

# In action

Joining forces to shape a resilient, sustainable, safe & healthy food system !



May 2021

## In a foreword

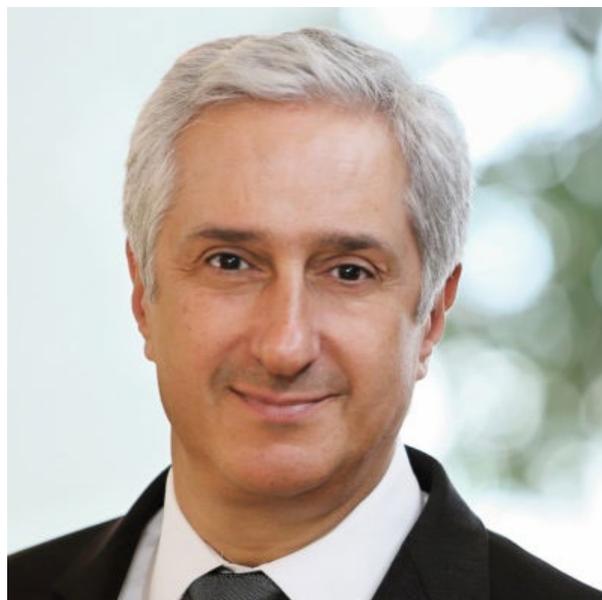
Dear readers,

1

It has been of great importance for WUWM to gather the global fresh food sector together in our three independent regional dialogues aiming to make our voice heard in the forthcoming United Nations 2021 Food System Summit. This moment was unique for collectively identifying challenges and finding pathways to a sustainable food sector by 2030.

Our organization not only recognizes the value of collective dialogue but also the significance of multi-stakeholder perspectives. We want to bring together our wholesale markets alongside a range of fresh food actors and experts representing various levels and sectors of society around the world. In fact, in this May newsletter we highlight the different actions we have taken to establish these links and build bridges between stakeholders, especially in the important months leading up to the UNFSS and our Global Conference to be held in Florence, Italy.

We are delighted to feature in this edition of "In Action" an interview with Ms. Carolyn Steel, who gave a key note in our European dialogue, and to whom we extend our sincerest gratitude. In her interview she enlightens us on the interdependent relationship of food and achieving a sustainable future. In fact, this is a critical issue to address in contemporary society, and in the post Covid-19 world given the major disruptions to the food supply chain, climate change and the need to reduce emissions and the increasing risks to food safety and security. This is also the focus of our Global Conference which seeks to tackle fresh food distribution and all other aspects relating to challenges arising after the Covid-19 crisis.



The epidemic crisis highlighted the central role that wholesale markets play in ensuring both the efficient functioning and long-term solutions to challenges in the fresh food ecosystem.

In doing so, it shed light on the need to improve targeted actions and scale-up efforts in strengthening market infrastructures to withstand future shocks and similar adverse conditions.

WUWM is also organizing a last edition of our independent dialogues on May 3. It will be held in partnership with UN-Habitat and will focus on Africa, tackling significant topics including the need of a multi-stakeholder approach through the role of local authorities, producers, logisticians, markets and other stakeholders in building sustainable food systems.

We look forward to your continued support, commitment and valuable partnership!

Yours sincerely,

**Stéphane Layani**, WUWM Acting Chairman

# In the loop

## UN Food Systems Summit Independent Dialogues

With great success WUWM organized three independent dialogues in support of the 2021 United Nations Food Systems Summit. Over 250 stakeholders from across the food sector were present and contributed to meaningful discussions. The series is called: 'Making Nutritious and Healthy Diets Available to All: Empowering a Sustainable and Resilient Fresh Food Supply Chain Worldwide. In total, there will be four different sessions (LATAM, Asia, Europe and Africa) to include voices around the world in the final report to be presented upon its conclusion.

The dialogue was equally successful in its dynamism and wide reach – bringing together key food actors from major organizations, representing various sectors and regions of the world. In Latin America, it had over 125 participants including our wholesale markets, government officials, international organizations as the FAO and the IDB, food experts, university professors and other stakeholders. In Asia, it had almost 60 participants from Asia-Pacific wholesale markets and retail markets, FAO, Asian Development Bank, GAIN, and many more. In Europe, it had over 60 participants from a wide range of entities such as wholesale markets, the European Commission, FAO, World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF), the Global Alliance to Promote Fruits and Vegetables Consumption "5 a day" ("AIAM5"), the OECD, the Food banks, among others.

We are organizing a final edition on the 3rd of May in Africa in collaboration with UN-Habitat. It will focus on the collaboration between wholesale markets, local authorities and producers. This May 3rd session will highlight the multi-stakeholder nature of the sector by tackling the role of local authorities, producers, logisticians, and other stakeholders in sustainable markets. We are looking forward to sharing the final report with you soon!



