



Countryside Conservancy

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Speed Daters Find True Love of the Land FarmLink Program Plays Successful Matchmaker to Farmers Looking for Land

Dating is difficult without the aid of a matchmaking service. That is exactly why new farmer Elyse Perruchon attended a speed dating workshop last month. She wasn't expecting to find love, she was looking for land. Perruchon wanted to find a small farm where she could grow produce and raise chickens. This particular speed dating event sought to match new farmers and farm owners instead of matching men and women. At the workshop she met William Takacs, a farmer with land in Chagrin Falls, and they made a match.

Perruchon and roommate Stephanie Privison will move to the farm this summer. They have already planted a garden where Takacs tilled the ground for them. He's helping them build a chicken coop and install rain barrels. They pay rent for the house and, in exchange for the girls' help with his hay operation, Takacs will provide feed for the chickens.

Leasing or working on an established farm is a good option for beginning farmers with limited access to capital. The cost of land can be highly prohibitive for new farmers trying to start their own operations, and many older farmers want to see their land stay in agricultural use but have no heirs interested in farming. FarmLink matches these two groups by holding events like the speed dating workshop.

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FarmLink connects farmers and land in Northeast Ohio. It is a program of the Countryside Conservancy. The Conservancy works to protect farmland, support farmers, and grow a healthy local food economy.

For more information about the FarmLink program or the Countryside Conservancy, please call Meredith Poczontek at (330) 657-2529.

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