

Access to Land and Community Supported Agriculture

stories from Europe





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About the authors

This booklet has been written by the European Access to Land network in cooperation with Urgenci, the network for Community Supported Agriculture (CSA), as well as members of CSA initiatives from across Europe. Our networks have worked together to explore the interactions between access to land and CSA approaches, and to highlight the need and potential for greater collaboration.

The European Access to Land network brings together grassroots organisations from across Europe to share experiences and promote the significance of access to land for agroecological transition and generational renewal. Established in 2012, it functions as an informal network of about 20 organisations. The network's main objectives are to consolidate and disseminate initiatives on access to land, and to put land issues in the spotlight. To that end, it organises information- and experience sharing, fosters cooperation between members, and facilitates broader communication.

www.accesstoland.eu

Urgenci, the international network for CSA, works as a movement to advance community supported agriculture. It is composed of all existing 19 national and regional CSA networks, and gathers members from more than 25 European countries. Much of the spread of CSA in Europe can be attributed to its work, especially through shared learning projects and advocacy. Urgenci, which is deeply embedded in the solidarity economy and food sovereignty movements, recognises access to land as one of the central challenges and opportunities in regard to CSA.

www.urgenci.net

For two years, our networks have met regularly to share views and experiences, through a combining staff meetings and workshops. This publication presents the result of our work. In our views, this initial work confirms the importance of the connection between CSA and access to both land for local food systems and the food sovereignty movement. The Access to Land network and Urgenci continue to collaborate to provide inspiration.

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Foreword

Land and communities – new building stones for European food and agriculture

In the last 10 years alone, Europe has lost 4 million farmers, and over 3 million farm jobs. For over 60 years, the modernisation of agriculture has meant investing in specialisation, mechanisation, capital-intensive approaches, exports and land concentration to ensure viable farms and cheap food. This has in fact been a global and not merely European feature of food systems. Land grabbing is rife from Africa to the Amazon, and the food system is one of industrialisation of agriculture, processing and selling through hypermarkets. And Europe is no exception to this phenomenon. The results of this trend are manifold, from the loss of peasant agriculture to the spread of non-communicable diseases in consumers the world over.

But the paradigm has changed. Consumers are increasingly looking for local, clean food. The adverse impact of intensive agriculture on the environment is now widely recognised, and becoming a major concern. And many farming sectors are hardly viable without public lifelines. A new sustainable system is not yet in place.

Every day, throughout Europe, our networks are witnessing social innovations and mobilisations to create and support sustainable food and farming. This movement has many faces and many names – overall, it is based on food sovereignty, peasant farming and agroecology. It also includes important aspects of economic solidarity.

Central to this movement is the experience that farming needs to be anchored in community connections, and that CSA as a new form of solidarity between prosumers and farmers, is a win-win solution for consumers, farmers and society at large.

Also central to this movement is the recognition that farmland should be used primarily by farmers for producing diversified, seasonal food to feed local communities. This entails a long-term vision, and multi-stakeholder discussion about how we use and manage farmland, generational renewal, and connect urban and rural issues.

Communities and land are thus two of the major building blocks for reinventing European food and agriculture. But while innovations are flowering, time is running out. It is urgent to unite and put weight behind the debate, to fight the trends towards ever-increasing farm consolidation, long supply chains, hyper-industrialisation of the whole food chain, and loss of food cultures. And to urgently address the new challenges posed by the financialisation of agriculture and land-grabbing.

This report offers stories and analyses of how land and communities can play a new role in food and farming. It aims to make our movements more united and stronger in their struggle for good and affordable quality food for all, a network of peasant farms feeding their communities and fulfilling many social and cultural roles, a new generation of farmers, rich biodiversity, diversified landscapes and protected natural resources, and a successful balance between urban and rural areas.

Judith Hitchman,
President of Urgenci International

and

Sjoerd Wartena
Co-founder of Terre de liens and
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Content

Introduction	5
CSA in Europe	6
Access to land and CSA	10
Case Studies	14
Case Study 1: Preserving fertile land in the vicinity of cities – the GeLa Ochsenherz CSA, Austria	14
Case study 2: Setting up a farmland trust for CSA farms in one of the most expensive parts of Europe – Landgenoten, Belgium	16
Case study 3: A long search for land... and adequate legal status – GartenCoop CSA, Germany	18
Case study 4: Preserving a farm and so much more... – CSA Hof Pente, Germany	20
Case study 5: From building CSAs to securing land – the perspectives of the ASAT movement, Romania	22
Case study 6: Starting and expanding a small farm thanks to the support of CSA members – Marcel Has CSA farm, Romania	24
Case study 7: Mobilising land from the municipality – the hard-won experience of Arvaia CSA, Italy	26
Case study 8: Fighting back: from land loss to developing positive local community – the mobilisation of Terre de Rivières, France	28
Case study 9: Helping a farmer protect his land from speculators – Valderoure Farm, France	31
Case study 10: A strategic regional partnership to promote entries into farming – Pôle Abiosol, France	34
Case study 11: New hope and a home for agricultural land – Nadace pro pudu, a new land trust in the Czech Republic	38
Case study 12: The site matters! Reconciling farming and community needs – Farnham Local Food, UK	40
Case study 13: From CSA member to farmer – Cambridge CropShare, UK	42
Case study 14: Managing public land for the benefit of the community – Simms Hill Shared Harvest, UK	44
Conclusions, challenges and recommendations	46
Appendix: Further resources	49

Introduction

Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) “is a direct partnership between a group of consumers and producer(s) whereby the risks, responsibilities and rewards of farming activities are shared through long-term agreements. Generally operating on a small and local scale, CSAs aim at providing quality food produced in an agroecological way.”¹

CSA in Europe is a dynamic movement that feeds between 500.000 and 1 million eaters (European CSA Research Group, 2016) with thousands of initiatives operating and many new initiatives starting every week. CSA can now be seen as important approach to creating sustainable and sovereign food systems in Europe.

Access to land is a daily obstacle faced by agroecological farmers, often preventing new farmers from entering the sector and creating instability for existing farms. There is indeed increasing competition for farmland between agricultural and non-agricultural users (e.g. urban secondary residences). Within farming, the functioning of the land market is such that it favours large farmers and leads to land concentration. This is crucial at the time when the ageing of many farmers means that farms and farmland are changing hands. In parallel, more and more non-agricultural people and businesses choose to invest in farmland, which they view as a highly profitable investment. This phenomenon fuels land speculation and, in extreme cases, land grabbing.

Our experience shows that access to land can be even more of an issue for community- supported farms. At the same time, the community support that is integral to CSA can also create opportunities, and help farms to be more robust and resilient.

It is timely to look closer at CSA and access to land, especially as there is to date no publication to our knowledge that addresses the link between them. This report aims to show the different facets of how they are intertwined, telling stories from across Europe, discussing successes and challenges, identifying needs for research and ultimately stimulating discussion on a topic that is one of the most important issues in present-day Europe. If we want to truly alternatives to industrial farming, access to land for agroecological entrants is key. Through solidarity-based and community supported agriculture, this access is often more feasible than for small farmers operating in a highly competitive market.

This report is the result of in-depth research and exchanges within the access to land and CSA community. A cornerstone of this process was the organisation of several workshops at the third European CSA forum in Ostrava, Czech Republic (September 2016), the European Nyeleni forum for food sovereignty in Cluj-Napoca, Romania (October 2016) and the Oxford Real Farming Conference in the UK (January 2017). It is part of an effort towards the democratisation of agricultural research.

This project does not stop with this publication: We are interested in continuing to collect stories from the CSA community regarding access to land and publishing them together on the website www.accesstoland.eu (please send your stories to info@accesstoland.eu).

¹ European CSA Research Group (2016): European Overview of Community Supported Agriculture. In: www.urgenci.net/the-csa-research-group



CSA in Europe

CSA started in Europe in the 1970s in Switzerland. From Europe it spread to the USA and then bounced back to Europe in the early 2000s, especially to France where the CSA concept of AMAP¹ is the most highly developed in Europe. Since then, the idea has found followers across Europe, from Norway to the Balkans, from Portugal to Romania.

The rise of CSA in Europe since the millennium happens at a time of - and as a reaction to - severe changes in the food system, with rising demand for local quality food and transparency in the food chains.

A key characteristic of CSA is that it is diverse. This is hardly surprising in Europe where there is considerable variety in the context of farming. There are big differences in CSA models regarding the prominence of initiatives in the various countries, organisational structures, legal status and interaction with politics. There are actually many forms of CSA that exist across Europe, and the role of farmers, new entrants and consumers in starting a project (and getting access to land) as well as the participation of the consumers in the actual farming process can be really quite different.

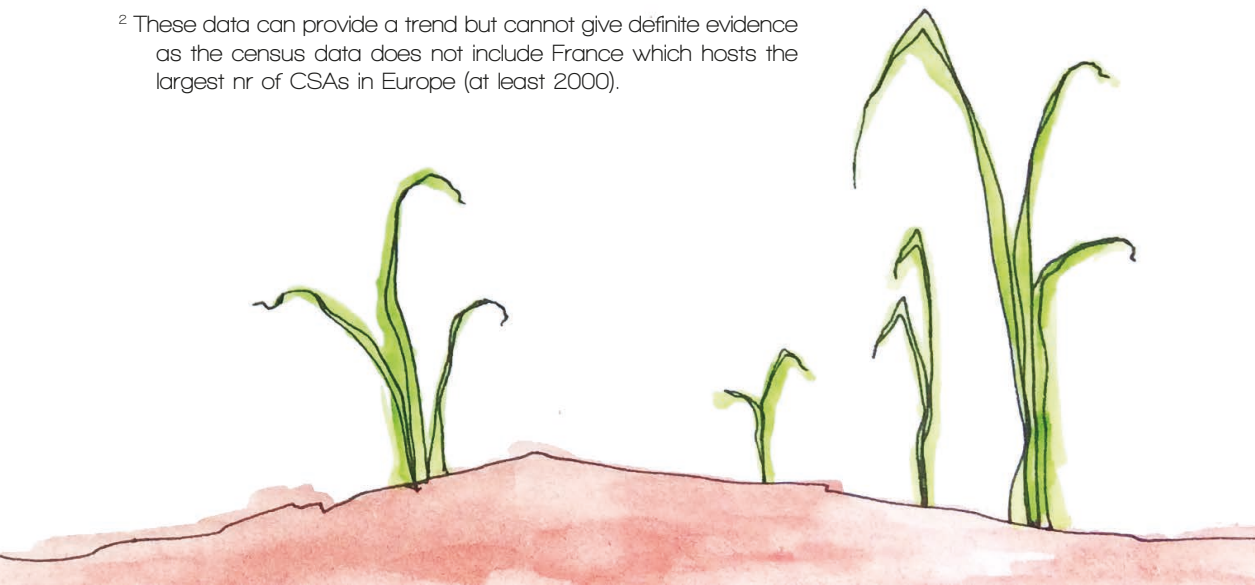
The "European CSA overview" (European CSA Research Group, 2016) gives a good update on this. If we look at recent census data from this report² we see that



- CSAs in Europe have been initiated by consumers (41%), by farmers (33%) or by both (18%), the remaining 8% were created by associations, foundations, businesses or institutions.
- Most CSAs are based on vegetable production (94%), but they increasingly cover a wide range of agricultural produce: fruit (58%), eggs (38%), meat (29%), honey (28%), dairy produce (26%) and bread (25%)
- CSA farmers have mainly independent farmer or small business status on CSA farms (74%); others are part-time (11%) or full time (7%) staff workers.
- Farmers involved in CSA need to have other sources of income: only 22% of farmers get 100% of their income from CSAs, Other income sources derive from other distribution channels (36%), other jobs/employment (28%), or subsidies (18%),
- Land used to produce food distributed to CSAs is mostly held by the farmers:
 - most CSA farmers directly hold land, either in full property (47%), lease (11%), or a combination of both (10%)
 - some CSAs engage in renting the land where they grow the food (17%), but rarely own it (4%)
 - CSA-farmer collaboration to either rent or own the land exists but in negligible proportion (1%)

¹ AMAP (AMAPs are associations for the preservation of peasant farming. Their members are consumers (or "prosumers") who pre-pay a share of the produce of one or several farmers at the beginning of the season. They then receive a box of produce (vegetables, meat, cheese, eggs...) corresponding to a weekly share. In this way, AMAP members share the risks and benefits with the farmers. Read more: <http://urgenci.net/amap-in-france/>)

² These data can provide a trend but cannot give definite evidence as the census data does not include France which hosts the largest nr of CSAs in Europe (at least 2000).