UNITED NATIONS  
FOOD SYSTEMS  
SUMMIT 2021

## In facts

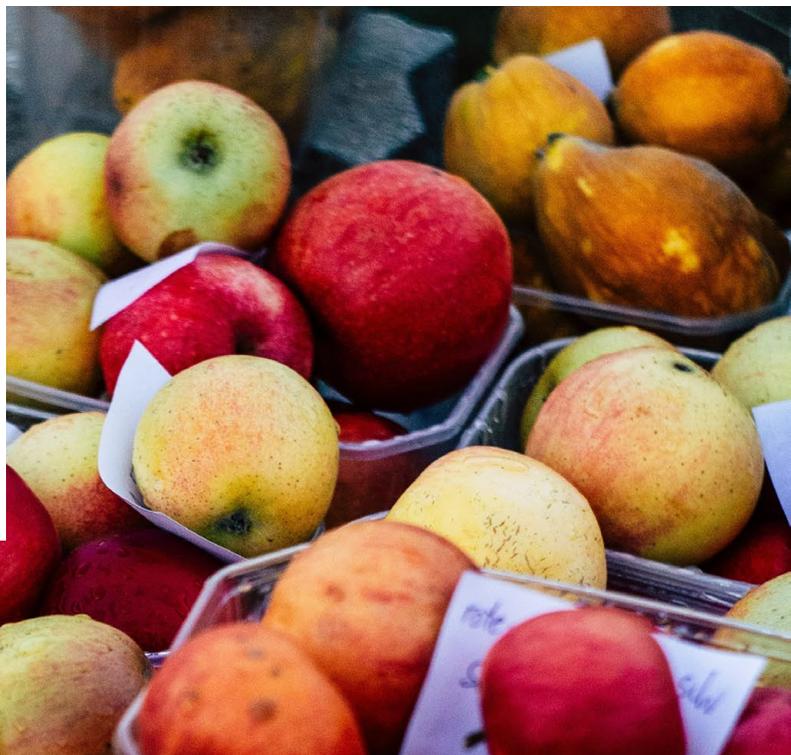
- **Over 1/3 of all food produced globally goes to waste.**

- **An area larger than China is used to produce food that is never eaten.**

- **In most developed countries, over half of all food wasted is in the home setting.**

- **The annual value of food wasted globally is \$1 trillion and weighs 1.3 billion tons of kilograms**

**Over one third  
of all food produced  
globally goes  
to waste.**



# Insightful :

## Early bird registrations to the next 2021 WUWM Conference are now open!

This year the annual WUWM conference, that will take place on the 25th of June in the city of Florence, will be co-organized by Mercafir, Florence's wholesale market, and shed light on the challenges and opportunities that the food sector is facing as a result of the COVID-19 crisis which has not only disrupted food chains worldwide but also adversely affected various stakeholders and livelihoods. The conference will be delivered in a dual modality both on site and online.

Under the theme "Fresh food distribution in the post Covid-19 world: Challenges, opportunities and pathways to ensure resilient and sustainable food systems and access to healthy diets" the conference will tackle the lessons learned from the pandemic and highlight best practices across sectors at the intersection of sustainability strategies and solutions-based approaches to bring more resilience to the fresh food supply chain.

Experts, representatives of major wholesale markets, international organizations, policymakers, entrepreneurs, researchers, and food supply chain actors will come together both on site and online to share first-hand experiences and propose a pathway to ensure a healthier and sustainable food system!



FLORENCE 2021  
WUWM  
World Union of Wholesale Markets  
CONFERENCE

FRIDAY 25<sup>th</sup> JUNE 2021

"Florence is looking forward to welcoming you. The timing for this conference is ideal and will create the necessary energy to explore the future of our food systems and understand in depth the important role that wholesale markets have in the post Covid-19 world " expressed Giacomo Lucibello, Presidente Mercafir

«COVID-19 and the resulting inequalities have reinforced the need for urgent action. We need to find today, solutions to address the main challenges that can put at risk food security,» remarked Stéphane Layani, WUWM Chairman. «The COVID crisis has shaken food supply chains around the world. Accessibility and affordability will be key points in the forthcoming years, and we urgently need to address them,» he added.

For registrations, please visit:

<https://wuwm.org/fresh-food-distribution-in-the-post-covid19-world-florence-25-june-2021/>

**FRESH FOOD DISTRIBUTION IN THE POST COVID-19 WORLD**  
**Florence, Italy, 25 June 2021**



## Interview :

### Carolyn Steel, author of the award-winning *Hungry City: How Food Shapes Our Lives* (2008) and *Sitopia: How Food Can Save the World* (2020)

