



# Time to Read 3

Topic 8

Lesson 22

## From Concrete to Carrots (1)



# What happens when cities start growing food instead of just buildings?



Rooftops and parking decks are turning into high-tech vertical farms that bring fresh produce closer to city neighborhoods.

What once was empty concrete is now feeding the city. Could your next meal come from the roof above you?

[Here's a 1-minute update on vertical farming-as-a-service trend!](#)



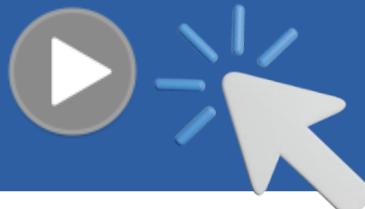
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https://www.newstrend-innovativethinking.com



1 min News

## 'Farming-as-a-Service' in Urban Spaces



Imagine picking fresh lettuce for your lunch salad from a farm built on your community's abandoned rooftop. This is becoming reality through companies like UrbanGreens, pioneering "[Agriculture-as-a-Service](#)" by transforming forgotten urban spaces - empty warehouses, parking garage ceilings, and school rooftops - into thriving vertical farms.

These companies don't sell produce; they sell the service of localized food production. For a monthly fee, they install and maintain high-tech hydroponic systems that use 95% less water than traditional farming while yielding crops year-round. The global market for such services is projected to reach \$12.8 billion by 2027, signaling a shift from simply buying food to "subscribing" to food production capability.



# Words P u z z l e



Companies like UrbanGreens, pioneering "**Agriculture-as-a-Service**" by transforming forgotten urban spaces - empty warehouses, parking garage ceilings, and school rooftops - into thriving vertical farms.

These companies don't sell produce; they sell the service of localized food production. The global market for such services is projected to reach \$12.8 billion by 2027, signaling a shift from simply buying food to "subscribing" to food production capability.

**Tick the statement that does **NOT** describe "Agriculture-as-a-Service."**

It transforms forgotten urban spaces into vertical farms.

They sell the service of localized food production.

They sell harvested vegetables directly to consumers.

It shifts from buying food to subscribing to agricultural production services.

# Main Idea

## Quest

The news highlights that companies like

UrbanGreens are transforming abandoned

① into ② and offering

"Agriculture-as-a-Service," allowing

people to access ③ through

a subscription-based ④.

Match each word on the right to the correct blank to complete the main idea.

vertical farms

farming service

locally grown produce

urban spaces



**“ This farming service is the perfect solution for urban food deserts and community development.”**

*Maria Rodriguez, Community Center Director*

It provides reliable access to fresh and visible produce in our food desert neighborhood. During the recent transit strike, when grocery deliveries stopped, our rooftop farm supplied fresh vegetables to 50 families in our building.



It automatically benefits everyone in the community equally. Since we installed the system, all residents who evenly share the cost of the service have equal access to the harvests and take turns collecting their weekly baskets of fresh produce.

**Details**  
**Hunter**

Read Maria Rodriguez's statement, then choose the option that is **NOT** a benefit of the rooftop farm.

Provides the community with reliable access to fresh produce.

Guarantees that every family receives the exact same amount weekly.

Gives all residents equal access when they share the cost.

# **“This corporate farming model is undermining local businesses while creating new dependencies.”**

*David Chen, Neighborhood Grocery Store Owner*



Instead of benefiting everyone equally, the service is undermining the interests of community-service providers and disrupting the ecological balance of production and consumption within the community. For instance, our local organic grocery—a social enterprise that employed at-risk youth and sourced from neighborhood gardeners—was forced to close within six months of the service's launch.

It creates a fragile system dependent on corporate expertise rather than building local resilience. When the farming company had technical issues last winter, the entire crop failed because no one in the community knew how to fix the system.

## **Details**

## **Hunter**

Complete the blanks with details from the passage to summarize its main points.

The rooftop farming service is undermining the interests of community-service providers and disrupts \_\_\_\_\_, creating a \_\_\_\_\_ system dependent on \_\_\_\_\_ rather than building local resilience.

**“Urban farming services demonstrate innovative potential but require redesign to ensure they complement rather than replace existing community food systems.”**

*Lena Petrova, Urban Planning Specialist*



The model successfully demonstrates how underutilized urban spaces can produce food and strengthen community bonds - this innovation is valuable. However, treating essential food infrastructure as a corporate service risks creating systemic vulnerabilities and deepening existing inequalities in our neighborhoods.

We need a community-centered model where: 1) service contracts include mandatory skills-transfer programs to build local self-sufficiency; 2) a fixed percentage of all harvests directly supplies existing neighborhood food programs, ensuring the innovation complements rather than replaces established community food systems.

## Details Hunter



Read Lena Petrova's ideas and complete the sentences to explain how urban farming can support the community.

1 Include mandatory skills-transfer programs to \_\_\_\_\_.

2 Give a fixed percentage of the harvest directly to \_\_\_\_\_.



## Exercise Time

# What is the key idea expressed in the reading?

**A**

Urban vertical farming services promote sustainable eating but might increase reliance on imported equipment.

**B**

Urban vertical farming services provide fresh local food but may create dependence on corporations and disrupt local communities.





## Exercise Time

**“It creates a fragile system dependent on corporate expertise rather than building local resilience.”**

Which sentence BEST explains the meaning?



The system becomes weak because it depends on companies instead of building the community's own abilities.



The system improves because it depends on companies while the community gradually develops its own abilities.





## Exercise Time

### According to the text, what do companies like UrbanGreens actually offer to customers?

- Fresh produce delivered weekly
- Training programs on urban farming
- A subscription for localized food production
- Land for people to start their own farms

Companies like UrbanGreens, pioneering "Agriculture-as-a-Service" by transforming forgotten urban spaces into thriving vertical farms. These companies don't sell produce; they sell the service of localized food production. For a monthly fee, they install and maintain high-tech hydroponic systems that use 95% less water than traditional farming while yielding crops year-round. The global market for such services is projected to reach \$12.8 billion by 2027, signaling a shift from simply buying food to "subscribing" to food production capability.

Find the answers  
in the text!



### Glow Lines Take-away

This farming service is the perfect solution for urban food deserts and community development.

What does “urban food deserts” mean here?  
Is your community an urban food desert?

### Glow Lines Take-away

This corporate farming model is undermining local businesses while creating new dependencies.

What does “new dependencies” mean in the context of this corporate farming model?

### Glow Lines Take-away

Urban farming services demonstrate innovative potential but require redesign to ensure they **complement** rather than **replace** existing community food systems.

What's the difference between "complement" and "replace" ?  
Which one best describes the idea: "A rooftop garden grows vegetables alongside local markets" ?

# Thanks

In the next lesson, we're going to do  
zoom-in reading of two key viewpoints.  
See you next time!

