

# Food and Sustainability:

## Local food system, food policy and global engagement<sup>1</sup>

Co-organized by

Sustainable Ecological Ethical Development Foundation (SEED)<sup>2</sup>

Southeast Asia Research Centre, City University of Hong Kong<sup>3</sup>

12 August 2022

Venue: Via Zoom and at Lecture Theatre 12, Yeung Kin Man Building, City University of Hong Kong

The global food system has long been challenged by issues regarding environmental degradation, urbanization, industrial agriculture, oligopolistic food production, monopolized markets, top-down rural development and unsustainable food policies. The involuted and complex transnational networks in the food supply chain, rather than easing food supply, has posed an array of challenges to the global food market. Accelerated urbanization around the world also threatens land supply and stable food production. COVID-19 has further exposed the weaknesses of the food supply chain and led to critical food issues, including spikes in food prices, supply shortages, food contamination and competition in food logistics.

This conference will draw together food scholars and practitioners to interrogate various food problems at the time of a pandemic crisis. It aims to revisit many of the existing problems and flaws in the global food system that challenge humanity and sustainability. At a time of crisis, we see opportunities for a discovery of food for thoughts and social changes.

### Objectives:

- Explore various food policy frameworks that support sustainable development.
- Review local food systems in and beyond Asia that challenge food security and farmers' livelihood.
- Explore various good practices and local resilience that help promote ecological food environment and social sustainability.
- Collect thoughts that help transform the global food supply chain and build a sustainable global food regime.

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<sup>2</sup> SEED is an NGO established in 2000 in Hong Kong. It aims at promoting ecological agricultural practices and sustainable development.

<sup>3</sup> City University of Hong Kong is a public funded university devoted to the development of sustainable communities in Asia.

**Conference Program**  
**Hong Kong time (GMT+8)**

<b>Time</b>	<b>Panels</b>	<b>Speakers</b>
<b>8.30</b>	<p><b>Opening: Welcoming Remarks</b></p> <p><b>Welcoming Address [written messages]</b></p> <p><b>Opening Address</b></p>	<p>Professor Mark Thompson, Director, Southeast Asia Research Centre, City University of Hong Kong</p> <p>Professor Way Kuo, President and University Distinguished Professor, City University of Hong Kong</p> <p>Angus Lam, Chairperson, Sustainable Ecological Ethical Development Foundation (Hong Kong)</p>
<b>8.45 – 11.30</b>	<b>I. Sustainable Food Production in Asia</b>	
<b>8.45 – 9.15</b>	Sustainable Diets and Food System Change in China: Challenges and Opportunities	Steffanie Scott University of Waterloo
<b>9.15 – 9.45</b>	Rethinking the Possibility of Resilient and Sustainable Food Production in Hong Kong	Angus Lam Sustainable Ecological Ethical Development Foundation
<b>9.45 – 10.15</b>	Much Agu about Sustainability: Examining the Use of the Heirloom Agu Breed in the Development of Premium Pork Brands in Okinawa	Benjamin Schrager Utsunomiya University  Sayaka Sakuma Osaka Metropolitan University
<b>10.15 – 10.45</b>	Farmers' Rainfall Observation Activities in West Java: Anticipating Agro-Ecological Uncertainty amid Climate Change	Rhino Ariefiansyah University of Indonesia
<b>10.45 – 11.30</b>	Q&A and round up	
<b>11.30 – 12.30</b>	<b>Lunch</b>	

