liverpool.ac.uk
- WP1 sites secured for soil assessment
  - UoL; Cirencester cathedral; Liverpool community garden; St David's Shopping Centre, Cardiff; Pontypool.
- Ethics approval granted for WP2 and WP3.
- App launched.
- Recruitment launched.
- Study presented at British Ecological Society Conference (Felicity).



EQUI-Food

Environmental Quality Impact on Urban Food Growing for Better Health and Wellbeing

Home About Team Approach Get Involved

Growing Diaries Resources News

Welcome to the EQUI-Food project website. We are running a pilot research project exploring how soil health and urban food growing are connected to nature and people's wellbeing Find out more <u>about the project</u>, the <u>team</u> and <u>how you can</u> <u>get involved</u> or <u>sign-up to our newsletter</u> if you want to receive more regular updates.





# THANKYOU

EQUI-food@Liverpool.ac.uk

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