



Ecologies of Food

Food Conference Perugia
at The Umbra Institute
Perugia, Italy
11-14 June 2026

Keynote Speaker:
Prof. Serenella Iovino

Call for Papers

Ecology is the study of interconnections between organisms (humans and non-humans) and their environment. The most common visual depictions of ecology usually show a web, with nodes connected by lines to other nodes. This network representation has long highlighted the complexity of ecological associations and the ways that shocks to parts of the system can create unintended ripples far from the source of the input.

If we picture ecology as a web, where is food? Is it simply a line drawn between nature and humans, or something more? How do climate change and artificial intelligence change (strengthen? weaken?) that web? Agroecology, defined as the application of ecological principles to agricultural production systems, is increasingly at the centre of scientific studies, institutional policies and political debates surrounding food. By taking into account not only the environment but also human and social values, culture and food traditions, this concept approaches food in a holistic way.

The conference organizers look forward to a wide-ranging discussion about our past, present and future ecologies of food, a conversation including but not limited to the following topics:

- borders, definitions, and new materialisms;
- multi-species ethnographies on food ecologies;
- digital and techno-scientific ecologies of food;
- processes of heritage-making involving food and its more-than-human components;
- ecological and holistic approaches to food production (agroecology, permaculture, biodynamics, regenerative agriculture, etc.);
- the intersection of art and food ecologies;
- local and long-distance connections between food systems;
- the implications (and imbrications!) of artificial intelligence on food ecologies;
- the implications of climate change on material ecologies;
- food and humanitarian emergencies;
- pedagogy of ecologies.

Our conference has long been a forum for talking about both research and teaching. We are very interested in papers on teaching food, best practices in pedagogy, and integrating experiential learning and community-engaged projects into food studies courses. The conference takes place in Italy but welcomes papers and panels that focus on different historical and geographical settings.

We are soliciting individual papers, full panels, and roundtables. If you're a junior scholar and need help with your abstract, contact the conference organizers at foodconference@umbra.org.

For individual papers please submit the following through the form below:

- an abstract, with title, in English of no more than 250 words that summarizes the focus and content of the paper;
- three to five keywords;
- contact information and a brief academic bio of no more than 100 words.

For panel presentations (3-4 papers) please submit the following through the same form below:

- an abstract, with title, in English of no more than 250 words that summarizes the overall focus of the panel;
- an abstract, with title, in English of no more than 250 words that summarizes the focus and content of each paper;
- three to five keywords for the panel;
- contact information and brief academic bios of no more than 100 words for all panel participants.

Please use [this submission form](https://bit.ly/umbra-food-2026-submit) [<https://bit.ly/umbra-food-2026-submit>] to submit your proposal by **31 December 2025**.

Notifications of acceptance status will be made by **16 February 2026**.

This is an in-person conference; there is no Zoom/remote option. For more information on fees and registration, as well as other [FAQs](#), please see the conference's website: <https://www.umbra.org/food-conference-home/>

Why Perugia?

Just in case you're wondering "Why should I go all the way to Perugia to present?", we have [some great responses](#) that have to do with the beauty of the city, the small size of the conference, and the abundant opportunities for getting to know people, both inside our Institute and outside at a series of informal activities. See all the reasons to come to Perugia and share your work on our conference website.