4

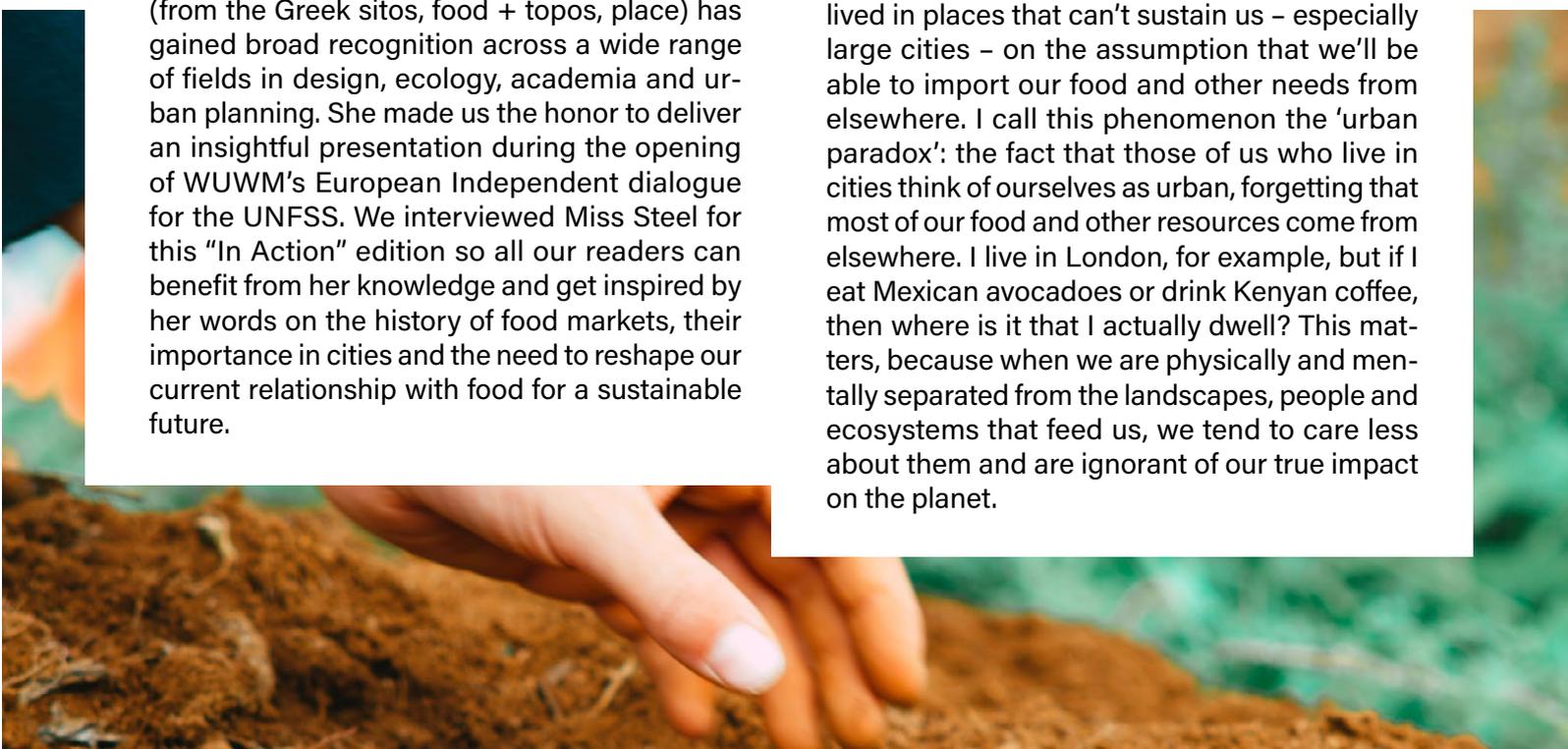
Carolyn Steel is a leading thinker on food and cities. She is the author of the award-winning *Hungry City: How Food Shapes Our Lives* (2008) and *Sitopia: How Food Can Save the World* (2020). Her concept of sitopia, or food-place (from the Greek *sitos*, food + *topos*, place) has gained broad recognition across a wide range of fields in design, ecology, academia and urban planning. She made us the honor to deliver an insightful presentation during the opening of WUWM's European Independent dialogue for the UNFSS. We interviewed Miss Steel for this "In Action" edition so all our readers can benefit from her knowledge and get inspired by her words on the history of food markets, their importance in cities and the need to reshape our current relationship with food for a sustainable future.

#### **How did you get interested in food and markets?**

My interest in food probably stems from the fact that my grandparents had a hotel in Bournemouth, the *Miramar*, where I spent most of my holidays as a child. The food there was wonderful – the best English produce with a French twist – and I only realised much later that I was eating far better than most of my contemporaries in the UK! But it was only when I became an architect that I started to see how food shaped our lives and world. Markets were naturally interesting to me (as they are to most people on holiday!) because they always seemed to be where the action was. We are naturally drawn to markets, I believe, because they have such a powerful sense of theatre; of being a place where something essential about life and death is played out. When I was in Rome in the 1990s studying the everyday life of the city through history, I deliberately chose the market district of Rione S. Angelo near the Theatre of Marcellus to study, because I sensed that this would be where I would find most evidence of the ordinary lives of Romans as they lived in the past.

#### **Why is it fundamental to ask ourselves what is our true dwelling place in the context of the urban paradox?**

How we should dwell on earth is a fundamental question, yet in recent times we've forgotten to ask it. As humans, we have a set of needs for things such as food, water, energy and materials, all of which come from the natural world. In the past, we made our homes where such things could be found: in other words, we dwelt in places capable of sustaining us. Ever since the industrial revolution, however, we've increasingly lived in places that can't sustain us – especially large cities – on the assumption that we'll be able to import our food and other needs from elsewhere. I call this phenomenon the 'urban paradox': the fact that those of us who live in cities think of ourselves as urban, forgetting that most of our food and other resources come from elsewhere. I live in London, for example, but if I eat Mexican avocados or drink Kenyan coffee, then where is it that I actually dwell? This matters, because when we are physically and mentally separated from the landscapes, people and ecosystems that feed us, we tend to care less about them and are ignorant of our true impact on the planet.





## What lessons can we learn from the ancient Greeks and the Athenian Agora in terms of how we feed a city?

In many ways the Greeks were the first to address the urban paradox, since they lived in a region with poor soils and were thus obsessed with the question of how to feed a city from early on. Both Plato and Aristotle considered the ideal arrangement would be for the city to remain small enough to be fed directly from its local hinterland, creating a self-sufficient city-state, or polis. Each citizen would ideally have a house in the city and a farm in the countryside from which to feed it – an arrangement known as oikonomia, or household management (from oikos, household + nemein, management). Such an arrangement (which is incidentally the root of our modern word economics) would not only render the city self-sufficient, but would establish a natural balance between city and country. Of course in the real Athens, not everyone did feel themselves in this way, and the agora played a key role, not only in feeding the citizens, but in providing a public arena in which everyday political life was played out. To my mind, the agora remains arguably the greatest public space ever built. As open space with a somewhat rustic feel surrounded by public stoas in which people could gather, it combined of food, politics, philosophy and the ribaldry of everyday life in a way that epitomises what markets can be at their best. I believe both of these aspects of the way in which the Greeks fed their cities have much to teach us today.

