

# Urban Farming

<http://plantagon.com/>

Challenges, opportunities and perhaps a reality check  
from a commercial farming perspective

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## “ Why urban farming?

What people claim:

- Provides healthy food to urban populations
- Reduces transportation costs & associated impacts
- Provides jobs and economic development
- Improves food knowledge and food security

What people tend to overlook:

- Limited space and expensive land prices
- More regulations and challenging access
- Our diets require more than leafy greens
- Environmental impacts and their costs
- A business can only survive if it's profitable

The vision?



<https://www.wederopbouwrotterdam.nl>



<https://www.kbcc.cuny.edu>



Modern take:  
Kingsborough Community College Urban Farm



# Modern Take: Brooklyn Grange Farm



<https://www.rockrose.com>



Another vision?

De Witt Clinton Park, Manhattan, 1902

Children's farm



<http://cityfarmer.info>



# Modern take: Target Bronx Community Garden



<https://www.nyrp.org>



Modern Take:  
YMCA high tunnel  
East Orange, NJ





Yet another vision?

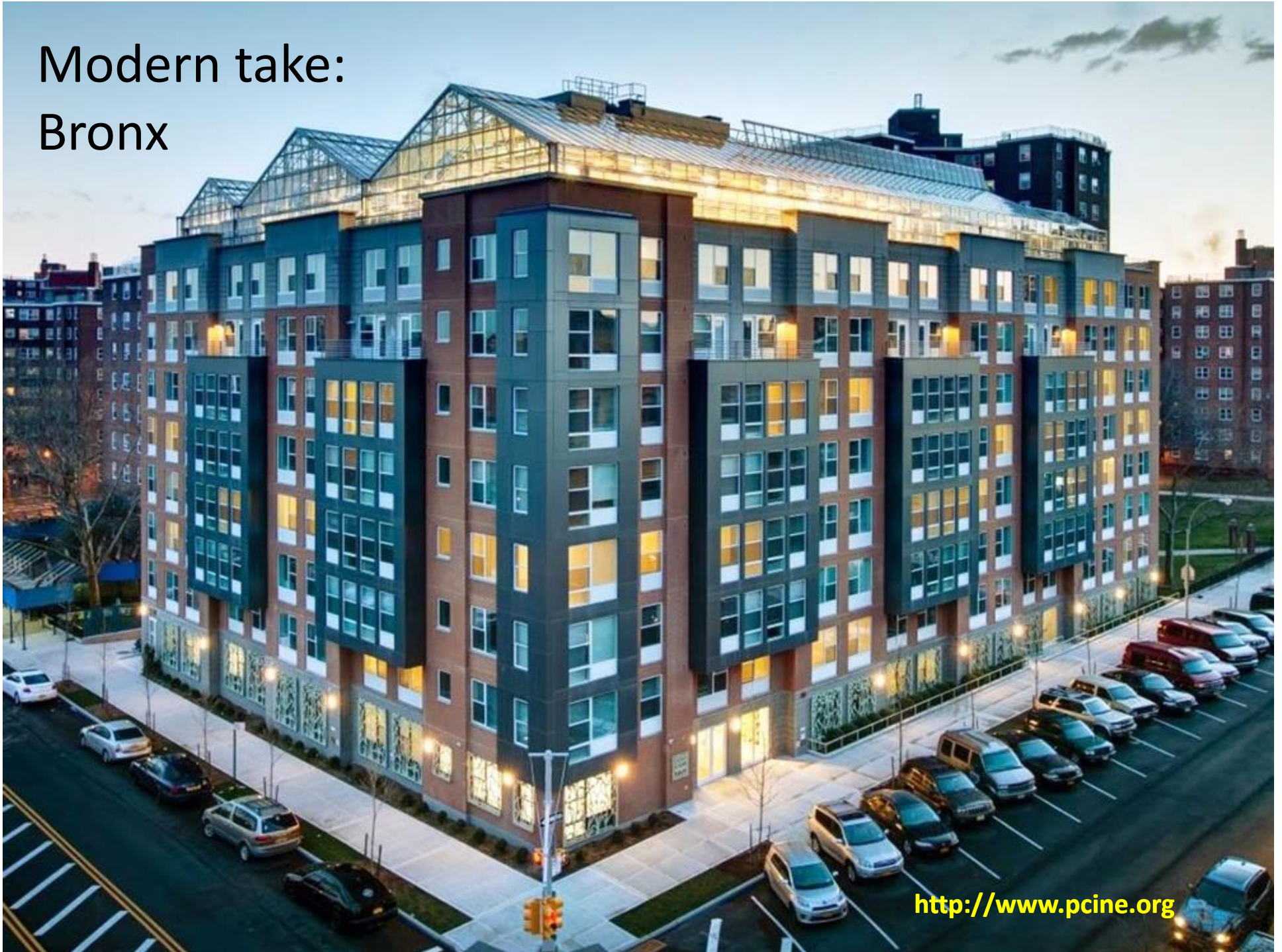
NYC, 42<sup>nd</sup> Street and 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue, 1872



<https://digitalcollections.nypl.org>



# Modern take: Bronx



<http://www.pcine.org>



# Modern take: Whole Foods & Gotham Greens, Brooklyn



<http://www.chriscooperphotographer.com/blog/>



# Latest developments (I): Growing in containers





# Latest developments (II): Indoor farming



<http://www.nytimes.com/>



# Latest developments (III): Indoor farming





## “ The challenges for urban farming:

- Finding a suitable location
- Securing financial support
- Growing plants well requires skills
- No room for staple crops (corn, soybean, wheat)
- Working with biological systems
- High labor requirements
- Automation is expensive
- Year-round production requires lighting
- Potential higher soil and air pollution
- Competing with field-grown produce
- Marketing
- Long-term planning



## “ Development opportunities for urban farming:

- Further explore alternative farming opportunities
- Consider public-private partnerships
- Engage in creative long-term planning
- Develop novel financing strategies (public, private; with a emphasis on sustainability)
- Expand educational efforts & community support
- Invest in interdisciplinary research
- NJ is uniquely situated to play a key role...
- Rutgers University and Rutgers Cooperative Extension can become valuable partners...



## “ Personal thoughts:

- Urban farming can address a variety of urban issues, but
- It will remain challenging to make a profit growing leafy greens in the city
- Better alternative: peri-urban farming
- Plants can be grown for other purposes than just for food: nutritional supplements, medicinal compounds (including vaccines), recreational uses...



“ And what about animal farming in the city?



Thanks!!!  
Questions?