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Havana Homegrown: Inside Cuba's Urban Agriculture Revolution

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I recently had the good fortune to travel to Cuba as part of trip organized by the [Kellogg Fellows Leadership Alliance](#) [1] and the [IATP Food and Society Fellows program](#) [2]. The organic and urban agriculture revolution that is under way there is nothing short of amazing, but what a lot of people don't know is the amount of hardship Cubans have been through to get to where they are. Unlike with most people in the US and other wealthy countries, growing their own and doing it organically were not really choices for Cubans: they did it to survive. Or to put it more flippantly, when life gave the Cubans lemons (mint and rum), they decided to make [mojitos](#) [3].

I'm sharing some of my own reflections on what I saw through the video above. Although the gardens and farms we saw were picture perfect, Cuba's food system is far from perfect, but even in its imperfection it offers much food for thought about gardening's role in our societies and how that role may change as we move more into the post-carbon world that Cuba has been acclimating itself to over the past 20 years.

In the end, each city will have to make its own path to sustainable food security for its residents and what works in tropical Havana may not translate to Hartford, Connecticut or Hamburg, Germany. The road is going to be long and bumpy, but as the Chinese philosopher Lao Tzu so famously said, a journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step and the most important thing is getting started on that journey.

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Links:

- [1] <http://www.kfla.org>
- [2] <http://www.foodandsocietyfellows.org>
- [3] <http://kitchengardeners.org/recipes/homegrown-mojito>