5

**« Food represents life, but for some reason we've come to expect it to be cheap, thus cheapening life itself. If you list some of the externalities of so-called cheap food – climate change, pollution, soil degradation, obesity, it soon becomes clear that there is no such thing. »**

## Can you tell us a little bit about your book *The Hungry City* (2008)? Why did you write this book?

That's a long story! But I suppose, in a way, I have already partly answered your question: I was an architect who was interested in food, and slowly those two sides of my life came together. The study I did in Rome (which I called *The Mundane Order of the City*) was probably key, since it taught me so much about the power of food and markets to shape cities. But my inspiration ultimately came from wanting to discuss and think about cities in way that went beyond architecture, to the question of what really made them tick – in short, I was looking for a way of injecting real life into the architectural discourse! Shortly after I came back from Rome, I became the inaugural studio director of the Cities Programme at the London School of Economics, where I was able to debate urban design with planners, politicians, economists, sociologists and so on. It was an incredible experience, but it also showed me how hard it is to break out of our intellectual silos, and I really wanted to find a way of exploring urban life in all its facets. It was actually in conversation with one of my LSE colleagues – on the 18th of April 2001, so almost exactly 20 years ago – that I had the idea of describing a city through food, and I immediately knew that I had found my subject! That idea became my book *Hungry City*, in which I explored what it takes to feed a city, from past, present and future perspectives. The book follows food's journey from the land and sea to the road, the market, kitchen, table and finally to the waste dump. In the last chapter, I wanted to capture what I had learned through writing the book – that we live in a world shaped by food – so that was when I invented the word *sitopia*, or 'foodplace' (from the Greek *sitos*, food + *topos*, place).

**What about your new book *Sitopia* (2020)? What are some of the key messages it conveys?**

As I just mentioned, I invented the word *sitopia* while writing *Hungry City*, and a couple of years after the book came out, it became clear to me that I was going to have to write some sort of sequel. *Sitopia* took me eight years to write, since it explores pretty much every aspect of life through the lens of food. The structure actually came from a drawing I did in 2011, in which I explored where food sits in our world (answer: right at the centre!), and it starts with a plate of food and works out to the universe, in a series of overlapping scales in which I look at the body, the home, society, city and country, nature and time, all through the lens of food. The book thus covers a vast range of topics, from happiness, digestion and the workings of the brain to politics, economics, philosophy, urban planning, agriculture, soil health and finally the nature of life and death.

The basic thesis of *Sitopia* is that food represents life, but for some reason we've come to expect it to be cheap, thus cheapening life itself. If you list some of the externalities of so-called cheap food – climate change, deforestation, mass extinction, pollution, soil degradation, water depletion, declining fish stocks, obesity, diet-related disease and zoonotic pandemics – it soon becomes clear that there is no such thing. In short, we live in a bad *sitopia* because we don't value food, and now that is threatening us and our planet. But the good news is that food is also the great connector, so by valuing food once more, we can change all that, get our lives back in balance with nature and create much happier, healthier, more resilient societies. In essence, *sitopia* is a food-based philosophy: it's a practical, real-life alternative to utopia.

**How can we reflect on the lessons of the past to move forward in addressing contemporary issues of sustainability?**

One of the things I love most about thinking through food is that it's a bit like having a time machine: humans have always had to eat, so we have a huge range of past experience on which to draw. What's interesting, though, is that of the 200,000 years that *Homo sapiens* has been on earth, we've only been farming for 12,000 years and living in cities for 5,500, so our experience of urban-agrarian living is relatively short.

**« I believe wholesale markets can play a leading role in reimagining the food system to revitalise city centres and city regions, by becoming new food hubs. »**

And what becomes clear when we look at past urban civilisations is that they've tended to be much shorter-lived than their hunter-gatherer counterparts: ancient Rome, for example, only lasted for about 500 years, while the Khoisan people have lived continuously in the Kalahari desert for 150,000 years! So that's one obvious lesson: live in balance with nature and with one another and you'll last much longer. But I think the greatest lesson from our past is that, before we started burning fossil fuels, we were really careful with scarce resources. Cities generally grew as much food as they could nearby, both due to the difficulties of transporting it far, but also in order to recycle precious organic waste. Towns and cities were invariably surrounded by market gardens, orchards and vineyards, on which 'night-soil' (human and animal waste) was used as manure, and many households kept pigs, chickens or goats, feeding them on kitchen scraps. Although cattle were often raised far from the city (because they could provide their own transport), they were still fattened on spent brewers' grain before slaughter. I think many elements of such traditional food systems could make a return, for example, we could have more small producers within city regions, supported by the necessary infrastructures, and we could be much better at recycling our organic waste. This doesn't have to mean a return to medieval ways, but I do believe many of the solutions we need to feed cities better in the future lie in the past. I often say that, after a two-century long gap, we are entering a 'Neo-Geographical Age', in which geography really matters again.





**How can bringing food system stakeholders together, such as during the UN Food Systems Summit Independent Dialogues, support a transition in the way we consume and think about food?**

I think it's really important that those with a stake in the food system – which is all of us, of course, but I mean those whose job it is to feed the rest of us – have this conversation now. In my experience, the vast majority of those who work in food – whether on the industrial or organic side – genuinely want to feed the world better, without destroying the planet. The problem is that we are all trapped in this insane 'race to the bottom,' in which producing more food, more cheaply is the goal. To me, the most important message that could come out of the UN Food Summit would be the joint statement that there is no such thing as cheap food. Yes, we need to provide enough good, healthy food to feed 7.9 billion people, but we also want to leave a liveable planet for our grandchildren – for me, this means we must transition towards more regenerative farming practices and more equitable societies, which in turn means revaluing food and putting it back at the centre of our social and economic thinking. Tech 'fixes' alone won't get us where we need to be; this has to be the start of a food revolution that involves the whole of civil society – which is why I also believe that civil society food groups have a crucial part to play at the Summit.

