



Fig 1: Pildammskolonin (1898) Sweden's oldest allotment



Fig.2: Odlingssnätverk Seved in session

## URBAN GARDENS IN: Sweden

**Urban Gardening in Sweden** is deeply rooted in the country's social fabric. This incorporation of agricultural practices in the urban landscape has been ongoing for more than one hundred years, in the form of Koloniträdgårdar (allotments) which have been rather common since the shift of the century and although their popularity is in decline, they play a substantial role for the food production in Sweden. Their relevance is such that a recent study, carried by the Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences (SLU), calculated that these allotments could supply a vegetarian diet for at least five million swedes. Having this background in mind, the rise of public and private initiatives that promotes gardening in urban settings, have become more common lately. A few local examples of such initiatives will be now presented.

**Odlingssnätverk Seved** is widely regarded as one of the success stories for urban gardening groups in the southern city of Malmö, Sweden. Since its foundation in 2009, under the name Barn i Stan (Children in the City), it has been a project that aims to introduce members of the community, from different cultural backgrounds and ages, into urban gardening. This recognition arises from the fact that, the area in which this group carries its actions, is notorious for being a focus for criminal activity. Therefore, regenerating efforts that invites for social interaction and creativity, are well received by the municipality. This initiative, originated from the members' own desire to partake in social activities, where not only fresh produce could be grown, but also bonds between the mixed members of the community.



Fig 1: Trädgård på Spåret (Garden on the Tracks), Stockholm

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**Trädgård på Spåret** is a local initiative in central Stockholm to make use of abandoned train tracks and offer an opportunity for Stockholmers to witness and be involved in the growing of their own food. The garden also holds cultivation classes for city children who rarely get a chance to see where their food comes from. They are given their own section of the garden which they are responsible for. The garden also has a café and a library where you can learn more about urban gardening and gardening in general. There is also a trend in Stockholmers wanting to create a stronger sense of a community feeling, and this type of garden helps citizens interact with their neighbours.



Fig.2: Bee Urban, bee-keeping in central Stockholm

**Bee Urban** is a company started by two biology students who were concerned with the decreasing biodiversity of Stockholm. They lease bees to companies who use this as part of their CSR-work. The bees are kept on their downtown city roof tops, and they contribute to the biodiversity of the city. The result is a more fruit-bearing and green urban environment. Bee Urban's goal is also to spread awareness of the importance of bees and the possible extinction of them. Results of their work shows that the general awareness of urban citizens about the importance of bees has increased. The honey is sold in local shops and adds to the feeling of eating locally-produced food, which is a big trend in Stockholm.

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