



ACCESS TO LAND

A European network of grassroots organisations securing land for agroecological farming.

Access to land: new entrants difficulties and community answers

The experience of Terre de liens, France

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**LAND IS
NUMBER ONE OBSTACLE
FOR NEWCOMERS TO FARMING**

Accessing land: an obstacle for new entrants?

ROMAIN

- Newcomer to farming (pigs, sheep and cows)
- Searched land for 5 years (worked as a truck driver)
- does not have local network, seen as outsider.
- 24 ha of land. Breeding, 100% processing. Direct sales. A farm reborn.



Accessing land: an obstacle for new entrants?



EMILIE

- Succeeds her parents on part of the family farm (sheep)
- **Not enough land in secure tenancy** to start small fruits production – necessary to have viable full time job as a farmer and young farmer's subsidy.
- Breeding. Small fruits. Meat products. Fruit products. Wool products. Farm sales point. Co-founded a producers' shop.

Accessing land: an obstacle for new entrants?

GAEL and MATHIEU

- Newcomers to farming (market gardening)
- **Not enough own capital. Bank loan rejected.**
- 9 ha of land. Exceptional agronomic quality. Interest of neighbouring cereal farms.
- Temporary land portage by SAFER.



Accessing land: an obstacle for new entrants?

STEPHANE

- Established farmer (meat and eggs)
- Mountain farm of 20ha
- High pressure for secondary residences
- **Risked losing part of its tenanted land**, which would have made its farm system unsustainable.



Accessing land: an obstacle for new entrants?

ROBERT

- Retired farmer and mayor of a small village in the Pre-Alps
- Aging of farmers. **Farm closures and land abandonment.**
- 3 new farms – 4 families.
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Obstacles for new entrants?

- > Lack of information about land availability, prices, etc.
- > Competition with established farmers, or non-farming uses.
Highest bidder.
- > Discrepancy land supply (large farms) / demand (smaller farms)
- > Difficulty of extra-family farm succession
- > “Atypical” projects – lack of trust, little access to bank loans,
not eligible to most public support
- > Lack of financial capacity (own capital/ bank loans) to acquire.
Financial burden in the long run.

+ Lack of tenure security

Increasingly also established farmers and intra-family succession.

**COMMUNITY INITIATIVES
TO FACILITATE
ACCESS TO LAND FOR
AGROECOLOGICAL FARMERS**

Terre de liens: what do we do?

- Mobilising citizens and local stakeholders beyond agriculture
- Supporting future farmers
- Acquiring & managing farmland which is rented to farmers



TDL: results so far

Since 2003 :

- > Over **15 000 citizens** mobilised
- > **54 million €** raised (investment and donations)
- > Over **200 farmers** set up / maintained
- > **150 farms** acquired (or about to)
- > **3000 ha** dedicated to organic peasant ag
- > **1000 future farmers** supported /year
- > **Tens of partnerships** with local authorities



Community land trusts and initiatives

- > Access to land has become such a hurdle that **they emerge throughout Europe** (mostly EU15): BE, DE, UK, SP, CZ, etc.
- > They **focus on land use** and management. Acquisition is only a mean. Work with local authorities, private land owners, etc.
- A drop in the ocean but
 - Show other forms of land allocation and use are possible
 - bear testimony of public interest for local quality food, rural jobs and rural areas.
- > **Policy changes needed** to enable these initiatives, better regulate land and foster agroecological farming in Europe

Let's take it into our hands!



Photo credit: Cécile Dubart, Capucine Godinot and Sylvain Cosson, Terre de liens; Emilie Sage

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