7

**« We must transition towards more regenerative farming practices and more equitable societies, which in turn means revaluing food and putting it back at the centre of our social and economic thinking. »**

**What is the role of wholesale markets in promoting food sustainability and feeding mega cities of the future? Is this reflected in your book(s)?**

I believe that food markets have a pivotal role in shaping our future cities, landscapes and food systems, as they did in the past. As I said above, we are entering a Neo Geographical Age in which the way in which we feed ourselves will be crucial to our survival. We can no longer afford to externalise the true costs of food, and markets have a key role to play in helping to restore the public's connection with food in order to build more sustainable, regional and seasonal food networks. Food markets have always been the heart and soul of cities – it's very clear when you approach one how powerfully they drive the cultural and commercial life of the city – and I believe wholesale markets can play a leading role in reimagining the food system to revitalise city centres and city regions, by becoming new food hubs offering a range of services, perhaps including food growing, processing, education, research, retail and hospitality, as well as traditional logistics. Such a range of services would actually return wholesale markets closer to their origins as the social and economic hearts of cities. Some cities, like Barcelona, recognise this potential and have poured millions into restoring and subsidising their food markets, while others lag behind: the future of London's Smithfield, for example, remains unclear, yet its potential as a future food hub is huge. Such ideas are indeed reflected in my books, in fact everything that markets symbolise – the sociability, sharing, sustainability, economy and joy of food – is central to my very idea of sitopia.

*WUWM would like to sincerely thank Miss Steel for her great speech earlier this month and this fantastic interview and we encourage all readers to find out more about her work at <https://www.carolynsteel.com/>*



# Innovation

## Wuxi Chaoyang Wholesale Market (China) tackles Covid-19 disruptions through digitalization

8

Located in the southern Jiangsu province (north of Shanghai), Chaoyang Wholesale Market has been a pioneer in developing and using digital tools for wholesale markets in China.

In 2019, Chaoyang Wholesale Market developed a platform that offers real-time transaction data, forecasts and supply information (such as origin, variety, weight, expected arrival time, and number of vehicles) to suppliers and traders. During the first epidemic outbreak in China, the lockdowns and regulations caused a backlog of fresh agricultural products in Hubei province. Through its digital platform, Chaoyang market shared this information with the traders enabling better commercialization and distribution of the excess of fruits and vegetables from Hubei area, thereby ensuring farmers an income and drastically reducing food waste.

Chaoyang Wholesale Market has also developed an integrated online and offline payment system in the past years. During the COVID-19 crisis, the digitalization of transactions facilitated the continuity of its operations and safeguarded its clients and staff while maintaining efficient operations.

This original and quick response to epidemic challenges showed how digitalization can bring new solutions to the food sector and encourage the need to keep exploring digital tools helping actors in the food system.

The wholesale market is now betting on the development of new services: a digital tool for marketing analyses and a warning system with data on food flows that will cover the entire food supply chain, aiming to build up more resilience and adaptability in case of crisis.

## Chaoyang Wholesale Market has been a pioneer in developing and using digital tools for wholesale markets in China.



## In membership :

9 **Meet CEO Leanne Williams of Joburg Market who is improving healthy food intake in South Africa's largest city.**

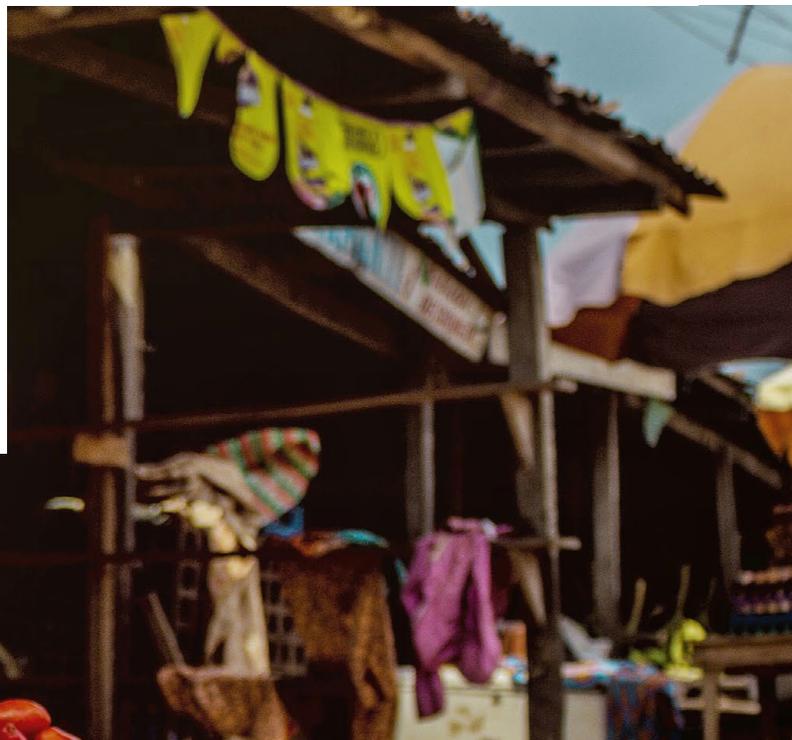


The World Union of Wholesale Markets (WUWM) had the great opportunity to interview Joburg Market's CEO Leanne Williams to learn more about the largest fresh-produce market in South Africa. Here her interview:

### **1. Could you briefly introduce your organization to the readers of this newsletter?**

Joburg Market (JM) is the largest fresh-produce market in South Africa, by volume and value. In fact, this is highlighted in our Joburg Market's key statistics. We serve more than 5000 farmers across South Africa who send in fresh-produce consignments daily, averaging 9 000 trucks per month, and we have more than 10 000 daily buyers, who come from across all towns of South Africa and neighbouring countries. We also cater to a diverse set of buyers, varying between large Bulk-buyers, Retails-shop buyers, Supermarket Wholesalers, and Informal Traders (street-vendors).