Access to Land in Europe

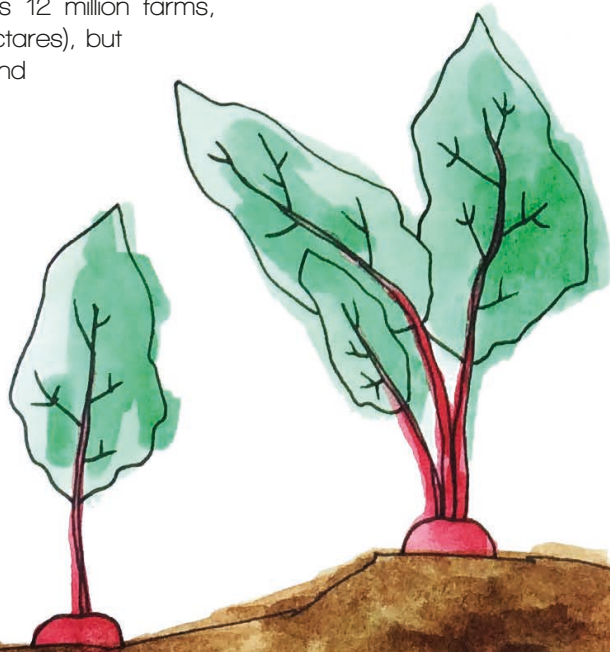
Land access is a growing issue in many parts of Europe, and a key obstacle to the development of agroecology. There are national differences, but some trends prevail throughout Europe, which are highlighted here.

The first pressure lies in the loss of farmland area throughout Europe. The Utilised Agricultural Area (UAA)¹ represents approximately 40 % of EU territory. Since 1990, the EU- 27 (in its current borders) has lost 12% of its agricultural area, i.e. over 22 million hectares representing approximately the equivalent to the area of Romania. Most of this land is lost to urban sprawl and other infrastructure projects.

A second issue is increasing environmental pressure on farmland. Intensive farming practices – monoculture, use of heavy equipment, use of fertilisers and pesticides, etc. – result in soil compaction and degradation, pollution of soil and water resources, and the loss of biodiversity that undermines the quality and resilience of farming ecosystems.

A third and major trend impacting access to land is land concentration. Land for sale or rent usually goes to the larger farmers who tend to have more financial means and support from agricultural institutions and other farmers. Today, out of the EU's 12 million farms, only 3% are large farms (over 100 hectares), but they control 50% of the farmland. Land concentration is increasing in the EU, making Europe a highly inequitable continent in terms of land distribution.

A fourth challenge is the financialisation of the land market and the rise of land speculation. Many landowners now view land primarily as a money-making asset. Owners



near urban areas hope for land to be designated for development; this may lead to a tenfold increase in land prices. Non-agricultural investors invest in farmland to secure food provision and/or speculate on land prices. Across Europe, diverse pressures have resulted in skyrocketing farmland prices, with a rise of up to 200% in the Netherlands, and 400% in the UK between 1990 to 2014².

A fifth challenge lies in the need for generational renewal. In 2010, 48% of farm holders were aged over 55 (25% were over 65). Many have no successors in their family, and have no other identified successor. Without proactive support for farm succession, particularly to enable the entry of a new generation of farmers, many farms will end up closing down or being absorbed by neighbouring farms.

Finally, a widespread difficulty is the lack of security of tenure. In the EU, 46% of farmland is under tenancy; this means that farmers are renting rather than owning the land they farm. Given the context of competition for land use and increasing land prices, this makes for a fragile situation for farmers. The current trend is towards the liberalisation of rental prices, the end of automatic lease renewal, and reduced lease duration.

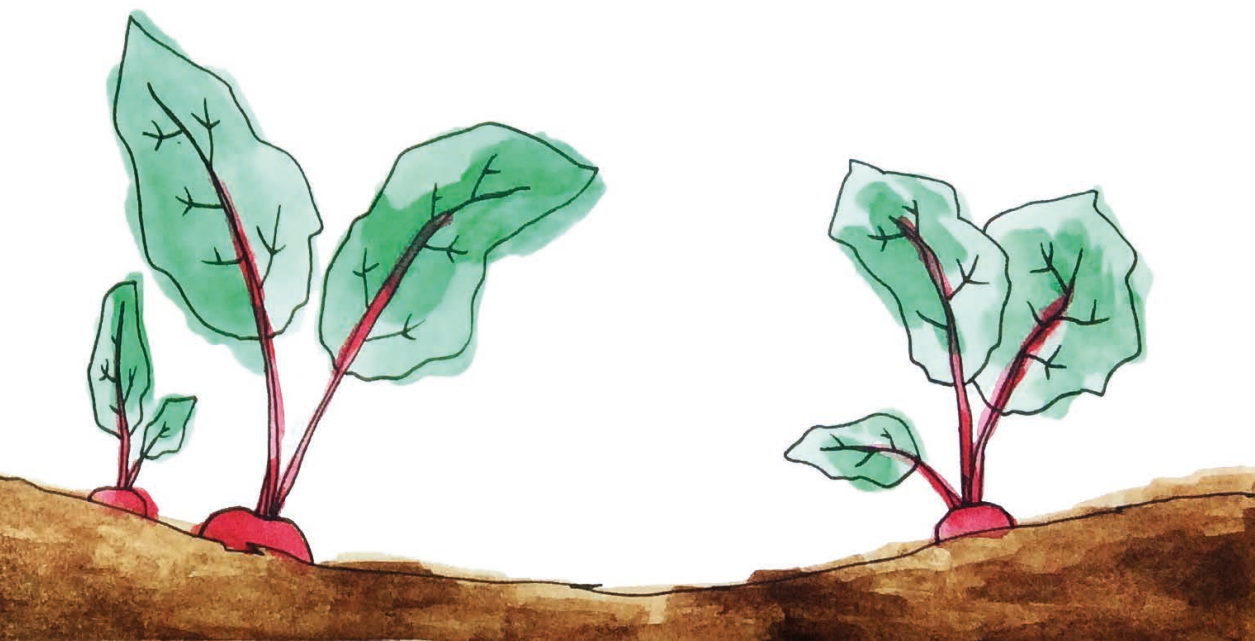
The increasing difficulties of gaining access to land coupled with political neglect³ of this issue have led to farmers, concerned citizens and institutions to set up initiatives related to access to land all over Europe.

These initiatives try to ensure that land is available for farms that are engaged in agroecology, as well as offering high social, regional-economic and environmental benefits. They make use of a variety of different approaches, such as citizens' finance, knowledge transfer, cooperation with local authorities and land stewardship. These initiatives have often started independent from each other, some for a specific farm, others at regional or national level.

¹ "Utilised agricultural area" means the total area taken up by arable land, permanent pasture and meadow, land used for permanent crops and kitchen gardens, *Eurostat 2015*.

² SAFER, Les marchés fonciers agricoles en Europe en 2014, in *Le prix des terres en 2015*, p.18 – based on Terres d'Europe-Scafr, Eurostat and national data.

³ Over the past 5 years, there has been increasing discussion on land and land grabbing in Europe – see in appendix for further references.





Access to land and CSA

Why is access to land an issue for CSA?

CSA farms face the same land pressures as the rest of the farming sector (see above). Furthermore, they are often faced with additional difficulties:

- They often require land to be close to cities, which is where many consumers are and where CSAs are an important element in bridging the urban/rural divide. But peri-urban areas are precisely where farmland is the most expensive, and the hardest to preserve from urban sprawl.
- They are often "atypical" farms by the standards of the agricultural institutions and mainstream farmers: they are often small, very diversified, with high added value (e.g. on-farm processing) and have a collective dimension; some also have non-farming activities (e.g. tourism, educational programmes). These projects are often deemed not (as) viable economically and therefore landowners (both private and public) may be reluctant to rent land to them, and banks to loan them money.
- CSA farms are farms where community involvement and on-site presence may be strong - helping the farmer with some of the work, organising the collection of vegetable shares, social activities, etc.. Some plots may not have the right conditions (limited or no road access, no parking area, etc.) and some landowners may not like having people coming and going.
- Some CSAs are run as a collective (e.g. association, cooperative, solidarity-based company). Many landowners prefer to have a legally registered organisation to rent to, represented by a single individual. In some countries (e.g. Germany, Switzerland), these legal structures are also not eligible to rent or buy farmland.

When does land become an issue for CSAs?

There are different times in the life of a CSA farm when land can become an issue:

- A CSA may be looking for land to get established. As noted above, this is usually harder when the plan is that the CSA, rather than the farmer, will be the party renting or buying the land. In some areas, it is also particularly difficult to find land: not much land available for sale or rent, strong competition, high prices. It may thus take years to find an adequate plot. (See case studies 2, 3, 6, 7, 8, 14 e.g.)

- A CSA farm may lose part of its tenanted land. This is particularly frequent in peri-urban and tourist areas, where landowners are often prone to rent or sell their land when the opportunity presents itself for a much higher price (e.g. if the land is designated for development). Losing part of its land means that the CSA must start looking for replacement land. That also often involves reorganising the production or farm system. (See case studies 1, 4, 8, 9, 12 e.g.)
- If part or all of the land belongs to the farmer, the CSA and the farmer may want to establish a more permanent system to ensure that the land and farm remains as a CSA in a long term perspective. This may involve organising land acquisition by the CSA itself, setting-up an ad hoc community farmland trust, or calling upon an existing farmland trust to acquire the land. (See case studies 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 8, 9, 10, 11 e.g.)
- A CSA may need varying land size, depending on the size of its membership. When the membership grows, or when members want to expand and diversify food products, this can in some cases be solved by resorting to using the land of other nearby farmers; in other cases, more land is sought. (See case studies 2, 3, 6, 7, 8, 10, 13 e.g.)
- A farmer may, for financial or ethical reasons, want the CSA to bear the financial and practical burden of the land. A new entrant may ask the CSA to acquire and manage the land, and/or to finance it. In a few cases, we have also seen an established farmer run into financial problems. This economic situation was improved once the CSA bore the cost of the land and buildings. (See case studies 1, 5, 6, 8, 9 e.g.)

How can CSA mobilise land for agroecological farming?

Getting involved with the land aspect is often a natural continuation for a CSA. Through a CSA, there is indeed already a financial solidarity between consumers and farmers, to ensure quality and seasonal production. Expanding this solidarity beyond enabling production to providing/ safeguarding the means of production such as land, is often viewed as natural, even if it is often not easy to bring about! Historic experiences of CSAs – such as Dottenfelder Hof in Germany or Fordhall Farm in the UK¹ – show that community engagement can successfully include or extend to securing land for farming.

To address land needs and issues, CSAs can mobilise their own resources and/or collaborate with access to land initiatives. Sometimes the CSA will acquire or rent the land with no outside support; sometimes it will create an ad hoc farm land trust, together with others; sometimes it will resort to an existing farm land trust, matching its values and objectives.

In practice, there are already several clearly identified ways in which CSAs are directly or indirectly providing access to land for agroecological farming:

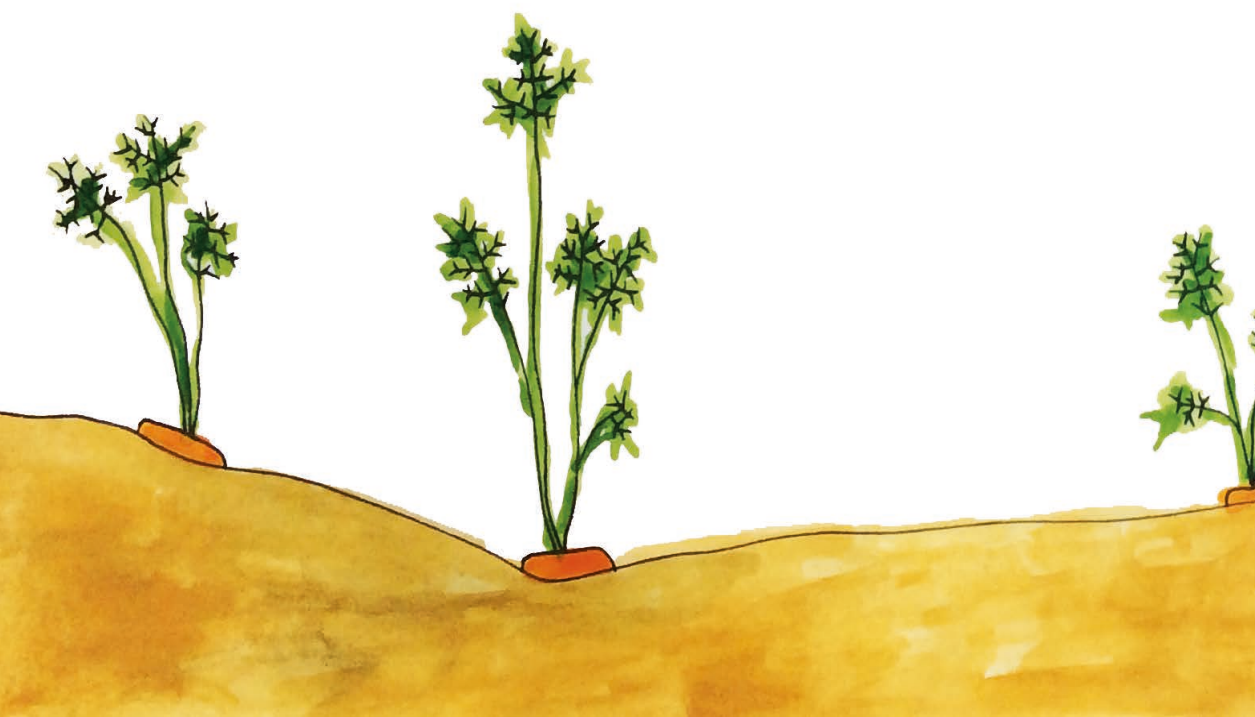
A – CSA members may help their farmers to secure land through direct support:

1. CSA members can help with the land search: CSA members often have many local connections. They can spread the word about a need for land, watch out for land that is coming up for sale or rent, or engage with (private and public) landowners to convince them of the interest to sell/rent to the CSA.

