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Nicola Twilley and Sarah Rich

The idea:

Urban foodscapes

The women:

Nicola Twilley and Sarah Rich, founders of the Foodprint Project

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'So much of the future of civilisation has to do with the future of cities,' San Francisco-based writer [Sarah Rich](#) tells LS:N Global. 'But with more and more people living in cities, I want to know: how is that going to affect how we eat?'

To find out, Rich and fellow writer [Nicola Twilley](#), founded the [Foodprint Project](#), a series of events where policy makers, culinary historians, retailers, designers and scientists examine topics such as the future of urban agriculture and the mapping of food supply chains.

'We're using our design and urbanism interest as a lens to look at food, to think about the community-related, social, anthropological and architectural structures of the city, and to see what a city's foodscape looks like,' Twilley says.

The first event, in New York this February, attracted more than 400 people. Anti-hunger campaigner [Joel Berg](#) and convenience store supplier Stanley Fleishman debated how policy and economics shape a city's food systems. David Haskell, founder of micro-distillery [Kings County Distillery](#), took part in a panel on 'culinary cartography'. Architect [Amale Andraos](#), who worked on the [Edible Schoolyard](#) project in California, and MIT designer [Marcelo Coelho](#) discussed New York's food futures.

After the first event's success the project is moving to its next city. On 31 July attendees at [Foodprint Toronto](#) will continue discussing the themes raised at the February event. Rich and Twilley's idea is to curate the same themed panels and ask the same questions in different cities. The result, they hope, will be to see the similarities and differences between cities' foodscapes, and seek solutions to create sustainable, positive urban foodscapes in the future.

Our top five take-outs

- 1: Food brings *tutti a tavola*, or everyone to the table. This sort of [Conviviality Culture](#) is the ideal way to engage today's consumers. Could a food-based approach rally your customers?
- 2: Consider alternative futures to create your view of the future. 'Several separate futures are being planned by the local food movement and the techno future-food people,' Twilley says. 'They need to converge.'
- 3: Go beyond the surface and dig deep. 'There's sort of a cult around pulling a carrot out of the ground with your own hands and brushing the organic dirt off it,' Twilley says. 'We want to move beyond that in our conversations.'
- 4: Seek diverse expertise. 'We go out of our way to not just have activists, designers, food scientists, urban planners or food business people, but to have as diverse a mix of all those people as we can,' Twilley says.
- 5: Start small. 'There's a lot of interest in scale right now – looking at lots of little ideas that work really well, and seeing if there's a way to make those work on a larger scale,' Twilley says. Foodprint's city-specific events help identify small-scale schemes that may inform national or even international solutions.

For more on the future of food, read our [Food Futures Report](#), available now.