<b>12.30 – 15.00</b>	<b>II. Small-holding Agriculture Revisited: Towards Innovative Food Environment and Experiences</b>	
<b>12.30 – 13.00</b>	Innovative Resource Management and In-Situ Adaptation	Lei Jing University of Guangxi
<b>13.00 – 13.30</b>	Generate Sensorial Experiences from Ecological Food Practices in Hong Kong	Eric Cheng National Taitung University  Chow Sze-chung Sangwood Kidsclub (Hong Kong)
<b>13.30 – 14.00</b>	Farming Innovations in Singapore	Chelsea Wan Jurong Frog Farm (Singapore)
<b>14.00 – 14.30</b>	Alive Homemeal	Chen Meng Kai TreeHope Eco-hub (Taiwan)
<b>14.30 – 15.00</b>	Q&A and round up	
<b>15.00 – 16.00</b>	Big break: Chatting and mingling	
<b>16.00 – 18.00</b>	<b>III. Food Supply Chain: Food Markets, Consumption and Social Sustainability</b>	
<b>16.00 – 16.30</b>	Sustaining Neighborhood Foodways in the Face of Urban Redevelopment Schemes in Tokyo	James Farrer Sophia University
<b>16.30 – 17.00</b>	Heirloom Rice and Rice-Growing Culture in Hong Kong: A Reflection on Rice Heritage and Social Sustainability	Mon M W Wong Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department, HKSAR Government  Chan Yuk Wah City University of Hong Kong
<b>17.00 – 17.30</b>	Making Open-Access Edamame Supply Chains: Organizational Structure, Institutional Power, and Rent Seeking in Thailand and Taiwan	Kuan-Chi Wang Academia Sinica

<b>17.30 – 18.00</b>	Q&A and round up	
<b>18.00 – 20.00</b>	Dinner	
<b>20.00 – 22.15</b>	<b>IV. Food Policy, Sustainable Urban Environment, and Global Partnership</b>	
<b>20.00 – 20.30</b>	Governance for Sustainable Food Systems	Nevin Cohen City University of New York
<b>20.30 – 21.00</b>	How Policy Together with Action by Civil Movements Can Develop a More Sustainable Local Food System: Bristol's Food Journey	Joy Carey Sustainable Food Systems Planning Consultant
<b>21.00 – 21.30</b>	Urban Collective Intelligence – Breadline: Exploring Food Rescue in Hong Kong	Daisy D S Tam Hong Kong Baptist University
<b>21.30 – 22.00</b>	Final discussion	Yuk Wah Chan and Angus Lam
<b>22.00</b>	<b>Closing</b>	Sustainable Ecological Ethical Development Foundation

## **Abstracts and Bios**

### **Farmers' Rainfall Observation Activities in West Java: Anticipating Agro-Ecological Uncertainty amid Climate Change**

Rhino Ariefiansyah, University of Indonesia

#### **Abstract**

Climate change-induced increases in temperature and changes in the frequency and intensity of extreme events will certainly affect Indonesian agriculture, but the greatest impacts from climate change will be the increasing irregularity and intensity of rainfall events, given that agricultural production is so dependent on interannual variations in precipitation. This situation is interrelated with the long-term impact of high dependency on the chemical inputs that create agro-ecosystem vulnerability. Since 2009, groups of farmers in West Java (assisted by anthropologists and Agro-meteorologist) initiate lifelong agro-meteorological learning centred on daily rainfall observations to understand the dynamics and complexity of the changing environment. Through times “the rainfall observer farmers” tries to find better farming strategies facing challenges and difficulties in managing their farming activities amid uncertainty.

#### **Bio**

Rhino Ariefiansyah is a Lecturer and Researcher in the Department of Anthropology at Universitas Indonesia. He has degrees in Cultural Anthropology from Universitas Indonesia and in Arts and Politics from Sciences Po, Paris. Rhino is interested in human ecology, environmental and climate change, and migration.

### **How Policy Together with Action by Civil Movements Can Develop a More Sustainable Local Food System: Bristol's Food Journey**

Joy Carey, Bristol Food Network

#### **Abstract**

Cities arise from and are connected with the regional farmlands to which they belong (Steel, 2008). Based on Bristol's experience and that of many other cities around the world, it is clear that cities can choose to use their significant influence in pursuit of a food and farming landscape that is good for people, planet, and place. This session will include describe examples of food activism and policy change that have taken place in one city in the southwest of England, during the two decades. The changes achieved are small, but they are a beginning. There remains a hard road to travel to achieve truly sustainable food systems.

In 2016 Bristol was the second only city in the UK to achieve a Silver Sustainable Food City award, and in June 2021 became the second only city in the UK to achieve gold status. Part of the criteria

for Gold status is to be a national exemplar in two areas of food system change: in the case of Bristol this was food waste reduction and its inspirational city food movement. We are now embarking on Bristol Good Food 2030 - a plan that brings people from across the city together to make change across our whole food system, making it better for people and communities, animals and nature, workers and businesses. The Bristol Good Food Partnership, coordinated by Bristol Food Network, is a collection of organisations working together across several different advisory and action groups to deliver Bristol Good Food 2030.

