



EdiCitNet Awards winner:

Most Innovative Individual Action

Local Hero

Issam Ben Chaaben

About me

I live in Carthage (Tunisia). I began growing vegetables in my neighbourhood, which is in the ancient Roman Circus of Carthage, to feed my own family. Realising that we had more than enough, I decided to expand my urban farming. It's now grown into a source of employment and fresh produce for my local community, where I sell my products to local merchants and restaurants in nearby towns.

What makes what I do innovative? What impact has it had on the community and environment?

From a modest start, I'm now able to employ two young people to distribute the produce and educate local people and children on farming and harvesting. My project's also had an environmental impact and I'm looking forward to trying my hand at beekeeping to produce honey and attract migratory birds. During the confinement, I also helped my neighbours by providing them with fresh vegetables.



I see more birds and bees coming to the land nowadays, and selling my products locally means that we can reduce pollution caused by unnecessary car use.

Issam Ben Chaaben

Find out more and get involved

Visit the [Carthage City website](#) or email the Carthage City Team Coordinator, [Karim Malki](#)



This project has received funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under grant agreement No 776665.



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How do I promote inclusivity?

I enjoy helping and working alongside local people and look for new ways to expand my activities and involve more local sites. My current activities take place in the heart of our archaeological landscape, so it's important to include and seek the support of heritage managers and the local authorities. It's necessary to keep in mind that this sort of urban agriculture should help to protect heritage and contribute to its cultural dimension, too.

What are my future plans?

I'd like to set up a vegetable garden in a local school called El Yasmina and offer gardening lessons to the children and teachers. The fresh produce from the garden could directly supply the school canteen and we could collect irrigation water from the classroom terraces and store it in a traditional underground basin, known as a majel.

How can we work together?

I'm keen to hear from individuals or organisations interested in financing the vegetable garden project and help create a green, educational oasis for this local school. I'd also like to swap tips and hints with other local urban farmers or agricultural experts!



My tips for starting a local urban food initiative



Be brave, patient and enthusiastic – they have been key to my success



Make sure you have the backing of the authorities before farming unused sites



Don't be afraid to start small and learn by doing



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