The JM is 100% - owned by the Johannesburg Metropolitan Municipality with a vision to build a smart fresh-produce trading hub that is globally competitive, and a mission of building a trading complex that capitalizes the growth of the city's economy through an inclusive business environment. Trade takes place primarily in three Food hubs (trading-halls) namely: The Fruit-Hub, The Vegetable Hub, as well as The Potato and Onion Hub - each dedicated solely to selling a given produce. Beyond this, the Market has other value-adding services like cold-rooms and banana-ripening rooms that can hold large volumes- and are located in our 65-hectare premises.





**2. What are some of Joburg Market’s short-term and long-term goals?**

JM is implementing key interventions across various levels of impact and growth to achieve its strategic goals. In the short-term, we embarked on a space rationalisation project in conjunction with Market Agents, meant to optimise the use of space at JM with the view to increase revenue generated per square metre. In the medium-term, it finalised the Precinct Development Strategy and Plan, which is being used to motivate the recapitalisation of the company with an appropriation of R 304 million allocated to fund completion of priority projects. We will also develop a skills plan to fast-track training and development of employees and enhance competencies. In the long-term, we embarked on 2 key projects to benefit historically disadvantaged individuals, such as the construction of a Pack-house for emerging farmers and the adopted of the Smart Market Strategy, which seeks to seamlessly integrate people, systems and processes that would improve both people and company performance. JM is also pursuing the automation and digitalisation of numerous market management processes

**3. Do you have any tips for handling the pandemic as a market? What are some of the initiatives Joburg Market implemented to address the pandemic?**

JM has worked together with the City in fighting the pandemic. During the first wave in South Africa in July 2020, Joburg Market developed a newsletter dedicated to COVID-19. The newsletter increased awareness among the Market’s staff and stakeholders, with official information on: the symptoms of COVID-19, actions to take when a family member or colleague displays the symptoms, the difference between Quarantining and Self-Isolation, the importance and process of sanitizing, including washing hands with soap and other hygiene habits, etc. We also put up notices and posters along trading hall walls, providing the information in various South African languages, and explaining the practice of social-distancing. We also implemented large-scale communication campaigns, as well as set-up task-teams to monitor and report incidents. As a CEO, I had to evaluate and send out updates to staff and stakeholders almost on a daily basis.

**4. How did you first get involved in the food industry? How did the Joburg Market develop?**

The company owes its origin to the establishment of the fresh produce market at the Market Square in central Johannesburg in 1887 where 3 000 people congregated to trade fresh produce. As the City grew, so did the trading of fresh produce. This prompted the building of a new facility in Newtown in 1913. In that year alone, the Market achieved an annual turnover of R1.5 million. The premises in Newtown became increasingly too small to handle trading. By 1974, the market had relocated to its current location in City Deep, in the South of Johannesburg.

The political transition in South Africa saw Joburg Market (JM) emerge as a private company, wholly owned by the City of Johannesburg Metropolitan Municipality (CoJ). In 2000, the company was converted into a State-Owned Company (SOC), in line with the implementation of the Companies Act of South Africa (Act No. 71 of 2008). The Company is required to comply with various legislative provisions that set out the statutory requirements, among them being the Companies Act, the Municipal Systems Act and the Municipal Finance Management Act 56 of 2003.

**5. What is the best business advice you have received?**

To achieve big strides in the fresh produce industry, you must start with efficient baby steps.

## **6. Joburg Market recently made food donations to Sparrow Village and Ivory Park in South Africa, could you tell us more about these significant undertakings?**

JM is pursuing an active CSI programme. Among many noble institutions, we have identified Sparrow Village as a significant one as it provides care to some 260 children and adults who became orphans as result of the HIV/Aids disease and who were living in this place of care established by a priest, Rev Corine McClintock. We also felt the need to extend compassion towards nearby communities with whom we could share the spirit of empathy in providing these food donations and thereby, demonstrating the significance of food security.

## **7. City of Johannesburg Member of Mayoral Committee for economic development Lawrence Khoza visited Joburg Market on February 17, what were some of the things you discussed?**

Among the key discussions held, the MMC acknowledged the Joburg Market's industry leadership and track-record, and encouraged the JM team not to be complacent. He also added that we should be innovative, and reminded us that food security is important not only for the City but for the country as a whole and recapitulated on the importance of fresh-produce, as well as delivering good customer services to all our buyers and stakeholders. He is very supportive and we appreciate that.

## **8. What is Johannesburg's GDS 2040 Strategy and how will it affect your market?**

The GDS 2040 is the City of Joburg's long-term strategy, developed and refined since the year 2006. It illustrates the envisaged City and focuses on building it through a futuristic and far-reaching, multi-sectoral outlook to guide the City on its growth-path, innovations, considerations, contextual analysis and strategic thrust the municipality will develop. It is a well-formulated model of the city-region paradigm, which seeks to harness resources towards sustainable development of Joburg as a world-class city. It entails considerations of a desired future: inclusivity, being youth-friendly, Millennium Development Goals, energy considerations, work-and-play ecosystem, policy and legislative imperatives, a multicultural Johannesburg cognizant of global economic challenges like climate change, global population growth, Fourth Industrial Revolution and mindful of disruptors like diseases and pandemics such as COVID-19, considering recovery plans, urbanisation and the new normal in a "VUCA (volatile, unpredictable, complex, ambiguous)" world. It also highlights the role that JM plays in implementing activities for its realization. It primarily concerns driving the attainment of food security, eradicating poverty, building liveable communities with social inclusion and cohesion, good governance and ensuring resource security and environmental sustainability. We will also see an enhancement and promotion of the strategy and its outcomes.