## Bio

Joy Carey is an independent Sustainable Food Systems consultant with a focus on cities, based in Bristol, UK. She has worked with urban, organic and local food sectors since 1990, is a founding director of Bristol Food Network and author of *Who Feeds Bristol: Towards a Resilient Food Plan* (2011). Since 2016 she has been an Associate of RUAF Global Food Partnership, continuing to work on food system assessment methodology and wrote the Milan Urban Food Policy Pact monitoring framework practical handbook and resource pack for cities in 2021.

## **Alive Homemeal**

Chen Meng-kai, TreeHope Eco-hub

## Abstract

Cooking is the act of falling in love with oneself. Through cooking and sharing meals together, we can reclaim our food sovereignty. We mistakenly think that there are many choices in the consumer market. However, even if a product is good for consumers, manufacturers will not be willing to provide them if profits are not lucrative enough or education is required for acceptance.

Here at Hopemarket, we help people slow down consumption and return to taking on the role of a producer and creator. It puts the aspirations and needs of those who produce, distribute, and consume food at the heart of food systems and policies, rather than the demands of markets and corporations. We work as a community to reclaim their power in the food system by rebuilding the relationships between people and the land, and between food providers and those who eat. We cook together, make our own miso, salt koji, fermented bean curd, coffee, bean curd, tofu, and natural blue dye. As we produce our own food and other daily necessities, we will come to love ourselves. Let's start the Homemeal movement through the kitchen as a way to move towards healthy and culturally appropriate food produced through ecologically sound and sustainable methods.

## Bio

Chen Meng-kai is the Chairman of the Hopemarket, founder of TreeHope Eco-hub, and Director and Deputy CEO of Taiwan Cooperative Development Foundation. After graduating from the Department of Electrical Engineering at National Taiwan University, he obtained a PhD in Electrical Engineering, and a MBA in Business in the United States. At the age of 45 he left the tech industry and founded the NGO Hopemarket to connect rural and urban peoples together in

supporting family-scale agriculture, caring for the land and sustaining the local economy. Dr. Chen received the Agricultural Excellence Award from the Taiwan Council of Agriculture in 2018 due to his dedication to promoting Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) and Consumer's Agri-food Education.

## **Generate Sensorial Experiences from Ecological Food Practices in Hong Kong**

Eric Cheng, National Taitung University  
Chow Sze-chung, Sangwood Kidsclub

### Abstract

Hong Kong's rural landscape is full of different sensorial experiences. This presentation adopts the anthropological concept of "walking" to reflect on those sensorial experiences walkers have shared for 15 years. By walking in rural villages and through farms, walkers on paths learn what farming is from each other. Besides, ecological food practices have become a more commonplace practice that attracts new walkers. The case study of a farming club will draw our attention to innovative ways of education which sheds light on human-plant interactions.

### Bio

Eric Siu-kei Cheng is an anthropologist whose research focuses on food and sustainability. He conducts ethnographic fieldwork on Hong Kong and Taiwan. Thinking and studying through things, Eric has published academic articles and articles for a general audience in Chinese and English. His work covers topics on organic farming, agro-food and seafood supply chains, tourism, salt heritage, commodification, and cold chain. He is also an engaged scholar facilitating and collaborating with NGOs and local residents to pursue a sustainable network based on gastronomy and eco-friendly practices.

Chow Sze-chung is a farmer and founding member of Sangwoodgoon Organic Farm and Sangwood Kidsclub in Hong Kong, who serve local community by producing seasonal vegetables and 2 crops of rice annually. He received his Phd in Cultural Studies from Lingnan University, research interest includes history of food and agriculture, regenerative agriculture, etc.

## **Governance for Sustainable Food Systems**

Nevin Cohen, City University of New York

### Abstract

Over the past several decades, cities worldwide have attempted to create sustainable food systems that improve public health, advance social justice, and promote environmental resilience by using diverse municipal policies, often with the support of stakeholder-led governance mechanisms such as food policy councils. This presentation reviews the roles that cities have played in creating sustainable urban food systems and the effects of those policies on public health. It explains that despite wide-ranging policy initiatives, disparities in food insecurity and malnourishment persist.