2. CSA members can mobilise local support to get or keep land: they may ask the local council for (financial or other) support; they may build a local platform, with other civil society organisations, to set up or maintain a CSA farm; they may entice or lobby the land owner; they may engage with a bank, etc.
3. CSA members can provide funding to acquire the land: finance can be secured as donations, investments, interest-free loans, advance payments of crop shares, etc. CSA members either finance the farmer who acquires the land through direct means, or provide funding to a third party (a land trust, an association) that buys the land and rents it to the farmer/CSA.
4. CSA members and farmers can cooperate to secure land in perpetuity: CSA farms may decide to put farmland into community ownership, to ensure it is preserved for farming, and entrench a lasting community dimension. This can be done by setting up an ad hoc community farmland trust, or through a wider trust or association. In this way, money can be raised from a broader circle of supporters as well as CSA members.

B - CSA keeps agroecological farmers on the land by making them more viable

5. CSAs facilitate the entry of new farmers: they provide a supportive community of consumers (who become "pro"sumers) who can provide finance, a guaranteed market and, in many cases, active participation in farming, distribution and/ or further organisation. They help plan for foreseen income and expenditure, and thereby make it easier to plan land rental or acquisition.
6. CSAs help maintain existing farms - CSA can help farms to survive and thrive and potentially grow by reducing market pressure, providing a more secure business model and stimulating investment.



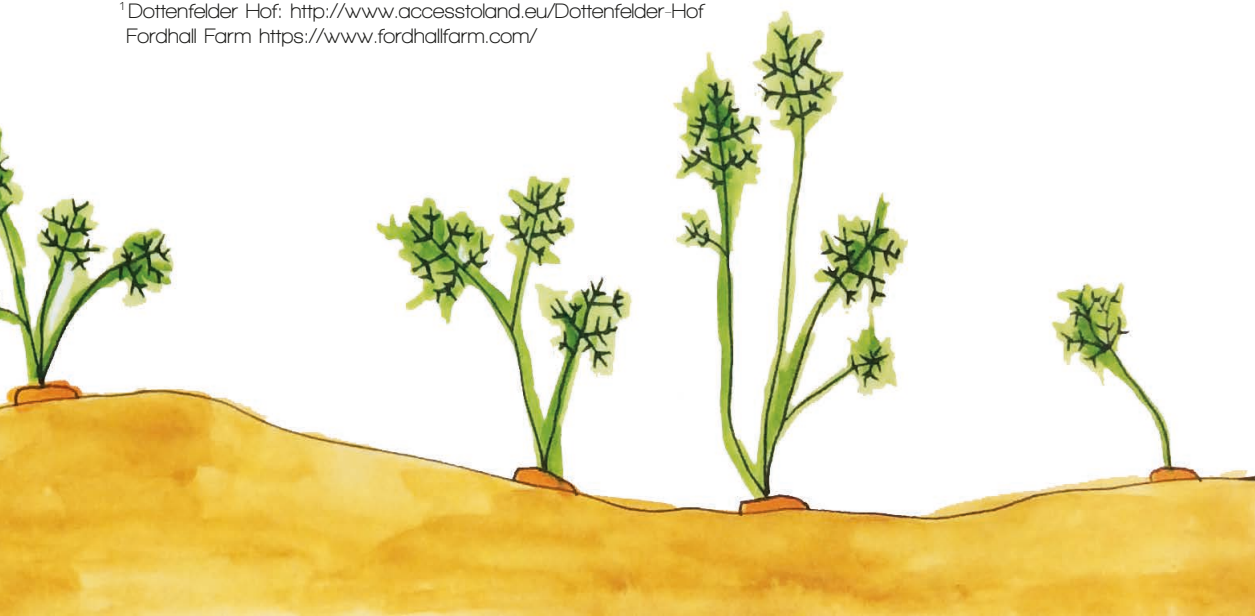
In both cases, the financial solidarity between farmers and prosumers includes funding for farmland. It not only covers the yearly production, but can also include some of the farm's capital (land and buildings).

C - CSA dynamics tip the balance in favour of land use for agroecology

7. CSA networks participate in setting up land trusts and land platforms to preserve farmland and make it available for CSA farmers – CSA networks have played an important role in setting up initiatives for access to land in several countries and regions (e.g. Czech Republic, Flanders, Catalonia, Romania). Their aim is to secure land not just for a couple of CSA farms but for the CSA movement as a whole and to build a political force. In other instances, CSA groups participate in multi-stakeholder platforms to ensure that land planning and zoning as well as local food policies pay due attention to preserving farmland and channel it towards agroecological and CSA farmers.
8. CSA farms are attractive to the public and charitable trusts: CSA farms fulfil social, ecological and educational aims. They have a civic base and local connections. Many also help bridge the divide between urban and rural issues. This may make them attractive to landowners such as public authorities and charitable trusts. While some may be wary to rent to a CSA, many will be attracted to a CSA project on condition that the legal status is clear, that one main representative is identified, and that the social benefits are highlighted.
9. CSAs create new farming projects: CSA models with a high degree of community involvement build and foster knowledge in agriculture among members. In some cases, CSA members pursue professional training and become farmers themselves.

In the following sections of this book we present 14 case studies, from eight European countries. They explore these various challenges and illustrate diverse ways of realising the goal of setting up and running a CSA. These case studies also highlight some of the difficulties of securing land for CSA. Lessons learnt and recommendations based on these case studies and further exchanges are presented in the conclusions.

¹Dottenfelder Hof: <http://www.accesstoland.eu/Dottenfelder-Hof>
Fordhall Farm <https://www.fordhallfarm.com/>



Case Studies



Case Study 1

Preserving fertile land in the vicinity of cities – the GeLa Ochsenherz CSA, Austria

By Lorenz Glatz sen. and Lorenz Glatz jun., geLa Ochsenherz

Ge(meinsam) la(ndwirtschaften) Ochsenherz¹ means “farming together Oxheart” and is the name of a CSA farm in Gänserndorf close to Vienna. The oldest CSA in Austria, it has been running since 2010 and has about 300 members. The CSA was established to save a Demeter farm that produces vegetables, fruit and open-pollinating seeds.

“Invest in fertile land in the vicinity of cities” – just a few years ago this was the proposition an investment advisor gave at a gathering of wealthy people inquiring about safe investments in Austria. The geLa Ochsenherz project is built on land that matches these precise criteria – 8 hectares of leased land with most of the farming infrastructure (polytunnels etc) built on it.

Soon a new life-threatening problem for the farm emerged. Public authorities announced the project to build a highway near the farm. This is very attractive for people aiming to live in the countryside with a short car-ride away from work in Vienna. For farming this poses a problem. Acquisition of farmland for building the highway, changing the zoning designation of farm land to construction land, selling the land newly designated for construction to buy more farmland – all of this is driving up prices of arable land.

The change of designation of agricultural land has led to the cancellation of the lease of parts of the Ochsenherz farmland. This puts the whole CSA project in a critical situation: shifting the land and infrastructure required for farming is not easy and costs money. Eventually, new land (about 2.7 hectares) became available nearby, although at significantly higher prices. Moving and rebuilding the polytunnels and the core infrastructure – new containers for the office, sanitary and work spaces, access to the sewers and electricity – cost more than €150,000.

Highlights:

- Urban pressure means leased land is more insecure and land prices are pushed up
- Losing land means costs and reorganising the farm system
- Securing long term land tenure is key to the perpetuation of a CSA
- Solidarity-based funding
- How to secure community investment (money, time, energy) when the farmer changes?

A budget and transition plan were presented, discussed and agreed at the annual gathering of the CSA. It was then implemented by the farm workers and volunteer work of the members of the CSA.

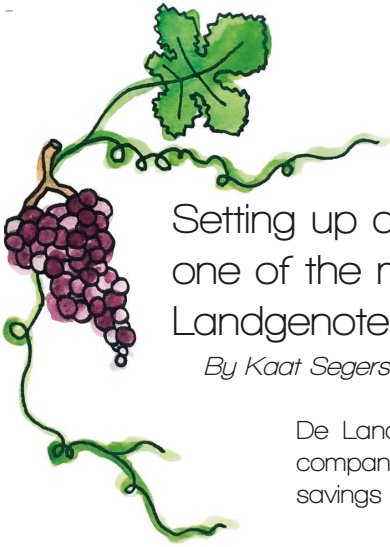
CSA members provided the funding needed for moving site. About 5% of the €150,000 came from donations, another part was lent to the farm by the CSA members, while the biggest part were advance CSA membership payments for future years. None of these payments included interest rates and apart from the donations, it will all be paid back over the next few years in the form of either cash or vegetables.

This successful effort to secure the farm's operation also brought a new dynamic into discussing the foundation of the farm itself – the ownership. The farm as well as everything that is being spent and built, is the result of the people working on the farm, as well as CSA members providing the necessary means and funds. Yet from a legal perspective all of it is the property of the farm's owner. What happens if he were no longer able to work on the farm or died, and his heirs subsequently wanted to sell it for a profit?

As a result of these considerations, the group opted to secure the farm for solidarity-based farming. The infrastructure and the land on which it stands will be transferred into a foundation (which has yet to be created) devoted to securing assets for solidarity-based farming. In order to protect the assets of the foundation from privatization and speculation, the mission of the foundation cannot be changed. The larger part of the owned land is still the property of the farmer, who on the one hand needs some income from the land, but on the other also wants to ensure that it is secured for the purpose of solidarity farming. The Ochsenherz community is now working on this.

¹ www.ochsenherz.at





Setting up a farmland trust for CSA farms in one of the most expensive parts of Europe - Landgenoten, Belgium

By Kaat Segers, Landgenoten

De Landgenoten² ("land comrades") is a citizens' cooperative company in Flanders, Belgium that brings together citizens' savings to buy land for organic farmers.

De Landgenoten has experience of buying land for four vegetable CSA-farms and one non-CSA family farm in short chain supply plus a couple of CSAs and other farm projects in progress. Much of the land for these CSAs is being bought for starter projects with new entrants. The total amount of land acquired currently amounts to 10 hectares. Land is being bought for example when the owner decides to sell the land leased by the CSA or when the farmer is the owner and wants to sell his own land. This is done for a number of different reasons, to free his capital for other investments; to increase the chance of farm continuity after he quits farming; to make the property relations between the three farmers of a cooperative CSA farm more equal or for ideological reasons (land as the Commons).

Members' capital is insufficient to finance all the land for a (vegetable) CSA-farm in Flanders as the average price of one ha of land is about €50,000, and can reach as much as €80,000 to €100,000 for arable land. That means capital from the wider community is needed. CSA farmers mobilise friends, family, neighbours and even the general public to become De Landgenoten shareholders. CSA-farmers are often sociable and good marketeers. This is a big strength in convincing others to become De Landgenoten shareholders. Members of a CSA-farm are already a kind of "local group" or "community" before De Landgenoten steps in. This makes it easier to get the De Landgenoten crowdfunding campaign organised.

CSA members are used to and/or have learned to have a responsible attitude towards their farm(er)s. Involvement in the farm has become their "natural" way of life. Their contribution to De Landgenoten is thus often not limited to financial support. They also contribute with expertise (e.g. a member may be notary, another member may have expertise in land valuation), communication skills (e.g. a member with good press contacts), mobilising fellow members, finding or providing land for sale (e.g. a member landowner who provided land for another farm) etc.

In a CSA farm, added value is generated on the farm itself rather than through external processing and marketing. CSA farms score high in farm income per surface area. In other words they need little land per full time equivalent farm income. This makes it cheaper (and therefore more feasible) for De Landgenoten to raise the capital needed to buy the farmland.

Highlights:

- CSA network helps set up a national access to land initiative
- High land prices mean CSAs need to raise funds for land beyond their members
- Natural continuation between CSA and access to land involvement for both CSA farmer and community members
- CSA farms often have high added value per hectare, so they need only small plots. More compatible with citizen funding
- Resorting to Landgenoten, or to a farm-based community land trust?
- Investing in both CSA and Landgenoten may be too demanding for some members

For members of an existing CSA-farm, buying De Landgenoten shares feels like a continuation or extension of their existing solidarity with the farmer. De Landgenoten promote themselves as an “upgrade” of CSA, asking customers to extend their support to the farmer to the level of the land on which he/she produces food for them.

