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Montréal World Capital of Urban Agriculture

Montréal, August 24, 2023 – Regarded as a leading gastronomic destination, Montréal can now also pride itself on being the world capital of urban agriculture. This is the observation made by the Laboratoire sur l'agriculture urbaine (AU/LAB) in a recent study comparing ten international cities published in collaboration with the Office montréalais de la gastronomie.

The report titled *La place de Montréal parmi les grandes villes d'agriculture urbaine : Une étude comparative entre 10 villes au Canada, États-Unis et Europe* (The place of Montréal among the major cities of urban agriculture: A comparative study between 10 cities in Canada, the United States and Europe) aimed to evaluate in a factual way the place of Montréal among 10 large cities renowned for their urban agriculture, by analyzing the available data and mobilizing actors in each of the cities.

The findings of the study are unequivocal: Montréal ranks first ahead of some of the most important cities in America and Europe, including Brussels, London, Paris, New York, Toronto and Vancouver. The comparative cities were chosen according to several criteria, including the recent dynamics of their urban agriculture, their similarity with Montréal, their geographic distribution and the media mentions establishing them as exemplary in the field.

"In addition to being appreciated as an international gastronomic destination, Montréal is now recognized for the know-how of its urban farmers, so it is with great pride that we welcome the conclusions of this study," says Yves Lalumière, President and CEO of Tourisme Montréal. Urban agriculture also contributes to making our city a more sustainable destination, in particular through greening, increasing biodiversity and reducing heat islands, which is fully aligned with our Sustainable Destination Policy."

"Thanks to a bold urban agriculture strategy, Montreal is succeeding in providing local and ecological supplies, drawing on the innovation and know-how of local businesses. The public is also taking an increasing interest in edible landscaping, greenhouse projects and the protection of biodiversity. The title of World Capital of Urban Agriculture confirms our international leadership in sustainable development, and encourages us to continue putting down roots for nature in every corner of the metropolis. This is excellent news, and we can be proud of it." says Valérie Plante, Mayor of Montréal.

"We've known it for some time, but this study confirms it: Montreal is indeed the capital of urban agriculture. It's home to several internationally recognized projects, and has a wide diversity of urban farms and social organizations actively involved in the movement. In this ranking, Montreal is

accompanied by cities that can inspire it and lead it to surpass itself," points out Eric Duchemin, Scientific Director of the Laboratoire sur l'agriculture urbaine.

With more than 270 organizations involved, the city's movement in urban agriculture is vibrant, dynamic and diverse. The criteria that played in its favour are therefore both qualitative as quantitative. The number and the quality of urban farms present in the city can be noted among the city's most distinctive features. With 57 diversified agricultural businesses committed to the social and circular economy, Montréal is a pioneer in the matter. The city also counts on the presence of the Pousse-Menu farm, which founded the oldest urban farm in the world in 1988, as well as Lufa Farms, which set up the first rooftop greenhouse (2011) and the largest urban agriculture project in the world (1.7 ha). Montréal also counts urban agricultural companies such as Alvéole and MicroHabitat, which are expanding their commercial activities internationally.

Montréal also stands out for the accessibility of its garden plots for citizens, particularly through the community garden program, as well as for its two citizen spaces dedicated to urban agriculture, namely the Grand Potager and the Tiers Lieu of urban agriculture.

About the Office montréalais de la gastronomie (OMG)

The *Office montréalais de la gastronomie* is an initiative of Tourisme Montréal created in 2021 thanks to the financial support of the Ville de Montréal. OMG's mission is to mobilize the relevant communities to strengthen Montréal's status as one of North America's premier dining destinations. Its objectives are to position gastronomy as a driver of economic, social, environmental and cultural development and as a place of creation and innovation; to help relevant sectors increase the scope of initiatives adding value to the destination, and to facilitate business opportunities; to stimulate and recognize initiatives to promote the artisanal products of Montréal and our regions; to highlight key elements of Montréal's and Québec's cultural heritage and culinary identity; and to increase the visibility of Montréal's products, chefs and artisans outside of Québec. For more information, please visit www.officemtlgastronomie.ca.

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