It describes several promising pathways for sustainable urban food policy: engaging in food-focused urban planning to create equitable food environments; treating policies to address inequality and social justice as upstream food policies; considering the effects of new business models such as online food retail in urban food policy making; and using food procurement as a lever to influence regional, national, and global food systems.

## Bio

Nevin Cohen is an Associate Professor at the City University of New York (CUNY) Graduate School of Public Health and Health Policy and is Research Director of the CUNY Urban Food Policy Institute. His research explores the policies, governance systems, practices, and infrastructure to support socially just, healthy, ecologically resilient, and economically viable urban and regional food systems. Current projects include the development of a food environment equity dashboard for New York City, a five-country study of the food, water, and energy nexus of urban agriculture, research on changing mobility patterns and food retail access due to the COVID-19 pandemic, and a study of online grocery use by SNAP participants. Dr. Cohen is the co-author of *Beyond the Kale: Urban Agriculture and Social Justice Activism in New York City* (University of GA Press), which examines the potential of urban farms and gardens to address racial, gender, and class oppression. He has a PhD in Urban Planning and Policy Development from Rutgers University, a Master in City and Regional Planning from the University of California, Berkeley, and a BA from Cornell University.

## **Sustaining Neighborhood Foodways in the Face of Urban Redevelopment Schemes in Tokyo**

James Farrer, Sophia University

### Abstract

The foodways and culinary livelihoods of urban neighborhoods depend upon a complex and open ecology of local small businesses, national and transnational economic actors, residents, commuters, and visitors. Among all these actors in neighborhood foodways, local independent businesses are essential, sustaining local memories, foster social relations, and providing spaces for artisanal employment (Farrer 2022). As a space of concrete memories, neighborhood shopping streets may support nostalgia and a sense of timeless tradition, whereas, in fact, they are contested and often highly unstable environments. The politics of urban renewal and redevelopment shape these spaces, as do the counter-politics of anti-developmentalism and the heritagization of local landmarks. This presentation uses fieldwork and archival materials from one Tokyo neighborhood to describe how local foodways interact with urban redevelopment processes and plans. It looks at actors in these struggles and the responses of various community stakeholders. The paper places this case study in a comparative analysis of similar process, both in Tokyo and in other cities. Ultimately the study addresses the question is how neighborhood foodways are defined, sustained, and defended in the face of neoliberal economic development.



## Bio

James Farrer is Professor of Sociology and Director of the Graduate Program in Global Studies at Sophia University in Tokyo. His research focuses on the contact zones of global cities, including ethnographic studies of sexuality, nightlife, expatriate communities, and urban food cultures. Recent publications include *International Migrants in China's Global City: The New Shanghailanders*, *Shanghai Nightscapes: A Nocturnal Biography of a Global City* (with Andrew Field), and *Globalization and Asian Cuisines: Transnational Networks and Contact Zones*. His current projects investigate community foodways in Tokyo and the spread of Japanese restaurant cuisine across diverse world regions.

## **Rethinking the Possibility of Resilient and Sustainable Food Production in Hong Kong**

Angus Lam, Sustainable Ecological Ethical Development Foundation

### Abstract

This presentation focuses on Hong Kong agriculture which is generally regarded as a declined sector. Although the official statistics shows such a picture, SEED's Agriculture 3.0 project targets to find the current situation that may otherwise depicts another scene of Hong Kong agriculture. Invoking data from 149 surveys and 59 interviews, our team finds that Hong Kong farmers, whether organic, conventional, or from the other farming categories, have diversified their strategies in crop choices, farming methods, and marketing strategies. Their resilience is stronger than the official statistics show. The results show that stakeholders from the supply chain, including but not limited to seed retailers, CSA supporters, vegetable delivery service providers, etc., are attached to the agricultural sector because of the warmth and friendliness of farmers, the rising consumer demand for local produce, the farmers' effort for produce quality enhancement, and the more effective marketing strategies of supporters. The research outcomes also reflect the fragmented and fragile supply chain, despite the interconnections of stakeholders. I argue for a multifunctional, simultaneously virtual and real platform available for farmers and the other supply chain stakeholders to interact, mutually support, and sustain the supply chain to explore more and stronger food production strategies in future.