From the perspective of some of the CSA-members there can be however a contradiction in being 1) a co-“owner” of the land as a member of De Landgenoten cooperative and 2) having to co-fund the farm’s yearly land rental cost to De Landgenoten as a member of the CSA-farm. It is sometimes confusing and financially demanding for members of new CSA-farms if the farmer asks them to contribute an obligatory harvest share of €250-450 per adult as well as an optional 1-20 shares of €250 in De Landgenoten cooperative before they have had any benefits from the farm (or even before a single lettuce has been planted).

CSA farmers are farmers that are willing to involve customers in their farm. For some of them cooperation with De Landgenoten is a logical choice. Some farmers, though, even go further in involving their customers and choose to organise their farm as a cooperative in which their members participate in the farm capital (machines, trees, ...). In this way, the farm cooperative might become more suitable as a land owner than De Landgenoten cooperative. De Landgenoten becomes “redundant”.

The Flemish CSA Network was one of the initiators of De Landgenoten, together with Landwijzer (education centre for organic and biodynamic farmers) and a local access to land initiative (preparatory phase 2011-2014). In 2014, the CSA Network was one of the seventeen founders of De Landgenoten cooperative. CSA farmer Tom Troonbeeckx is the president of both Flemish CSA Network and De Landgenoten.



Photo by Patrick De Ceuster

² <https://delandgenoten.be> + <http://www.accesstoland.eu/-De-Landgenoten->



A long search for land... and adequate legal status – GartenCoop CSA, Germany

By Peter Volz and Fabian Kern, GartenCoop

The German CSA GartenCoop³ was founded in 2009 and is seen as one of the most inspiring SoLaWi's (abbreviation of the German term for CSA – solidarische Landwirtschaft) in Germany.

Currently over 300 prosumers are members of GartenCoop which is well known for its innovative logistic concept⁴ and a great variety of plants cultivated (100% from open pollinating seeds).

The diverse members of Gartencoop are at the heart of the initiative. Their contribution was crucial for the start of the Gartencoop and is still important for the development of the project. Members contribute not only monetarily (about €1000 per year and a one-off mandatory private loan of €400 per member on joining) but also by participating in farming (a minimum four times a year) and in the distribution of the food. In return, the members receive the shared total harvest every week and thus contribute to the implementation of the concept of food sovereignty. Furthermore, they are involved in all major decisions that are taken by consensus. The eight farmers that are employed by the CSA are assigned by the members to develop the crop plan and do the farming as well as carrying out some educational work.

When a group of prosumers and young farmers started up the initiative in 2009 after visiting the "Jardins des Cocagne" in Switzerland, they soon experienced difficulties in finding land. As the concept of CSA was not well known then, many land-owners did not understand their ideas. There are also legal limitations in Germany for persons or institutions without agricultural status for buying or leasing agricultural land. This limitation aims to protect farmers from organisations interested in speculation. Nevertheless it poses a problem for initiatives like GartenCoop who do not want their land to be owned by an individual person as this would create dependence and hierarchies. The objective is the communal ownership of the land.

Furthermore, due to urban sprawl, land concentration and areas designated for nature protection as well as due to flooding, it was not easy to find land close to the city. Land in the region around Freiburg is largely used for growing corn, grains, asparagus and strawberries as well as for wine. Land prices have increased in the last 10 years (€17.500/ha on average in 2014) and often land is not sold on the open market: sales tend to be pre-arranged and the land is often bought by established farmers who want to expand.

Highlights:

- Facilitating the establishment of new farmers
- Land tenure in the hands of the community (not the farmers)
- Difficulty to find land near cities
- Difficulty to rent land as a non-farming legal person
- Renting land from a municipality

All this meant that GartenCoop had to search for almost one year before finding 7-8 ha of land but it is land not within easy reach of the city. Infrastructure and inventory (e.g. machines) was partly in place and could be improved over time thanks to the capital provided by the members. To avoid legal issues, the lease was officially in the name of one of the young farmers who acted as a single entrepreneur. The lease is for 15 years and quite secure. GartenCoop has now adopted the form of an Association with limited liabilities (GmbH), which holds a lease until 2029.

When the contract was signed, the initiative included 50 members. GartenCoop could easily feed 300 people with 7-8 ha. Nowadays GartenCoop has a little over 10 ha. The additional area was given by the municipality, who occasionally rents it out to local farmers.

It is challenging for a new CSA initiative to find enough people to invest, many prefer to join a project when it is up and running. GartenCoop eventually attracted many people and became well-known, inspiring people across Germany and Europe⁵.

³ www.gartencoop.org

⁴ <http://www.gartencoop.org/tunsel/node/4232>

⁵ See the film "The strategy of the crooked cucumbers"
<http://www.cinerebelde.org/the-strategy-of-crooked-cucumbers-p-121.html?language=en>



Photo by GartenCoop Freiburg



Preserving a farm and so much more... - CSA Hof Pente, Germany

By Tobias Hartkemeyer, Hof Pente

Hof Pente in Northern Germany is a farm with more than 450 years of history as a family farm; it became a CSA in 2011 and currently has 290 members.

50% of the 52 ha of Hof Pente⁶ is owned by the farming family, the other half is rented with an uncertain future: what happens when the landowner dies? New ideas were needed in order to secure the rented land for the future.

The CSA community is in close contact with the CSA farmers and has taken on more and more responsibility. A small working group composed of engaged CSA members and representatives of the farming family has developed a model for a community trust to own the land and make it accessible for the CSA farming. It is understood that this type of farming includes social goals like education, democracy building and biodiversity.

It was decided to start this foundation. €40,000 was donated by CSA members, 4ha woodland worth €120,000 was donated by the CSA farmers and 8.000m² worth €50.000 was donated by a neighbour (retired farmer) who used to rent the land to the CSA. These donors constitute the chairperson and the board trustees of the community foundation Hof Pente (Gemeinschaftsstiftung Hof Pente).



Photo by Tobias Hartkemeyer

Highlights:

- Insecurity of leased land
- Trust and quality of community connections is key to finding a solution
- Need to find a good balance between community and farmer
- Innovative funding schemes
- Showing the social and environmental benefits of a CSA encourages people to invest in land
- A CSA farm is a source of good food as well as education and generates a sense of belonging

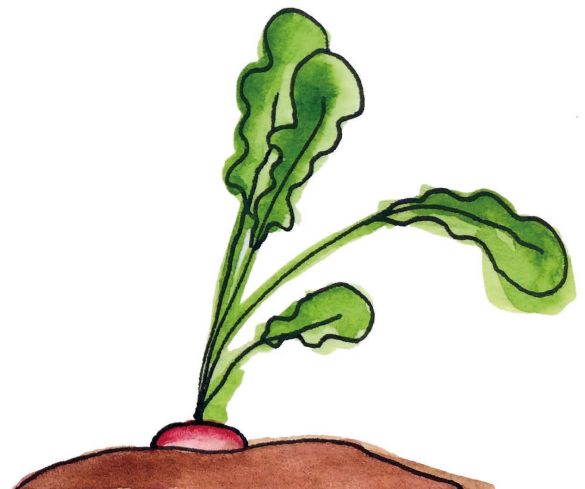
The foundation can acquire more land through land donations, by buying land or by a rent-acquisition scheme, whereby the Foundation pays a higher rent for a number of years, after which it owns the land. The plan is to increase annual donations from the CSA community. The other plan for the future is to show the benefits of farming regarding soil development, biodiversity and other social goals in order to be able to receive money from the municipality.

The cultivation of the CSA community is essential for the whole process. It plays the key role in the development of an atmosphere of trust in a joint process that includes the CSA community and the landowners. What has helped in this respect is that the Hof Pente has followed an approach that places high importance on educational and recreational concepts since the beginning of the CSA. These include:

- regular work with children (Kindergarden group)
- regular events and farm tours
- community workshops and activities
- vocational and educational training
- newsletter and publications on the political dimension of CSA
- lectures

The CSA has thus become a place where you not only get your daily food, but where you and your children also spend considerable time learning – the CSA plays an important role in community life – it is a place where members also invest to ensure its continuity!

⁶ www.hofpente.de





From building CSAs to securing land – the perspectives of the ASAT movement, Romania

By Anna Gioia, Eco Ruralis

The cornerstone of the Romanian food system is the large number of small-scale subsistence farms that nowadays hardly have any room in a market dominated by the agri-food industry. Right at the other end of the food chain, a small but increasing number of health-conscious consumers fumbles for fresh organic food in the supermarket shelves. Against this backdrop, CSA represents the missing link that can reconnect the two ends, filling the gap created by the market through a consumer-producer relationship based on the values of co-responsibility, solidarity and mutual trust.

In 2008, the Centre of Resources for Solidarity and Ethical Initiatives (CRIES⁷), an NGO whose aim is to promote social economy in Romania, initiated the first consumer-producer partnership and helped establish the “Association for the Support of Peasant Agriculture” (Asociația pentru Sustinerea Agriculturii Tărănești, ASAT⁸). Starting in the town of Timisoara, ASAT partnerships that are inspired by the French AMAP model have expanded across the whole country. They can now be found in several larger Romanian cities like Bucharest, Cluj, Arad, Odorheiu, Secuiesc and Sibiu. The network currently brings together 10 CSA groups and 900-1000 conscious consumers.

The current scheme of the ASAT partnership has played a role in supporting access to land by helping small farmers to survive or grow by giving them a secure and fair compensation for their work. It also helped young Romanian producers earn their livelihood on their own land with ecological methods instead of migrating as agriculture labourers on intensive large farms. Nonetheless, if we want to analyse the link between the Romanian CSA movement and access to land from the perspective of future developments, there is still a lot that can be done. Point 5.9 of the ASAT Charter states that the “members of the partnership should reflect on its continuity and on making their activities permanent ones through actions such as: e.g. collective purchases and solidary investments.”

This means that the consumers’ engagement can evolve to make a more effective contribution to securing land. Consumers can purchase land jointly with other ASAT members, thus becoming shareholders of Commons that will eventually be entrusted to

Highlights:

- CSA is a way to make small farms more viable, to help farmers stay on the land or even expand their farms
- CSA members can help secure land by
 - buying land and renting it to a farmer
 - lending/ donating land to farmers so that they may rent/ acquire (more) land
- CSA network as a partner in a future national access to land initiative

a farmer. For example, the group of ASAT consumers in Bucharest came up with the idea of jointly buying an orchard so that it could be further developed and cared for by the family of CSA producers. This would cater for their access to fruit to complement the access to organic vegetables that they get in their weekly CSA share. The details of this initiative are still under discussion in the group. Furthermore, consumers provide a peasant with the direct financial resources to lease land when the area in ownership is not enough for the size of the CSA group.

The first land trust initiative that aims to provide access to land to a new generation of peasants in Romania is about to be established as a cooperation between members of both the national ASAT network and the organisation standing up for the rights of the numerous Romanian peasants, Eco Ruralis (member of via Campesina). The majority of Romanian small peasants have a hard time to find a successor to take over their farming operation. Therefore, a likely scenario is that these farms will be incorporated into larger farms, developed for non-agricultural purposes, or abandoned. This issue is linked to the first constraint highlighted by ASAT - the transmission of the small-farming model to other farmers - and gives room for the hypothesis that CSA may render small-scale ecological food production a viable livelihood alternative for the new generation of entrants into farming. The idea of removing land from the market and placing it under a common, democratically managed land trust initiative would fit well with the larger ideals of CSA. The land owned by a retiring farmer could be purchased by the future 'land trust organization' and then made available to new peasants with certain use criteria, like agroecological principles. This partnership: land trust organization with CSA solidarity economy and training in agroecological methods would result in making rural living an attractive option for motivated new farmers.

⁷ www.cries.ro

⁸ <http://asatromania.ro/>





Starting and expanding a small farm thanks to the support of CSA members - Marcel Has CSA farm, Romania

By Brîndusa Bîrbala, ASAT and Eco Ruralis

The story of Marcel Has is a successful example of how the ASAT CSA scheme can effectively support small farmers. After losing his job in the city of Arad, Marcel moved to the countryside and started practicing subsistence agriculture. He was in his forties, with five children, no rural background and no formal training in horticulture. In 2011, he discovered CRIES and decided to start his first ASAT partnership with 25 households from Timisoara. He had the experience of a few seasons of growing food and some experience as an agriculture worker on larger farms, but the

technology at his disposal was very limited at that time. Over the years, and thanks to the consumers support for improving the operating of the farm, Marcel managed to secure the production, to increase the variety of the vegetables grown (from 24 to 37 in a 5year period) and to increase the number of customers (currently he delivers in total of 45 shares each week from April to November). His cultivation area grew from 0.2 hectare (the size of his village garden plot) to 1.5 hectares, the rest being leased by the CSA consumers. In time, he gained confidence in his capacity as a grower.



