



La Comunidad Verde

www.lacomunidadverde.com

GREEN CITY EUROPE MEETING

Budapest, 29th octubre 2016

Presentation

Good afternoon,

First of all, thanks for your welcome. It's a pleasure be part of Green City family, and I would like also to thank organizers for inviting us. Visiting this amazing city and let me know personally initiatives that your countries are carrying out to promote the green philosophy in European cities, it's a great opportunity for me, just now that I began to collaborate with LCV recently, representing AEPLA, the association that holds the vice presidency of the organization.

About LCV

As you know, LA COMUNIDAD VERDE is a non-profit federation that involves leading Spanish associations concerning gardening, greening and urban green areas, to promote and release about the benefits that garden and urban green areas bring. It is already the seed of a united front of the green business and professionals in Spain.

We are a young federation born in 2014, and officially registered in October 2015. But despite its youth and limited budget, move us passion for being the engine of green culture in Spanish cities and towns. We want to become a forum for meeting and discussion, sharing ideas, experiences and information for promoting green culture. That's why we began working on communications and PR strategies to spread news about the good things that more and better green spaces can do for urban environment.

Nine associations are members of LCV:

- Spanish Association of Garden Centres
- Spanish Association of Greenkeepers
- Plant Protection Association
- National Association for Agricultural, forestry and green spaces machinery
- Garden Products Manufacturers
- Substrates and Soil producers' association
- Official Organization of technical Agricultural Engineers Centre Area
- Spanish Landscape Contractors Federation
- Spanish federation of producers and exporters of fruits, vegetables, flowers and live plants

How we do it (3 y 4)

Networking and communications: Two ways for developing our mission

LCV has developed a network for information and experience exchange through cooperation with European organizations and scientific projects held in Spanish universities. Eg. Urban Agriculture Bioclimatic Laboratory, which is being developed by PRONATUR, and Polytechnic University of Madrid.

And now it is also included in Madrid's future design of its green infrastructure, a project called **Madrid+Natural**.

On 2016 LCV has organized new workshops to increase awareness in the people, like Sustainable Sunday in cooperation with an international management event called Sustainable Brands.

LCV collects information and research studies that support and demonstrates benefits of gardening and green infrastructures in the city. Then it spreads the news and gives access to it on its website www.lacomunidadverde.com and through its social media profiles.

It also distributes a monthly a corporate newsletter to keep its members informed about projects and news.

Actions

Park(ing) Day event is our main awareness action participation. The number of gardens is increasing each year: **More than 70 gardens, last September 16th 2016**, in 20 different cities. (50 in 2015; 13 in 2014, and just only 4 in 2013). Figures shows the success of this initiative.

Primary and secondary schools, landscapers, community associations, local governments, garden centres and flower shops participated in the last edition. With the cooperation of the Graduated Landscape Designers Association we reinforced the activities at schools with previous workshops, trying to improve the interest and creativity of children.

In 2016 we closed cooperation deals with Local Commerce Associations like 'Salesas Village' in Madrid. Local business has realized that better green infrastructure keep people in downtown, promoting live and activity in the neighborhood. This make them walk by just for leisure and that helps local commerce to rise, in opposition to people that go to the mall with their cars, out of the downtown. **Green cities have better local business.**

The interest on Park(ing) Day increases year after year. As an example, last edition was included in the European Movility Week Program under the patronage of Madrid local government and the event was publicized in underground stations. The event was highly covered on social media as well.

On the other hand, LCV has developed an initiative to encourage the commitment for a better green urban environment. It is called **“Commitment to garden”** and has been presented to different authorities, political organizations, professionals, journalists...

Local governments are already supporting this project. We are working so the 20 towns and cities that hosted our Park(ing)Day gardens sign it. Some of them have been already done. This is a great beginning to involve local authorities in our idea of green development for the cities.

Ondara Experience

I would like to share with you what we call Ondara Experience. A great example of how our committed and passionate work is giving results.

Ondara is a 6.600 people population town in the Mediterranean coast.

After participating in Parking Day, then signed the **“Commitment to garden”** and now is developing small actions focused on creating awareness, such as workshops to help people to identify local varieties now unavailable in garden centers. The aim is to share their memories and then organize a local contest for the most beautiful balcony and patio “greened” with these varieties which are provided by the Town hall.

They’re also organizing educational workshops in primary and secondary schools, to make children value their local varieties and finally they want to extend the cooperation with the local business to encourage the local authority to a greener Ondara.

We want a lot of ‘Ondaras’ all around Spain, and we’re working to achieve.

Other projects

But LCV is developing other projects, local actions like microgardens contest in the city of Salamanca and keeping conversations with SEO Birdlife so we can fight together for a law to make new constructions to have green roofs or sun panels.

Close and thanks

Before the end, I would like to share with you a quote.

Luis Barragán, Mexican architect who won Pritzker Price in 1980 said:

'In the garden, the architect invites the plant kingdom to collaborate with him. A beautiful garden is permanent presence of the reduced human proportion and in the service of man's nature, is the most effective refuge against the aggressiveness of the contemporary world'

Thank you for your attention