

New York City [Steady] State

Home Grown

Can New York City become self-sufficient within its political boundaries? Intended as an alternative master plan for the city's future, New York City [Steady] State investigates the possibility for urban self-reliance in such areas as food, energy, waste, water, air supply and quality, manufacture, employment, culture, health, and transport.

Our first volume, Home Grown, is a research and design proposal that interrogates the limit of self-sufficiency in urban food systems. We first demonstrate that it is technically feasible to grow enough food within New York City's political boundary to provide 2,500 nutritious calories to 8.5 million people, but we also point out that such a technological fix would require exorbitant amounts of space and energy, while failing to address the social and economic inequalities embedded in our current food system. We subsequently investigate a variety of more progressive transformations ("sweet spots" at a wide range of neighborhood scales) that would dramatically increase forms of local sustainability without recourse to factory farming and corporate systems of production, distribution, preparation, and consumption.

Essays accompanying the design proposal track the social, economic, built and ecological flows and infrastructures of the city's past and contemporary food system and speculate on transformations that would be governed by more equitable and cooperative arrangements.

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