## Bio

Angus has been working in environmental and community-based NGOs for more than 25 years. His area of experience covers organic farming, rural community development in indigenous areas, community supported agriculture and capacity building. He founded the Sustainable Ecological Ethical Development Foundation (SEED) in 1999, a Hong Kong based charitable organization promoting organic lifestyle.

## **Innovative Resource Management and In-Situ Adaptation**

Lei Jing, University of Guangxi

### Abstract

In the process of rapid urban development, more and more young people, especially those grow up in rural villages, have reflections about the meaning of urban life. Many desire to live in rural areas because of nostalgia, and have decided to go back to the villages to become a farmer. However, they faced many challenges, such as lacking farming skills, farm planning, and marketing skills. Most of the time, young farmers rely on their passion to farm, but they lack capacity to analyze market and farm-based management knowledge. Lei Jing will share the experiences of how she and other Guangxi external organizations assist and guide the young farmers to overcome the challenges. By making innovative strategy plans based on the analysis of the conditions of external environment and internal strengths, farmers were able to adapt better to their new rural life.

### Bio

Lei Jing holds a Master in Plant Nutrition. She is a lecturer in the Agricultural and Animal Husbandry Industry Development Research Institute of Guangxi University. She is also a member of the Ecological Agriculture Research Team. Her research is on ecological agriculture and environmental science. She has worked on polluted soil remediation and youth development for a long time. Lei Jing has engaged in rural youth farmer training and development, covering technical support and mentoring.

## **Much Agu about Sustainability: Examining the Use of the Heirloom Agu Breed in the Development of Premium Pork Brands in Okinawa**

Benjamin Schrager, Utsunomiya University

Sayaka Sakuma, Osaka Metropolitan University

### Abstract

Originally introduced through trading relations with China, Agu is a black lard-type pig in Okinawa. In this presentation we focus on Agu to examine the evolving processes reshaping ideas of good meat, including the recent emphasis on sustainability. According to official Japanese government statistics, in 1906 Okinawa raised 110,000 pigs, which accounted for 39% of Japan's *overall* pig production. In mid-20<sup>th</sup> Century Japanese books on swine husbandry, Okinawa breeds including Agu were regularly cited as the only exemplars of Japanese pig breeds. Even as other regions within Japan sought to industrialize swine husbandry, the leading prefecture of Okinawa was often overlooked or criticized for unhygienic practices. WWII inflicted devastating losses of life and hardship on Okinawa. Under US Occupation and in the aftermath of WWII, the number of Agu dwindled as it was supplanted by more productive breeds like Chester White and Berkshire.

In the 1980s, a coalition of Okinawa organizations launched a breeding program to revitalize Agu, and it now provides the basis for numerous premium pork brands. Given this complicated legacy, Agu reveals insights into the multiple ways that we might think of sustainability as an idea that spans across cultural practices, companion species, and capital-intensive industries.

## Bio

Benjamin Schrager is an Assistant Professor at Utsunomiya University in the School of Agriculture's Division of Agricultural Economics. His research explores the political ecology of food systems and focuses on the situated processes driving socioecological change. Recent publications focus on chicken industries in Japan, examining the emergence of an artisan heirloom standard called "jidori" in *Journal of Rural Studies*, the issue of food poisoning from raw chicken dishes in *Gastronomica*, and the continual tightening of biosecurity measures in response to avian influenza outbreaks in *Territory, Politics and Governance*. He has a PhD and MA in Geography and Environment at the University of Hawaii at Mānoa and a BA from Grinnell College.

Sayaka Sakuma is a researcher in the Urban-Culture Research Center at Osaka Metropolitan University. Trained in human geography, her research focuses on the nexus between tourism and militarism in Okinawa and how people perceive their relationship to the land through hosting visitors. Her latest publications include "Souvenir of solidarity: Toward an Okinawa-centered politics of demilitarization" in the *Asia-Pacific Journal: Japan Focus*. She holds a PhD in Geography and Environment and Masters of Urban and Regional Planning at University of Hawaii at Mānoa, and a BA from University of the Ryukyus.