The political transition in South Africa saw Joburg Market (JM) emerge as a private company, wholly owned by the City of Johannesburg Metropolitan Municipality (CoJ). In 2000, the company was converted into a State-Owned Company (SOC), in line with the implementation of the Companies Act of South Africa (Act No. 71 of 2008). The Company is required to comply with various legislative provisions that set out the statutory requirements, among them being the Companies Act, the Municipal Systems Act and the Municipal Finance Management Act 56 of 2003.

**To achieve big strides in the fresh produce industry, you must start with efficient baby steps.**





**9. What trends in the African food sector are you most excited about?**

There are many trends to be excited about in the African Food sector, they include:

Agro-processing, the growing number of Food Cooperatives and food-vendors (traders), on-line-mobile food services, organic Food, urban-farming, the interest in the traceability and transparency in food-labels describing the entire life-cycle of a food-product, the uptake of immune-system boosting food among others.

**10. What are some key advantages for you and Joburg Market of taking part in WUWM?**

We entered this international network of markets largely because of an appreciation for the impact of our commodities at the national and international levels. It has become important to be connected globally given the developments regarding the availability and supply of fresh produce, pricing as well as other factors and variables that impact them. For us to be part of this network provides important benefits like information regarding developments in other countries' fresh produce markets, exchange programmes, access to international data, research findings, an avenue to explore export and import opportunities, learning about international regulations, systems and compliance procedure and learning from innovations and best-practices. And of course, it gives us the opportunity to participate in international campaigns and improve the Joburg Market's reputation and brand-reach.

For us to be part of the WUWM provides important benefits like learning from innovations and best-practices, access to international data, an avenue to explore export and import opportunities, learning about international regulations, systems and compliance among others.

# In a best practice

## Rungis wholesale market commits to the transformation towards sustainability of the food sector with an ambitious new Corporate Social Responsibility strategy!

WUWM's member Rungis Market is known as the biggest wholesale market in the world. The market serves 1200 companies and over 18 million consumers a day with fresh products. This year, Rungis Market demonstrates their ambition to be a contributor and "game-changer" of sustainable food transition by launching their new Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) strategy. We interviewed Pauline Jacquemard, the Director of the CSR Unit, to share their story.

### How has Rungis enhanced its Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) through its new strategy? Why is this important today?

Since 2013, Rungis Market has been pursuing an active policy in terms of CSR. A number of actions have been developed and successfully deployed these past years, in collaboration with the Market's companies, strengthening Rungis position as a committed player on sustainable development issues. Some major projects carried out in recent years include the recovery of 100% of our waste, the opening of an Organic Pavilion, the installation of electric terminals and a GNVert station to promote low-carbon flows, the greening of the Market, etcetera.

However, in a context where consumers are increasingly aware of these issues, we realized the need for engaging ourselves in a more structural way. That's why at the end of 2020 we decided to structure our CSR initiative, we launched an ambitious action plan for the next four years and created a CSR Unit in charge of the follow-up.



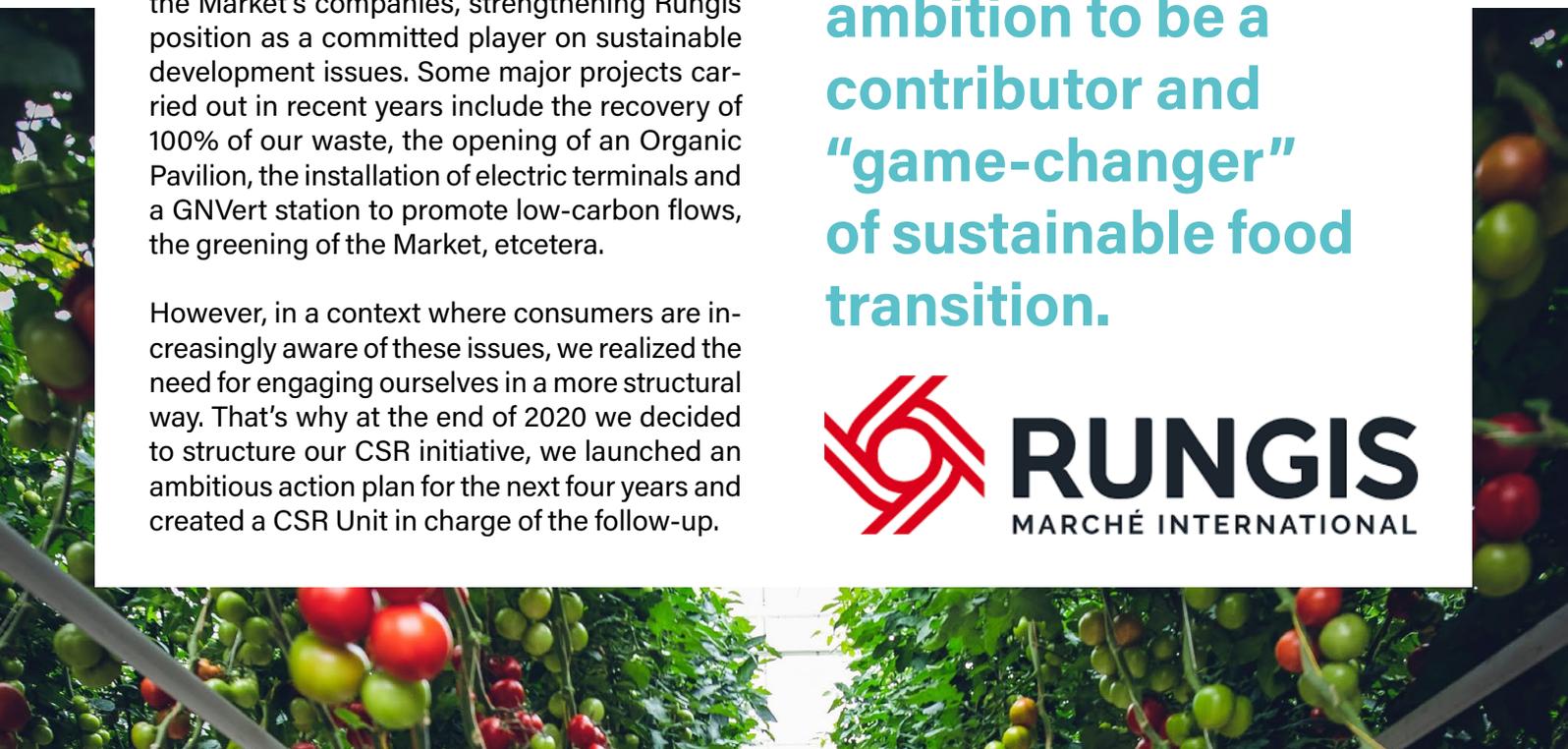
With this new action plan, we want to intensify our efforts and role as a catalyst and conductor of the environmental and societal transition by limiting our environmental footprint as much as possible, acting ever more responsibly and taking all our partners and our ecosystem on board!