Technical improvements to the farm (like the purchase of agricultural machinery and equipment, the construction of a new well and of a greenhouse) were made possible too because of the financial support of his CSA group. Marcel has been able to practise diversified organic

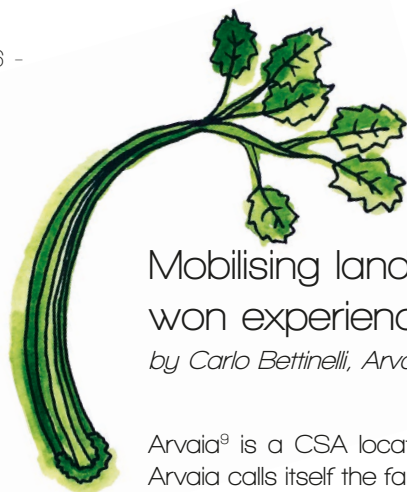
agriculture, because the ASAT partnership with his consumers allowed him to share the risks associated with this kind of agriculture. In fact, even though he lost part of the crops on several occasions, the consumers paid the subscription fee anyway as part of the shared risks and benefits principle of the ASAT partnership. In fact, at the beginning of each season, a part of the subscription fee is paid in advance, so that the farmer has the money needed to make the necessary investments for the season. In some years, some consumers decided to pay in advance the total amount of the subscription, in solidarity with the farmer who could not afford the investments on his own for the yearly food production.

Highlights:

- CSA enables the start of a farmer
- CSA food supply improves as members get involved with financial support

Because of the CSA model and the availability of small garden plots in his village, Marcel was able to access more land and thus to increase his earnings as a CSA farmer, proportional to the increase of consumers in his partnership. Through all this support and work, he has avoided the inevitable option left to many rural people in Romania, that of being a seasonal agriculture worker abroad. However, new entrants with zero capital cannot access agricultural land, as the prices are escalating fast due to pressure from large industrial farming. They need support in terms of access to land to gain that key prior experience before daring to start a CSA, as well as training in agroecological methods and gaining confidence in themselves.





Mobilising land from the municipality – the hard-won experience of Arvaia CSA, Italy

by Carlo Bettinelli, Arvaia

Arvaia⁹ is a CSA located in Bologna, Emilia-Romagna, in the North of Italy. Arvaia calls itself the farming cooperative of city dwellers and organic farmers ("Cooperativa agricola di cittadini e agricoltori biologici"), or "Comunità che supporta l'agricoltura" (community supported agriculture). It started in 2013, producing vegetables on 2 ha for about 100 members. It is now providing food for about 250 people and managing almost 50 hectares, where CSA members are growing vegetables, pulses, grains and aromatic herbs, for themselves as well as for selling outside the CSA. The aim is that more and more of the food produced be used by the CSA community. They have calculated that they could provide vegetables, eggs and milk to 500 neighbouring families.

Accessing land for the farm has not been easy. The process can tell a lot about potential strategies that can be successful in a situation like this, where political relationships are as important as having a solid and cohesive CSA group.

The municipality of Bologna, during the first decade of 2000, started the planning of farming and nature area ("Parco città-campagna") just outside the city of Bologna. This area was in the neighbourhood of Borgo Panigale, in a park of about 50 ha, that had been farmed using conventional agricultural methods for many years, and had been mostly neglected by the municipality. The municipality was trying to stimulate the development of a project of social farming¹⁰, but the efforts did not produce any concrete results.

In 2012, a group of people from Bologna, some of whom had farming backgrounds, got together and developed the idea of forming a CSA farm near the city, inspired by several initiatives in Europe. The idea of using the park seemed obvious.

Arvaia funders were clear they wanted to develop their project on public land. Their main motivations were to secure public land from future speculation, to return public land

Highlights:

- Finding land in a peri-urban area
- Establishing a CSA farm on public land:
 - public tender
 - support of the municipality for the project and its limits
 - showing the public/ social benefits of a CSA farm
- Increase in land area enables development of a more diverse farm system and provision of more local food

to the benefit of the common good, and to set an example for other cities. They soon realized that in a city like Bologna, a provincial capital with 400,000 inhabitants, without the support of the municipality it would have been impossible to start such a project on public land. This support was provided by two city councillors who decided to support the idea at institutional level.

Arvaia started to work closely with an association, Campi Aperti (open fields), that was implementing a project on access to land in Italy, following the example of Terre de Liens in France. Since the work with the municipality was taking a long time to reach a positive conclusion, in 2013 the group sub-rented 2 ha inside the area from a cooperative that was not farming it. Finally, in 2015 the municipality published a tender for the management of the whole area. This tender was won by Arvaia and since then the cooperative has been able to manage the whole 50 ha of the park, integrating the vegetable production with cereals and pulses, resulting in a wider and more sustainable crop rotation.

It is important to underline that the rent requested by the municipality is higher than the market price, and this shows that the municipality still considers the project merely as a way of making profit on the land that it owns, and not taking the benefits that a CSA in the area can give to the community into consideration.

All the efforts put into the creation of a CSA cooperative with more than 250 members over many years have resulted in the cooperative being recognised by the institutions, the local community and the national public at large. It has also become increasingly easy to dialogue with public institutions. In the last few years many people from all over Italy have visited Arvaia to understand and learn how such a project could be started elsewhere. The municipality itself has recognised the importance of the project: they have leased a small piece of land in another part of the city to a group of citizens, suggesting they use the Arvaia model as a reference.

⁹ www.arvaia.it

¹⁰ For more details on social farming see here: <http://www.maie-project.eu/index.php?id=33>



Photo by Arvaia



Fighting back: from land loss to developing positive local community – the mobilisation of Terre de Rivières, France

By Paco Friez and Véronique Rioufol, Terre de Liens

South Western France is a place where competition for land is rife, both among farmers – with a strong pre-eminence of maize growers and wine producers – and between farmers and tourist residences. When a piece of land was about to be lost by their farmers, local CSAs mobilised so strongly that they managed to reverse the situation and preserve the land and local food system.

Context: a coveted piece of land

For decades, Christophe Sonnevile had an organic orchard of 450 trees on four hectares, plus three hectares of cereals in Rivières, Tarn. In 2013, he decided to stop farming for personal reasons. He then offered to sell his land to his neighbour, who was also an organic fruit farmer selling his produce to the same CSA groups, called AMAPs¹¹ in France. But the local agricultural land market regulating agency, SAFER¹² decided to pre-empt the sale and allocate it to a neighbouring maize grower. The latter sought to expand his farm so as to gain access to new water resources as well as to receive more European subsidies. His plan was to uproot the apple trees and develop non-organic maize production on the land.

Strong mobilisation of local AMAPs

The local AMAP network, consisting of 22 AMAPs and 15 farmers then started a mobilisation and media campaign. They organised protests, meetings, a petition and public events such as a “sit-in picnic”. They asked for the orchard to be sold to Christophe’s neighbour, and for the remaining three hectares to be used for organic vegetable growing. Local AMAPs were already partnering with farmers producing meat, fish, cheese, apples and flour, but not vegetables so there was an existing need.

Highlights:

- Strong and successful CSA mobilisation
- Successfully fighting back land loss
- Collaboration between CSA (AMAP) and Access to land initiative (Terre de Liens) which has the expertise and processes to acquire and manage land more easily
- Land mobilisation gives way to a multi-stakeholder partnership around food and farming
- Setting up a farm incubator

To strengthen the mobilisation, members of the local AMAP network established the association *"Terre de Rivières"*¹³ ("Land of Rivières") in December 2015. Its mission is to acquire farmland so as to preserve land for organic farming and to support new agroecological farms.

As a result of this strong mobilisation, the SAFER agreed to reconsider its choice. It sold the four hectares of orchard to Christophe's neighbour, so that they remain in organic fruit production. It also sold the remaining three hectares of land to *Terre de Rivières* so that it could be rented to an organic grower who will sell his produce to local AMAPs.

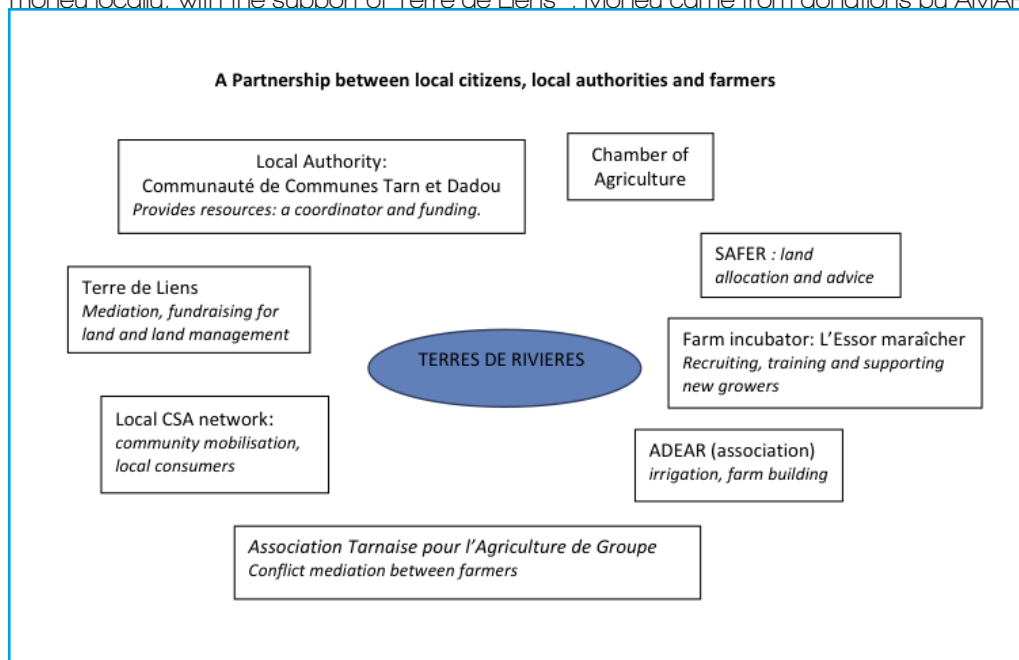
A favourable local context and multi-stakeholder partnership

The AMAPs' mobilisation quickly found growing support from a range of local stakeholders. First and foremost, the local authority, the *"Communauté de Communes Tarn et Dadou"*, which is a grouping of 29 municipalities (small towns and villages), bringing together 51,000 inhabitants. The president (mayor) is a farmer who has always promoted the development of local agriculture. In 2012, it supported the establishment of a vegetable farm incubator¹⁴ called *"L'Essor maraîcher"*. From the start, the incubator also involved the local AMAP network and the Chamber of Agriculture.

Both the local authority and the farm incubator are now members of *Terre de Rivières*. After initial tensions regarding the allocation of the orchard, the SAFER and the Agricultural Chamber also agreed to work in partnership with *Terre de Rivières*. Several local associations promoting agroecology and rural development also started collaborating with the AMAP network, to establish *Terre de Rivières*, acquire the land and find a new grower.

Organising land acquisition and the arrival of a new grower

Terre de Rivières is about to buy the three hectares of land for €34,000. It raised the money locally, with the support of *Terre de Liens*¹⁵. Money came from donations by AMAP



members, some of the AMAP, other interested citizens, as well as local stakeholders, such as the local *Friends of the Earth* association, an organic supermarket (Biocoop), and a local company. Technically, money was raised via the Terre de Liens Foundation, which made it easier to organise the fundraising and entitled individual donors to tax exemptions. Once the new grower starts his business, Terre de Rivières will then donate the land and buildings to the Terre de Liens Foundation. Terre de Liens will then lease the land to the new grower, under an environmental lease.

The farm incubator is now organising a tender for projects, to find a prospective farmer wishing to experiment a growing project on the three hectares of land. The prospective grower will then benefit from legal portage, support and mentoring for two to three years, so as to develop his farm business in a protected environment. Meanwhile, *Terre de Rivières* is organising irrigation and a farm building and finding an outlet for the future grower.

Buoyed by the success of this first mobilisation, *Terre de Rivières* is now planning to find new land to protect and to support more entries into farming that will benefit local food systems. This experience has also led the local authority to designate a town councillor responsible for strategic land watch in each of its 29 municipalities.

11 AMAPs are associations for the preservation of peasant farming. Their members are consumers (or "prosumers") who pre-pay a share of the produce of one or several farmers at the beginning of the season. They then receive a box of produce (vegetables, meat, cheese, eggs...) corresponding to a weekly share. In this way, AMAP members share the risks and benefits with the farmers. Read more: <http://urgenci.net/amap-in-france/>

12 Read more on SAFER, regional agencies in charge of regulating the rural land market in France, at: <http://www.accesstoland.eu/Unique-land-agencies-the-SAFER>

13 <http://www.terrederivieres.fr>

14 See: http://www.accesstoland.eu/IMG/pdf/tld_e__eta__tld_france_en.pdf

15 Terre de Liens is a civic movement, established in 2003, with the mission of preserving farmland and securing farmland for organic and peasant farming. It informs and mobilises citizens, as well as raises money (investments and donations) to acquire farms which are rented to farmers on long term leases. Read more: <http://www.accesstoland.eu/-Terre-de-liens->



Photo by Terre de Rivières

Case study 9



Helping a farmer protect his land from speculators - Valderoure Farm, France

By Paco Friez and Véronique Rioufol, Terre de Liens

Valderoure farm is a small livestock farm on the French Riviera, selling its produce to several CSA groups (called AMAPs¹⁶). Although the farm was twice faced with strong land pressures and land speculation, it managed to survive and expand thanks to the solidarity of AMAP members and citizen networks.