## **Sustainable Diets and Food System Change in China: Challenges and Opportunities**

Steffanie Scott, University of Waterloo

### Abstract

Some of the most pressing challenges to implementing sustainable diets in China are the increasing food waste, rising food-away-from-home and online delivery, persistent food safety anxiety and ecological threats posed by the overapplication of agrochemicals and food additives, and the loss of traditional food varieties and agricultural biodiversity. The government of China has taken measures to promote sustainable and healthy eating, to curtail food waste, and to address malnutrition. At the same time, civil society initiatives are addressing food safety and environmental concerns through sustainable food production, food education, and building producer-consumer networks. In this presentation, we outline these trends and actors. We then review support for and trends in ecological agriculture. Governments at various levels in China have provided support in the form of facilitating land access, financing, training and education, and marketing initiatives. While these are constructive, we offer some critiques of their limitations, key among these being the lack of support for small-scale farmers. Other challenges overall for enhancing food system sustainability include the high price premium for ecologically grown foods, the lack of support organizations for farmers, and the lack of trust among farmers. Despite these

challenges, China's case can provide some inspiration for government interventions that educate about and cultivate sustainable diets. The civil society food initiatives in China may provide inspiration for international organizations working on the promotion of sustainable diets.

### Bio

Steffanie Scott is a Professor in the Department of Geography and Environmental Management at the University of Waterloo. She is past president of the Canadian Association for Food Studies (2012-14) and co-chair (2007-11 and 2022-present) of the Food System Roundtable of Waterloo Region. Over her career, Steffanie's research has critically analyzed avenues for rural development, regenerative food systems, and alternative food networks—especially those that prioritize small-scale and organic farmers. Steffanie's research and teaching has been inspired by how “food systems thinking” enables a holistic view that integrates many dimensions of socio-ecological resilience. Steffanie is committed to community engagement, public education, and action research on food system change and land connection. Steffanie is passionate about regenerative food systems, Indigenous food sovereignty, foraging, plant medicines, and wildlife tracking.

### **Urban Collective Intelligence – Breadline: Exploring Food Rescue in Hong Kong**

Daisy D S Tam, Hong Kong Baptist University

### Abstract

Over half of the world's global population lives in cities. Despite only taking up 2% of the world's surface, urbanities consume 75% of global natural resources and produces the same in carbon emissions. Feeding this growing population is an urgent question of both security and sustainability. Yet one-third of all food produced for human consumption gets wasted – here in Hong Kong – 3600 tonnes of food waste get thrown into landfill everyday while 20% of the population suffers from food insecurity. Urban environments are therefore crucial sites to investigate sustainable solutions especially where urban food systems are concerned.

In this talk, I would like to look at the case of food rescue – the practice of repurposing surplus food for those in need. Presenting my research's web application “Breadline”– HK's first public digital platform for food rescue, I will share how the platform prevents food waste by providing a just-in-time response. In doing so, I demonstrate a form of collective action that is temporary, transient, but nevertheless enables a form of working together to achieve a goal where the sum is bigger than its parts.

### Bio

Dr. Daisy Tam is Associate Professor at the Department of Humanities and Creative Writing at the Hong Kong Baptist University. Informed by her Cultural Studies training, her research in urban food systems and critical cultural analysis on food waste is a theoretical and technical endeavour underpinned by an interest in ethical practices of care. She collaborates closely with community organisations and works in an interdisciplinary and impact-driven manner.

Dr. Tam has received multiple local and international grants, including the prestigious UGC-Fulbright Senior Scholar award (2018-2019) where she was a senior fellow at MIT's Urban Risk Lab. She was also awarded the Faculty Performance Award in 2021 for her service to the community. She founded HKFoodWorks and Breadline - HK's first public web application for food rescue which saved over 100,000 loaves of bread to date.

## **Farming Innovations in Singapore**

Chelsea Wan, Jurong Frog Farm

### Abstract

Local agriculture and aquaculture in Singapore require sustainable innovation. Lim Chu Kang in Singapore is the cluster of Singaporean local farms. Facing global competition, food quality and safety have become the key factors for local farms to sustain. This presentation focuses on the historical development of Jurong Frog Farm, which is currently a farm with a wide array of services including edible frog production, environmental and food education, skincare product development. The speaker will share her experiences of innovations and product development such as the green incentive scheme.