### Can you tell us a little bit more in detail what the strategy is about?

Rungis Market's new CSR policy is an ambitious approach based on three strategic pillars, objectives for 2024 :

- To be the driving force behind the transition to sustainable food
  - To preserve resources and aim for carbon neutrality
  - To accentuate the role of lever for the socio-economic development of our territory
- Based on these pillars we are going to develop 80 concrete actions.

## Rungis Market demonstrates their ambition to be a contributor and "game-changer" of sustainable food transition.





### **What are the most important work streams and goals of this strategy?**

The year 2021 will be devoted to carrying out a certain number of diagnoses and studies that will make it possible to define the major projects which we will develop and the best way of approaching them.

We are going to carry out the first carbon assessment of our activities and those of the Market, which will be shared with the companies and will enable us to set up a concrete action plan to reduce our greenhouse gas emissions. Actions will also be taken to strengthen the presence of responsible companies, products and services within the Market, notably by working on projects to label our companies and on a “charter of commitments” for our new operators.

Studies are also underway on the treatment of our waste to increase circular economy treatment solutions of all the waste that we produce, organic and non-organic (composting, methanization, plastic recycling, etc.), as well as continuing our actions to combat food waste. In terms of innovation, 2021 will be an important year for our Rungis & Co Start-up Incubator, which will be moving to the heart of the Market with a completely redefined offer and activities enabling this innovation center to become the Market’s response to the challenges of the food transition.

In addition, we have implemented various projects to make Rungis a sustainable logistics hub and promote low-carbon flows at the Market. The development of rail supply at the Market is one of our priorities, as well as the creation of a non-polluting energy recharging network, to support the promotion of clean vehicles for our users and customers.

Lastly, actions will be implemented on the social area with the opening of our learning center “Rungis Academy” dedicated to apprenticeships in the food industry.

### **Do you think this strategy could be applied to other wholesale markets around the world?**

Of course! We are dealing with the CSR issues of a food distribution logistics platform, and the problems encountered at Rungis Market are those that impact wholesale markets worldwide, such as: food transition, carbon footprint, sustainable logistics, eco-design for the construction of new buildings and renovation projects, employment and attractiveness of professions, health, safety and well-being of employees and users, and education.

These are all subjects that wholesale markets will have to deal with and we hope to exchange more about this topic with other WUWM members to propose game-changing solutions together for our sector in the forthcoming years!

**We hope to exchange more about this topic with other WUWM members to propose game-changing solutions together for our sector in the forthcoming years!**



# In WUWM's world

15

**April 6:** WUWM organized a webinar on food safety in LATAM with the FAO food safety unit. 10 WUWM's Latin-American countries were present. We are happy that our members are truly committed to collaborating for a better and more sustainable future!

**April 7:** WUWM met with Solidaridad to discuss technical tools they have developed for markets and producers around the world

**April 8, 15, 20, 21, 27, 29:** WUWM participated as permanent taskforce member in meetings for the development of the European Code of Conduct for Responsible Business and Marketing Practices.

**April 8:** The steering committee of a research conducted by the FAO's Investment Centre in collaboration with WUWM came together to discuss progress made and remaining challenges on the development of guidelines to upgrade food wholesale markets

**April 8:** WUWM organized its first independent dialogue in its series titled: Making Nutritious and Healthy Diets Available to All: Empowering a Sustainable and Resilient Fresh Food Supply Chain Worldwide. This episode was aimed at the Latin American food sector and over 125 participants attended this successful event. Thank you to all participants!

**April 13:** The second independent dialogue was held for the Asia-Pacific food sector and over 60 participants discussed the pathway to a sustainable future.

**April 14:** WUWM's organized its third independent dialogue for the European food sector with over 60 participants discussing how to ensure a safe, inclusive, healthy and sustainable food system by 2030.

**April 22:** WUWM met with MIT's Global Supply Chain and Logistics Excellence (SCALE) network to explore areas of collaboration.

**April 26:** WUWM met with UN-Habitat to discuss the organization of the fourth independent dialogue for the African food sector.

## More than 250 actors joined the WUWM Independent Dialogue for the UNFSS.



### About WUWM:

We aim to facilitate access to healthy diets for everyone in the world by delivering more sustainable, inclusive, and high-quality fresh food supply systems. We exchange ideas, share best practices and cooperate with our partners in international organizations, governments, businesses, and the public.