Background

In 2000, Stéphane Maillard started as a young farmer breeding organic cows and poultry on the French Riviera (Côte d'Azur). Despite the rough competition for land, he managed to buy a farm and meadows and to rent additional land from local landowners. He could thus connect the various meadows to create a managed grazing system for his cows, the basis of his extensive farming approach.

His farm was developing well until one morning in 2005, Stéphane discovered "for sale" signs in some of the meadows he was renting. He then realised that he was victim of a common practice of rural landowners: selling land to horse breeders who create horse-riding trails and build stables that will later be sold as secondary residences, at inflated prices. It was an immense shock for Stéphane, as the loss of those seven hectares of grazing would mean the end of his farm business. Indeed, he would no longer have the necessary pastures for his herd. He would also be forced to pay back subsidies from the Common Agricultural Policy (both direct aids and agri-environment measures).

Highlights:

- Insecurity of tenancy
- Strong CSA (AMAP) mobilisation overcoming farmer's isolation
- Successfully fighting back against land speculation
- Maintaining an existing farm and helping it develop
- Loss of land implies restructuring the farm system



Photo by Cecile Dubart

Finding the support of local CSAs

Stéphane sought ways to fight back. He did not receive any support from the local farmers' unions, as this "horse-breeding trick" was very common amongst farmers. Besides, Stéphane was new to the area. Stéphane and his wife, with the help of a lawyer, fought alone for one year to maintain their farm. Meanwhile, Stéphane had to reduce the size of his herd from 30 to only 12 cows. He was refusing consumers every week, and was actually facing economic problems and preparing for the possibility of having less pasture.

During that period, Stéphane attended the annual general assembly of the local AMAP network. From the start, Stéphane had sold his eggs and meat to 5 different AMAPs in the region (Grasse, Valbonne, Fayence...). The general assembly of local AMAPs provides an opportunity to discuss many issues through conferences, meetings and round tables. During a debate on food sovereignty, Stéphane presented his problems for the first time to AMAP members. Immediately, a group of people organised an ad hoc round table on the situation. One participant mentioned that Terre de Liens¹⁷ was about to establish a solidarity-based investment fund in order to secure agricultural land: the *Terre de Liens Foncière*. Participants of the round table decided to ask Terre de Liens to acquire the land, so as to maintain Stéphane's farm.

Securing the land thanks to the financial backing of AMAP members

AMAP members then contacted Terre de Liens to explain the situation. Interested to act in this area of high land pressure, Terre de Liens in turn contacted the local SAFER¹⁸, asking it to intervene with the landowners selling the land and requesting that they set a moderate price and agree to sell to Terre de Liens for Stéphane's use.

It was one of Terre de Liens' first land purchases. Local AMAPs did an immense amount of work and raised the money from their members and other concerned citizens. The total price was about €90,000 for 7.4 hectares – a price twice the French average, given the high land prices on the Riviera. In less than 6 months, local AMAPs and Terre de Liens raised over €70,000 from AMAP members, one of the AMAP, a local organic supermarket (Biocoop) and other citizens. Local AMAPs also mobilised and collaborated

with Terre de Liens to prepare for the land acquisition. *"Given the role played by the AMAPs, we just had to do the paperwork. It has been really easy"*, said the President of the local Terre de Liens.

In 2009, another landowner wanted to repeat the "horse breeding trick" with four hectares of land. Stéphane hesitated for few months before calling Terre de Liens: *"I was ashamed to ask for help again"*. When he finally called them, the *Foncière* told him that the previous fundraising had been so successful that there were enough funds left for this second operation!

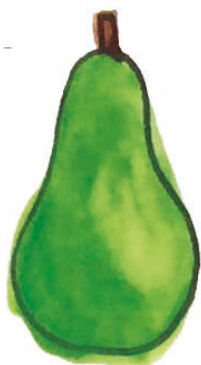
Stéphane's farm is now secure. He has increased his herd and started a new enterprise, a microbrewery growing his own barley. He now sells to 10 different AMAPs. After these rough times, Stéphane got involved in local democracy and local life. He is now a municipal councillor in his village, a board member of the Natural Park of the Préalpes d'Azur and chairman of the Park's farmers association. In a way, this tough experience helped him to realise how important citizen participation and trust is. Agroecological farmers often face land pressures and isolation within the farming sector: citizen networks and democratic instances can truly help empower them.

¹⁶ AMAPs are associations for the preservation of peasant farming. They are the French form of community supported agriculture (CSA). AMAPs are associations of consumers (or "prosumers") who pre-pay a share of the produce of one or several farmers at the beginning of the season. They then receive a box of produce (vegetables, meat, cheese, eggs...) corresponding to a weekly share. In this way, AMAP members share the risks and benefits with the farmers.

¹⁷ Terre de Liens is a French civic movement, established in 2003, with the mission of preserving farmland and securing farmland for organic and peasant farming. It informs and mobilises citizens, as well as raises money (investments and donations) to acquire farms which are rent to farmers on the long term. Read more: www.terredeliens.org

¹⁸ SAFER are regional agencies in charge of regulating land markets, through intermediation and pre-emption rights. Read more: <http://www.accesstoland.eu/Unique-land-agencies-the-SAFER>





A strategic regional partnership to promote entries into farming – Pôle Abiosol, France

By Paco Friez and Véronique Rioufol, Terre de Liens – April 2017

In the greater Paris area, the local CSA network has played a decisive role in developing a strategy and cooperation to promote the establishment of new farmers. With Terre de Liens and two other organisations, they have set up a farm incubator and established an informal platform to secure entries into farming for local organic food production.

Context

Ile de France, the region around Paris, is one of the most densely populated in France. In the early 2000s, rising interest for local quality food has meant a rapid development of AMAPs¹⁹, the French CSA groups. So much so that AMAPs had more interested consumers than available farmers. In the region, new land is scarce and very expensive. And very few growers are entering farming as large-scale crop farmers dominate the agricultural sector. In this context, the local AMAP network soon had the vision of supporting the establishment of new farmers: by training them, supporting and securing their entries into farming, organising consumers' solidarity and securing land.

Setting up an incubator farm: Les Champs des Possibles

Since 2006, the local AMAP network has worked on setting up an incubator farm, enabling prospective growers to try out CSA. The opportunity arose in 2009 when Jean-Louis Colas, farmer and board member of the AMAP network, retired. Terre de Liens²⁰ then bought the 73-hectare farm, rented most of the land and building to a new organic farmer and set aside two hectares which were rented to a newly established incubator farm: *Les Champs des Possibles*²¹.

This incubator farm provides access to land and equipment, mentoring and legal status to new growers during a trial period. The aim is to help them gain new skills and confidence, test farming practices, build a consumer base of AMAP members and develop their professional network before getting started on their own farm. This is a key dimension to bridging the gap between training and entry into farming for prospective farmers whose training often lacks practical experience²².

Over the years, *Les Champs des Possibles* has developed new trial sites and has expanded its activities. It now offers various options for trial farming: from a few months to three years, with various productions, on the incubator farm site or on existing farms. Since 2009, Les Champs des Possibles has "incubated" 40 prospective farmers and led to the installation of 14 new farmers.

Highlights:

- developing long term vision and actions to promote entry into (organic) farming
- strong partnership between 4 associations to offer a comprehensive support to new entrants
- creating a farm incubator to bridge the gap between training and actual entry into farming
- enabling consumers and citizens to have their say in food systems, agricultural models and land use

Gaining experience through selling to AMAPs is a strong incentive for many prospective farmers. It provides them with some financial security, as the AMAP system is based on pre-payment of the crop shares. It also fulfils their desire to develop community connections and invent new ways of farming that are embedded in the local community.

Developing a coherent offer to secure entry into farming: Pôle Abiosol
Parallel to this, AMAP, Terre de Liens, the local organic Agriculture Association and *Les Champs des Possibles* started working more and more closely. They ended up setting up an informal platform to promote entries into farming in the Ile de France area: the *Pôle Abiosol*.

The *Pôle Abiosol* consists of practical cooperation between the four organisations to provide advice and support to prospective farmers, from their initial idea all the way to their actual entry into farming. *Pôle Abiosol* offers:

- Monthly information sessions for prospective farmers: the aim is to describe the regional context, present the support which *Pôle Abiosol* can offer and discuss participants' projects.
- Training sessions on both general issues (principles of organic agriculture, land issues in Ile de France) and technical aspects (e.g. crop rotation with legumes, tractor maintenance)²³.
- A 10-day training session "From the initial idea to the actual farm" enabling prospective farmers, particularly those who do not come from a farming background, to explore the various facets of a farm project and to confirm their desire to train and set up as a farmer.
- Informal sessions in cafés, bringing together prospective farmers, newly established farmers and older farmers to facilitate an exchange of experiences.
- Ad hoc, personalised support to answer specific questions, share information (e.g. land opportunities, job offers,) and help prospective farmers to overcome obstacles. Each prospective farmer has a reference person in one of the four organisations.
- Farming experiment in *Les Champs des Possibles* (see above).

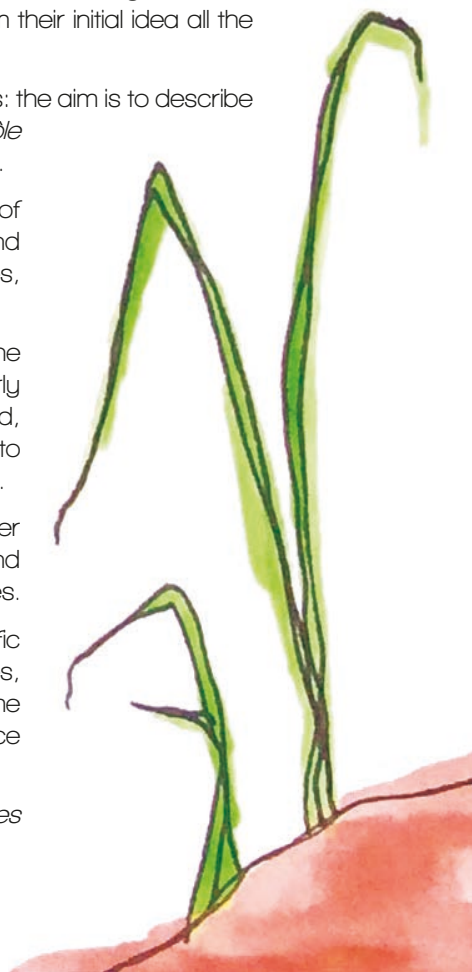




Photo by Pôle Abiosol

Those activities are jointly organised by all four organisations – each one is in charge of the activities relating to its expertise: the organic association provides training and mentoring on agronomic skills, the AMAP network on distribution systems and community connections; Les Champs des Possibles on trial farming; Terre de Liens on finding and securing land. All activities are offered free of charge, thanks to the public subsidies received by the members of *Pôle Abiosol* for this programme.

Results so far

Together *Pôle Abiosol* members promote forms of agroecological farming which are economically sound, socially responsible, respectful of the environment and focussed on food production and community connections. They also innovate and promote new community-supported forms of agriculture and open up debate and action on agriculture and food systems to non-farmers.

Joint training sessions offered to members and volunteers of the four organisations have also contributed to broaden their understanding of the situation and to develop their skills. Many local CSA groups in the region have thus gained specific skills to address land issues. Several have developed interest-free loans or donations to farmers (with money from CSA members or from the CSA association itself) to help them face land problems, and avoid their having to resort to bank loans.

Thanks to the diverse expertise of its members, *Pôle Abiosol* can offer a very broad and coherent set of activities, which help prospective farmers progress from initial plans to actual farming securing every step of their entry path into farming. Most of them are newcomers to farming, with no family background in agriculture and they are often in the process of changing careers. They need specific training and support which is rarely, if at all, offered by conventional agricultural institutions and policies.

In just a few years, *Les Champs des Possibles* and *Pôle Abiosol* have become key players in setting up new farms in Ile de France. Between 2008 and 2015, *Pôle Abiosol* has directly supported the entry into farming of 60 new farmers in Ile de France. It also increasingly advises local authorities seeking to promote local food systems and to support new farmers. The action of *Pôle Abiosol* contributes decisively to renewing the generation of farmers in the region, and to developing the offer of local organic food, particularly through AMAPs.

