Berlin’s Urban Food Commons

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Outline

• Theoretical Approach: Commons
• Methodology
• Foodsharing.de \textit{(as commons)}
• Public Fridges \textit{(as commons)}
• Governing Food Sharing \textit{(as commons)}
• Enclosing the Fridge Commons?
• Concluding Remarks
How and Why might the Commons be extended to Urban Food Sharing?
Food as Commons

**Concerns**
- Public Health
- Food Governance
- Sharing
- Food Access and Sovereignty
- Right to the City
- Right to food

**Food Commons**
- Fisheries
- Wild Edibles
- Community Gardens
- Open Source Seeds
- Gastronomy and Culinary Traditions
- Food Safety
## Methodology

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What is shared</th>
<th>How it is shared</th>
<th>Org.</th>
<th>ICT usage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Himmel Beet</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Social LOW</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foodsharing.de</td>
<td></td>
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<td>Logistics HIGH</td>
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<td>Mundraub</td>
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<td>Mapping MEDIUM</td>
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<td>Ueber den Tellerrand</td>
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<td>Mealsaver</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

- Ethnographic Research 2016 – 2017
- Site visits, Participant Observation and User Engagements
- Semi-structured interviews participants, stakeholders, and regulators
- Analysis of policy and governance documents and food safety regulations
Food Commons in foodsharing.de

Public Fridge

Foodsharing Platform

Peer 2 Peer Gifting

Food Rescue and Governance

Public Health

Food Safety
Public Fridge as Open Access Commons
Governing Food Sharing

General Food Law

European citizens need to have access to safe and wholesome food of the highest standard.

A series of food incidents in late 1990s draw attention to the need to establish general principles and requirements concerning food and feed law at Union level. Accordingly, the European Commission developed an integrated approach to food safety 'from farm to table', primarily set out in its White Paper on Food Safety. It covers all sectors of the food chain, including food production, primary production, food processing, storage, transport and retail sale.


The General Food Law Regulation is the foundation of food and feed law. It sets outs an
# Governing Food Sharing

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Concerns</th>
<th>Governance</th>
<th>Berlin Senat Fair-Teiler Ruling (meso)</th>
<th>Foodsharing.de rules (meso)</th>
<th>Personal and interpersonal (micro)</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Trust</td>
<td>Trust in the EU Risk Assessment Process, the European Food Safety Authority, and other member states</td>
<td>Trust in food safety laws, expiration dates, local food safety authority, and the Federal Institute for Risk Management</td>
<td>Trust Bananas and Violation reports, Foodsharing Rules and Quizzes, Being known by others.</td>
<td>Trust in community and altruism. Trust your gut.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Safety</td>
<td>Food that is not unsafe or injurious to health</td>
<td>No microbiologically sensitive foods. Must Maintain Cold Chain</td>
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<td>Dependent on smell, taste, texture, feeling, know how</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quality</td>
<td>Free movement (the market) of safe and wholesome food.</td>
<td>A responsible person must inspect food for quality.</td>
<td>Don’t share anything you wouldn’t eat.</td>
<td>Relational and dependent on tastes and preferences.</td>
</tr>
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<td>Traceability</td>
<td>Total traceability, 2 steps forward 2 steps backwards.</td>
<td>A responsible person keeps records on what goes in and out, when, and with whom.</td>
<td>Social and place based networks. Online message board and crowdsourced updates on the fridge.</td>
<td>Social, online, and place based networks.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Responsibility (Liability)</td>
<td>Liability carried by food businesses (from production to consumption).</td>
<td>Individual responsibility and liability</td>
<td>Collective responsibility for following rules, communicating, sharing well, keeping positive relationships, and maintaining fridges. No liability.</td>
<td>Personal responsible to use “common sense.”</td>
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## Trust in the EU Risk Assessment Process, the European Food Safety Authority, and other member states

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Enclosing the Fridge Commons?
Closing Reflections

• Market led food governance disadvantages Grassroots sustainability organizations
• Tensions in governing food as a public good and a private commodity
• New Liability structures for community based sharing
• Can we move from a risk society to an ethic of care?
References

• Bresnihan, P. (2008). The More-than-Human Commons: From Commons to Commoning,
• Huron, A. (2015). Working with strangers in saturated space: Reclaiming and maintaining the urban commons. Antipode
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