### Bio

Ms Chelsea Wan, a serial entrepreneur, entered the family frog farming business since 2006 after graduating from NUS majoring in Sociology. Her curiosity for this industry led her to dedicate 16 years of her frog farming career to expand on American Bullfrogs product offerings. Her strong environmental consciousness fuelled her motivations to work on various feasibility studies to reduce farm waste to revalorise them into high value consumer products. She is also passionate about engaging the community and has been a strong advocate for promoting local farms and their farm fresh produce in Kranji countryside.

## **Making Open-Access Edamame Supply Chains: Organizational Structure, Institutional Power, and Rent Seeking in Thailand and Taiwan**

Kuan-Chi Wang, Academia Sinica

### Abstract

Recent studies on vegetable supply chains (SCs) have addressed how smallholders in the rural area have adapted to the trend of globalization at regional and local levels of agricultural production, and furthered that the cooperative mode is a promising way of improving the efficiency of agricultural production. Yet, this line of scholarship tends to fold institutions into organizational elements of agricultural production and exchange. Little attention has been specifically given to the way in which the collaboration of agri-food production is an unfolding of power dynamics. The goal of this study is to examine the power effects of the vegetable SC collaboration: the internal balance of economic interests between organizations and institutional political powers that contains compatible systems of incentives across the agri-food sectors with a focus on the

edamame agriculture in Taiwan and Thailand. This study provides novel findings based on the case study of edamame supply chains at Thailand and Taiwan to justify the growth of the vegetable SC in light of an open-access regime that effectively reduced transaction costs through rent erosion.

### Bio

Kuan-Chi Wang is an Assistant Research Fellow at Academia Sinica. His theoretical interests stretch across critical geopolitics, environmental governance and politics, new economic geography, and geospatial modeling with particular focus on Asian foodways. He is also interested in technology-society interaction focusing on the political economy of building information city and cultural-creative city in Taiwan and Asia. As the member of Taiwan Water and Land Research Network, He has participated environmental movements to address groundwater overuse-land subsidence hazard of western Taiwan. His academic works appear in journals such as The Journal of Peasant Studies, Area, Geography Compass, Environment and Planning E, Geographical Review, among others.

### **Heirloom Rice and Rice-Growing Culture in Hong Kong: A Reflection on Rice Heritage and Social Sustainability**

Mon MW Wong, Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department, The Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region  
Yuk Wah Chan, City University of Hong Kong

### Abstract

Hong Kong was not only a place where rice had been widely grown to support its own population, it had also produced rice for the Chinese imperial court and overseas markets. While rice fields were commonly seen throughout the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, rice production declined rapidly after the 1960s. Many rice wetlands were converted into vegetable farms for growing more profitable cash crops. In 2019, the Agriculture, Fishery and Conservation Department recovered some heirloom rice seeds from overseas seed banks and successfully carried out the first harvest of HK heirloom rice after its disappearance for over half a century. The paper explores the process and experiences of re-growing local rice and seeks to understand the emergence of a rice-growing culture among Hong Kong farmers. It argues that rice has been a part of the local identity and food heritage. However, it is also undeniable that local rice supply will not be sustainable due to the lack of farmland, low productivity, global rice imports and the fact that few in the city will recognize the value of supporting and sustaining the city's own rice.

### Bio

Mon Wong is an Agricultural Officer of the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department. After graduated in the Department of Plant Pathology and Entomology at National Taiwan University, she has been working in the fields of crop production and extension service to vegetable farmers for over 15 years. Her work focuses on horticulture such as the introduction of new crop varieties, greenhouse production technology, organic cultivation techniques, crop

production and nutrition. Her current work includes re-introducing the heirloom rice varieties of Hong Kong to local farmers and the public as well as finding out feasible ways for local farm automation.

Chan Yuk Wah is Associate Professor at the Department of Public and International Affairs at City University of Hong Kong (CityU). Her research interests include agriculture and food, migration, and governance. She has designed and taught courses on food and sustainability and has been a member of the Advisory Committee on Agriculture and Fisheries since 2020. She guided students to do rooftop planting and has also organized the Good Food Club at CityU to introduce students to responsible food consumption.