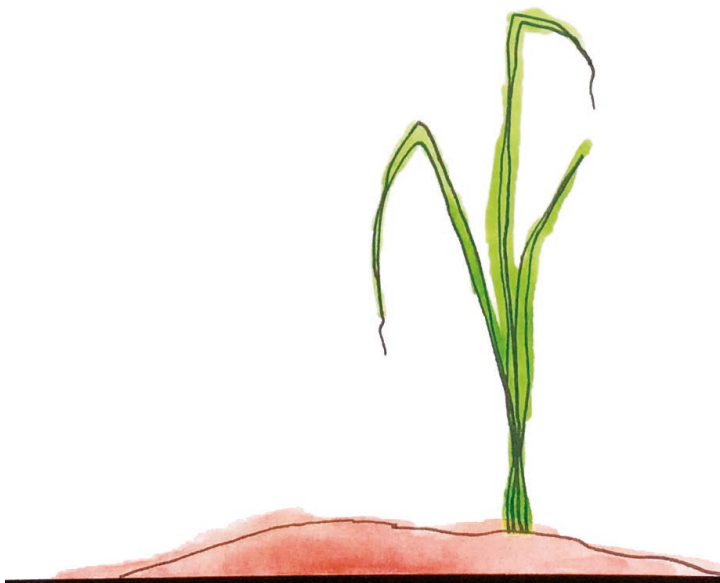
¹⁹ AMAPs are associations for the preservation of peasant farming. Their members are consumers (or "prosumers") who pre-pay a share of the produce of one or several farmers at the beginning of the season. They then receive a box of produce (vegetables, meat, cheese, eggs...) corresponding to a weekly share. In this way, AMAP members share the risks and benefits with the farmers. Read more: <http://urgenci.net/amap-in-france/>

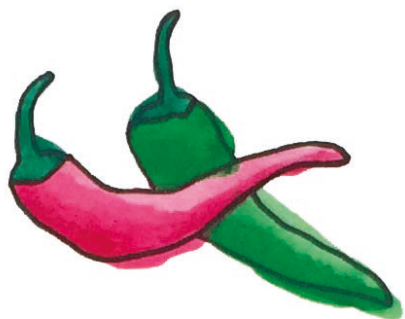
²⁰ Terre de Liens is a civic movement, established in 2003, with the mission of preserving farmland and securing farmland for organic and peasant farming. It informs and mobilises citizens, as well as raises money (investments and donations) to acquire farms which are rent to farmers on the long term. Read more: <http://www.accesstoland.eu/-Terre-de-liens->

²¹ See: <http://www.leschampsdespossibles.fr/>

²² To learn more on farm incubators, read: http://www.accesstoland.eu/IMG/pdf/reneta_overview_farmincubators_france_en.pdf

²³ Read the programme: <http://www.terredeliens-iledefrance.org/le-pole-abiosol/>





New hope and a home for agricultural land – Nadace pro pudu, a new land trust in the Czech Republic

By Vratislava Janovská, Nadace pro pudu

Access to land for small-scale farmers and new entrants is a new topic in the Czech Republic as in recent decades the focus has been on supporting intensive conventional agriculture. This was mainly due to the fact that the Czech Republic has the largest agricultural production blocks (average about 150 ha) with the highest proportion of rented land in Europe. On the other hand, there is a very high ownership fragmentation of agricultural land. Access to land is generally hard for new entrants in the agricultural sector, due to the extreme ownership fragmentation, land prices and insecure tenancy system. Access to land is currently becoming an important issue in the context of sustainable food production and protection of landscape stability in the Czech Republic. Non-governmental initiatives (such as Nadace pro pudu) have started raising awareness about the importance of a more responsible way of farming, its positive impacts on the environment, the accessibility of farmland for agroecological farmers and the affordability of fresh and organic food through their campaigns and programs.

Nadace pro pudu (NPP, Foundation for Soil²⁴) is a national organisation that was founded in January 2016. The main aim is to reconstruct the relationship between people and soil (the Earth) – the relationship that is expressed by shared forms of ownership, stewardship and finances. Soil, as well as water or air, is understood as a gift, therefore it should not



Photo of NPP land by Zuzana Špáková

Highlights:

- Initiative in the land with the largest average farm size in Europe
- CSA network gives a strong impulse for the access to land initiative

be taken as a commodity or a subject of speculation and private ownership.

The purpose of the foundation is to protect soil as a heritage given to us and to the next generations, and to support responsible, mindful and sustainable farming as well as those who farm or are willing to farm the land in this way. The foundation wants to achieve its purpose by buying land or receiving it as a gift, leasing the land to appropriate organic farmers, promoting responsible ways of farming and CSA, linking land owners with responsible organic farmers without available farmland, and cooperating with organisations with similar or complementary focus.

The CSA movement has played an important role in the starting of this organisation because they perceive the clear need for such a structure. There are about 47 CSAs in the Czech Republic²⁵ at the moment. Access to land and insecurity of tenure was a topic frequently voiced during the CSA core group meetings and was discussed at CSA meetings and with activists from different circles (e.g. university) looking to set up such an organization.

The Foundation was established with the gift of a part of the biodynamic Bemagro farm²⁶. Landowners, Miloslav Knízek and his wife Zuzana Knížková, wanted to "relieve their soil from the burden of private ownership". Originally he planned to establish the foundation just for his own land (i.e. to create something similar to Buschberghof in Germany) but then he got in touch with the CSA network and thus the Foundation took on a broader scope. They withdrew 200 ha from their 2000 ha farm and donated the land together with €20,000 into the NPP.

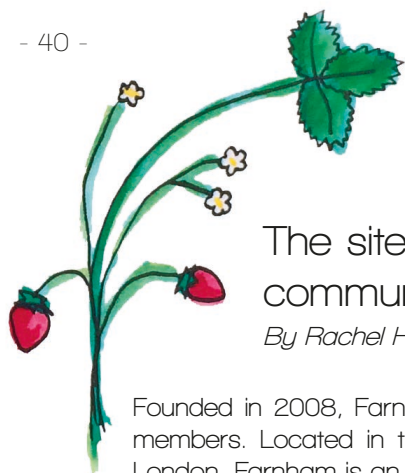
Members of the CSA sit on the NPP's Board, and this is important for relationship building. It is however still too early to evaluate the role NPP plays in enabling access to land for CSAs. There is no CSA yet on the land of the foundation – it all just started with the vision and establishing the organisation. It is now in the process of becoming operational.

²⁴ See www.nadacepropudu.cz

²⁵ See www.adresarfarmaru.cz

²⁶ See www.bemagro.cz





The site matters! Reconciling farming and community needs – Farnham Local Food, UK

By Rachel Harries and Gavin Bridger

Founded in 2008, Farnham Local Food²⁷ currently grows vegetable shares for 70 members. Located in the south east of England, in easy commuting distance of London, Farnham is an area with very high land prices, with farmers competing with recreational users (often horse owners) for land.

Farnham Local Food grows on two sites, one which has field scale veg and the other with more intensive veg production, which is also the main focus of community activities, events, the pick-up and distribution point. Members are very involved in production with harvesting done by the members on a rota basis.

In 2015, the owner of the main site gave the group notice to leave. Their subsequent search for new land was very challenging, highlighting some of the issues that are key to community supported agriculture and engaging local people in food production. This is well reflected in the road movie "Land for our food" produced by the Access to Land network²⁸. Over the following months, the group explored various land options. An initial offer of land was withdrawn. They were later offered the use of six acres with infrastructure, ease of access, parking, water, electricity, a barn, but with heavy clay soil that was prone to waterlogging. The landowner however was less amenable to the day to day involvement from the volunteers and members, and wanted to change the management set-up – employing the growers himself, with the CSA run as a separate organisation managing the members, contracting him to produce veg.

They were offered another 2.5 acre site which had great soil, a gentle south-facing aspect, one mile from the original site but with no infrastructure in terms of water or electricity, and very limited access and parking. It was part of the land from a farm estate where the farmhouse had been sold off and the farm buildings converted into a B&B. It was an attractive land offer.

Highlights:

- Lack of tenure security
- Land pressure due to competing uses for recreational purposes
- Land plots may have different pros and cons to the farmers and the community (road accessibility, soil quality, etc.)
- Community engagement is the driving force to find a solution
- Losing a piece of land, even if we manage to find another one, may mean a whole farm reorganisation



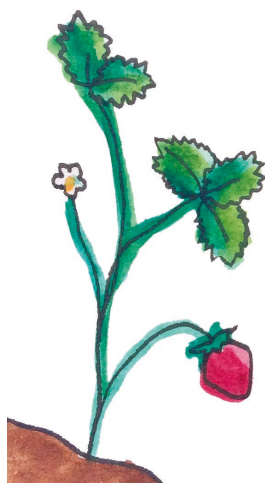
Photo by Gavin Bridger

Despite the challenge of lack of access and infrastructure, Farnham Local Food are moving to this site but changing where they focus their activities. The older field veg site will become the CSA's hub once they've created a car parking space with the newer site specialising on more perennial and less intensive veg.

Farmer Gavin Bridger says, "It's the community engagement with the project - with the harvesting and helping to grow the vegetables, and coming to the field where it's all grown to collect the veg - that a lot of our members sign up for. It is how I first got involved in growing and is what lead me to the Soil Association's Future Growers Apprenticeship Scheme to get enough experience. I wouldn't be here if it wasn't for this aspect of Farnham Local Food. It's not insurmountable problems that we're facing, but with different priorities to a conventional vegetable-growing business - and with decisions being made by a committee - there is a fair bit of weighing up to do between the compromises we will have to make. As a community-led CSA, the community side of things is rated as importantly - if not more so - than the horticultural viability. So this dynamic is a major influence in decision-making on our land options. But it has also been a real positive. The physical moving of the sites, polytunnels and equipment has been really supported by the members and volunteers, and meant we've continued with seamless veg production without a break at all."

²⁷ <http://www.farnhamfood.com/>

²⁸ Film *The land for our food*, directed by Julio Molina, 2015: <http://www.accesstoland.eu/-Our-film-The-Land-for-our-Food->





Case study 13

From CSA member to farmer - Cambridge CropShare, UK

By Rachel Harries and Helen Holmes

Cambridge CropShare²⁹ is an innovative producer-community partnership CSA in the east of England, seven miles outside the city of Cambridge. The community formed as a result of the local Transition Town Food Group, and the producer involved is Waterland Organics, a long established 65 acre organic veg farm, who have since set up their own producer-led CSA scheme.

Cambridge CropShare runs throughout the growing season, when a small group of volunteer co-ordinators, the CropShare Crew, organise weekend farm days for volunteers who sign up in advance. Typically there are around 20 Saturday farm days from March to October.

Volunteers help with whatever is happening on the farm: mending polytunnels, seeding, planting, weeding, harvesting, , enjoy a bring and share lunch and get to take home whatever seasonal veg is about on the farm on the day. In 2016 over 100 different volunteers joined in on the farm days, lift sharing to the farm or joining a group who cycle the seven miles from Cambridge city centre.

Founder member Helen Holmes writes: "When we started talking about setting up a local CSA in the Transition Food Group in 2010, I think the only output on my mind was the opportunity to get out and grow fresh organic veg that I would be able to take home. In our first official Cambridge CropShare season in 2011, I and the other volunteer members got 25 kg onions as well as a good suntan.



Photo by CCS

I didn't appreciate the social output the project would have and how providing access to land would positively affect the community of volunteers that formed round the farm. Several members have been profoundly influenced by their practical involvement in the farm. One member, a scientist ^

Highlights:

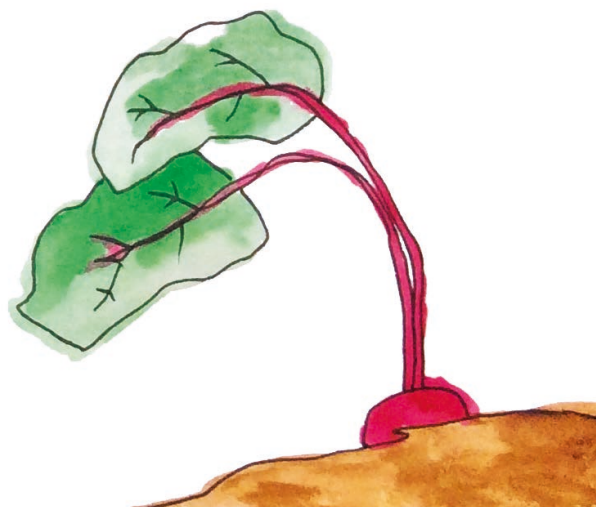
- Access to land may also mean access to land for "consumers" through direct involvement in farming
- This experience can be a life-changer
- Community engagement is a virtuous circle (farmer turned their box scheme into a CSA)

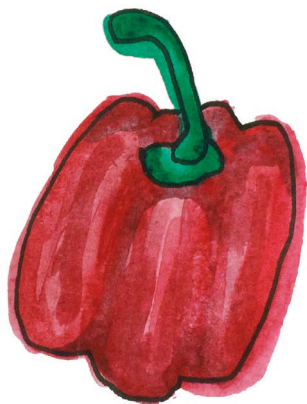
microbiology from the University decided that she would apply her training to agricultural research. She is now volunteering on an organic veg farm in California to get some more farm experience. A trainee lawyer is now convinced that agricultural and land law will be a part of his future.

CropShare has exposed people to the farming industry that weren't necessarily from farming backgrounds and helped them fully realise the variety of fulfilling jobs in the sector.

And as for me, I was able to go part time in my very fulfilling job as a crop scientist at RSK ADAS Ltd early in 2016 and take up a paid one day a week position at Waterland Organics as a grower. This opportunity has arisen from my friendship with farm owners Paul and Doreen Robinson. I'm not from a family who owns a farm or land (but I inherited green fingers from my gardener Mum and tree surgeon Dad). Although I have been an amateur veg grower for a while now it feels absolutely great to be in part supporting myself by growing organic veg, something I didn't think would ever be possible before getting involved in CSA."

²⁹ <http://cambridge.cropshare.org.uk/>





Managing public land for the benefit of the community - Simms Hill Shared Harvest, UK

By Steph Wetherell, Sims Hill Shared Harvest

Sims Hill Shared Harvest³⁰ is a Bristol based CSA that was started about 7 or 8 years ago. When a group of local people wanted to set up a growing operation and a Bristol City Council owned field just two miles from the city centre became available (with the caveat that it be used for the benefit of the community), a community support agriculture project was the obvious choice.

Sims Hill rent five acres from the council on a 10 year Farm Business Tenancy with a peppercorn rent³¹. It was the first CSA in the city and it launched with 25 members who paid for 6 months up front without receiving any vegetables, to help provide finances for the growers and set up costs. It now supplies around 85 shares and produces around 13,120kg of veg a year. It runs a schools program, regular volunteer and member days on the land, and offers a work share.

The land was in poor shape when it was taken on and had been grazed heavily. There was no running water or structures. After two years, finances were raised to build two polytunnels, and a natural building packing shed was constructed in 2014. Access is still a challenge as the track is deeply rutted from a neighbour's tractor, and so is only accessible in a truck.

Sims Hill works in partnership with Feed Bristol, an Avon Wildlife Trust educational project on the other side of the M32 motorway, using an additional 2 acres of land and a large glasshouse.

The CSA structure helped Sims Hill get access to the land because the council were specifically looking for a community-focused project, and it especially helped in negotiating

Highlights:

- Expansion of urban areas often affect the most fertile land
- Recovering traditional market gardening area
- Developing a CSA on public land for the public benefits
- Reconnecting urban people with agriculture and increasing food sovereignty
- Added value of having a cluster of like-minded farm/food businesses
- Community involvement provides financial stability at the start of a new business



Photo by Steph Wetherell

a peppercorn rent which has been integral to the viability of the project. The community activities are a vital part of this, and have helped to show the council the wider benefits of the project. It is hoped that this will be important for future similar projects in terms of laying the ground work for the benefits to the city. The CSA structure also allowed the raising of finances to get the project off the ground and a guaranteed income that allowed the farm to properly plan during the early few years.

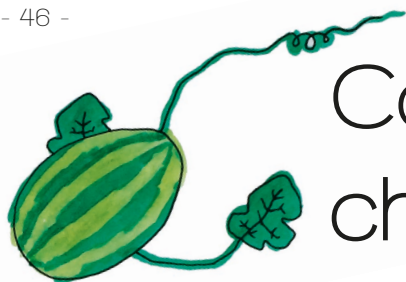
Importantly, the stretch of land that the farm is located on has significant historical interest, as it was the site of Bristol's historic market gardening quarter. It lies on the edge of a long stretch of Grade 1 agricultural soil (known as the Blue Finger³²) that stretches out of the city. Much of this land has been sold off or developed, with other sections being under threat. Sims Hill represents an important return to market gardening in the area, and along with a few other enterprises on the Feed Bristol site, a step towards small scale growing again.

Sims Hill helps to connect people to the strong history in the area, and highlights the importance of protecting such soil at a time when development pressures are high. The farm is very visible (running alongside the major traffic route into the city and just a few miles from the city centre), and provides an important link between city dwellers, the history of the land and the future food security of the city.

³⁰ <https://simshill.co.uk/>

³¹ In legal parlance, a peppercorn is a metaphor for a very small payment, a nominal consideration, used to satisfy the requirements for the creation of a legal contract.

³² The blue finger is a Grade 1 land strip close to Bristol and is coloured blue on Land Classification Maps - hence the name. The dark red soil is exceptionally deep and fertile - the area was Bristol's historic market gardening quarter



Conclusions, challenges and recommendations

These case studies provide a clear illustration of the significant roles of CSA in enabling access to land for agroecological farming across Europe. They highlight the power of communities and show their capacity to act to secure land, promote new farming models and even to fight back against land concentration and speculation. They also show the need to address land issues if we are to develop alternative food systems in the long run.

These case studies also highlight some of the challenges and potential tensions our movements are facing. We have identified the following questions:

Finding and implementing the right model

- What is the most adequate mechanism to secure farmland for a given farm? Do we opt for a short-term support or a long-term organisation? In the latter case, do we rather opt for a community farmland trust (attached to one specific farm), or do we prefer to go for a wider land trust? Do we have a single legal structure that owns both the farm business and the land, or two separate ones? Do we opt for a trust or a cooperative?
- How to assess the adequacy of a farm/ plot for a CSA farm? What are the specific needs and constraints of the CSA farm regarding land? How to adapt the project to match the features of the land and of the local land market?
- If a CSA or land trust owns the land, this has implications for the farmer in terms of:
 - obtaining a bank loan (no mortgage on the land)
 - finding a new home when s/he retires
- How do we find adequate solutions to these challenges?

Balancing community and farmers

- How to balance the needs and priorities of consumers and farmers? In some cases, these may differ or contradict each other (e.g. is the priority soil quality or having a parking area and meeting space?). How to clarify the various components, organise collective discussion and balance needs for a sustainable solution?
- How to balance community involvement and farmers' autonomy? To whom does the land belong? How are decisions made about using land, e.g. regarding maintenance (e.g. hedges...) or access (e.g. hikers)? How can decision-making be organised and legal problems avoided?

- Where CSA members (prosumers) provide support to the farmers through donations or loans, how is the purpose and community dimension of farming guaranteed in the long run (e.g. when the farmer retires or dies)? Conversely, how can the farmers secure long-term support and participation from the community?

Reinventing land management and ownership

- How are CSA/access to land initiatives inventing "new forms of land management" that take community needs more into consideration? What tools can we use accordingly (e.g. using environmental leases)?
- Does crowdfunding for "unaffordable" land make sense? Does it make sense to raise money from citizens to buy very expensive land (e.g. in peri-urban areas where most CSAs operate) in order to take it out of the speculative market? What is the capacity of CSA to "curb" the capitalist functioning of the market (or do without it)?
- How can we reform the legal system so that CSAs as legal entities may directly rent or buy land (in countries where there are legal restrictions)³²? What could be the criteria and red lines (to avoid further opening up the land market to non-agricultural investors)?
- How to reconcile community involvement in both the farm CSA and the farm land trust? Some people may be both members of a CSA (consumers) and shareholders/donors of a land trust. How to ensure that this does not represent an excessive burden (in financial terms, in terms of personal involvement) and does not create dual legitimacy?
- Should and can CSAs act not only in securing land and farm buildings but also in securing housing for farmers?

Mobilising public land

- How best to highlight the benefits of CSA farming so as to convince landowners to rent to the CSA? How to manage the specific risks attached to CSA farming?
- How to balance the risks and opportunities of working with local authorities as land owners? Local authorities may provide good lease conditions (duration, affordability) and offer additional support (infrastructure, public procurement...). But working with local authorities may also depend on the good will of political actors and be subject to electoral changes.

Based on the case studies, internal discussions and workshops, we also identified the following recommendations to:

Consolidate our movements

- Increase networking between access to land initiatives and CSA networks to develop better mutual knowledge and synergies
- Develop action-oriented research to consolidate general data, explore more practical experiences and assess the specificities of various country-contexts
- Identify and list organisations and experts which can be resources for CSA groups on access to land issues in different countries

- Explore the various legal and practical models available for land ownership and management in various country-contexts
- Explore and document funding options to finance land acquisition
- Better measure and highlight the societal benefits of CSAs (economic, ecological, empowering new entrants (from non-agricultural backgrounds) etc.)

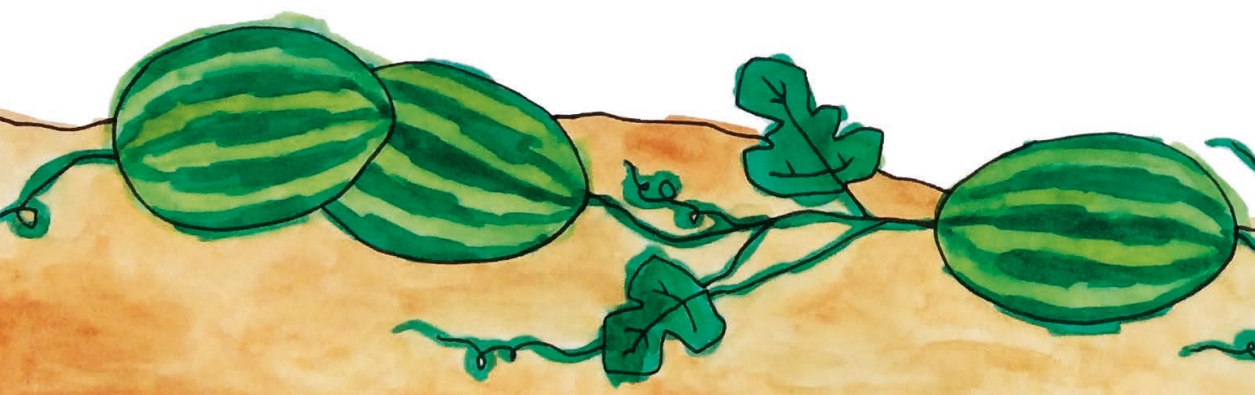
Create a more favourable environment

- Develop strategies to raise awareness among public authorities and charitable trusts presenting the various benefits that CSA models provide for managing public land and call for preferential treatment for land access for CSA initiatives
- Encourage local authorities and citizens' movements to develop land watch and land planning and zoning
- Develop proactive local food policies that include support for CSA and access to land for agroecological farmers
- Regulate land markets to better take into consideration the needs of new entrants and agroecological farmers
- Resolve legal questions regarding access to land for CSA initiatives in various countries (legal forms of land entry), while maintaining mechanisms which limit land ownership by non-agricultural investors and land speculation

Ultimately, we can see that the increased interest in the question of access to land is a step in the evolution of CSA: CSA is defined as a direct partnership to share the risks and rewards of farming activities, but it can also mean expanding that direct partnership and solidarity to cover not only production but also the means of production.

Together as international network for CSA, URGENCI, and the European Access to Land network, we are jointly committed to further cooperation in making progress on these challenges.

³² This situation is only relevant for few CSAs and specific countries, where CSAs are collective structures which aspire to directly own or rent land.



Appendix: Further resources

Some resources on CSA in Europe:

- European Overview of Community Supported Agriculture (2016): <http://urgenci.net/wp-content/uploads/2016/05/Overview-of-Community-Supported-Agriculture-in-Europe.pdf>

Some resources on Access to Land in Europe:

- Land concentration, land grabbing and people's struggles in Europe (2013): https://www.tni.org/files/download/land_in_europe-jun2013.pdf
- Petition to the European Parliament Preserving and managing European farmland as our commonwealth (2014): http://www.eurovia.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/03/ep_petition_land_vf_24feb2015_en.pdf
- Releasing the true value of land (2014): <http://www.ibda.ch/wp-content/uploads/2014/12/Releasing-True-Value-of-Land-20141218.pdf>
- Land Rush (2016): <http://www.arc2020.eu/wp-content/uploads/2016/12/20160411Landrush.pdf>

German reports:

- Landfreikauf (2012): <https://www.demeter.de/sites/default/files/article/pdf/IBDA%20Bodenstudie%20121207.pdf>
- Landjäger (2015): https://www.maria-heubuch.eu/fileadmin/heubuch/pdf/EU_GRUENE_Landgrabbing.pdf



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Access to agricultural land has become a major issue throughout Europe - we are witnessing loss of land, land degradation, land concentration, land price increases and speculation. Yet the growing demand for local, fair and organic food cannot be met without the land and the committed farmers.

Community Supported Agriculture has emerged as a powerful and direct method of cooperation between farmers and consumers - based on agroecology, solidarity and proximity. For this growing movement in Europe, access to land is an obstacle in an increasingly competitive and expensive market. However, we have seen that the power of community can overcome these challenges in a variety of ways.

This report seeks to raise awareness and offer inspiration by providing 14 case studies and an analysis of the difficulties faced and the potential solutions developed.

