Land Access: Updates on Regional Efforts

Kathy Ruhf
Land For Good
Land Access: A Systems Approach

- More attention and support
- Non-traditional models and methods
- Who are seekers?
- Who else is involved?
  - Landowners (farming and non-farming)
  - Community members
  - Policymakers
Seekers: variety

- Starry-eyed beginners
- “Restrategizers”; scaling-up
- Established: relocating, expanding
- Junior generation on the farm

Diversity
- Ethnic, cultural, language differences
- Gender challenges
Recent Work

- FarmLASTS
  - Research paper
  - Land Access curriculum
- National “Just Land” convening (MN)
- Upcoming: New England Farmland Convening
Farmland Advisors

- AFT and LFG, funded by NESARE
- 80+ service providers
- Learn basics
  - Land access
  - Land transfer and succession
  - Non-farming landowners
- Assist audiences, make referrals
Land Access Challenges

- Availability
- Access
- Affordability: not = cheap
- Findability
- Security
- Equity
- Housing
Seekers: Stress Options and Readiness

- Tenure: a path
- To own or not to own
- Equitable division of rights & responsibilities
- Culture and stereotypes
- Start with personal, family and business goals
Update: Land Access Project

- Six states
- Over two-dozen partners
- Five task forces
  - Listing and Linking
  - Non-farming landowners
  - Farm Transfer Network
  - Tenure Innovations
  - Coaching
Listing, Linking & Matching

- More programs emerging at various geographic levels
- Important to define and distinguish
- Important to coordinate
- Important to promote!
Listing

- A managed list of available farm properties; sometimes also list of seekers.
- May include:
  - Landowner application
  - Seeker application
  - Online/other posting
  - Notification process
  - Updating process
  - Outreach/promotion
Listing clearinghouse

- NewEnglandFarmlandFinder.org
  - Consortium design and support
  - Key features: easy, automated, etc.
  - Low budget and administration
  - Pre-directs listers and seekers to resources
  - Harmonize with other linking sites & prog’s
Linking

A service providing contact information to seekers/owners, typically pre-sorted or screened

May include:

- Providing selected contact/other info
- Screening and categorizing/ coding owner and seeker applicants
- Supporting information
- Site visits
Matching

A service that facilitates a specific transaction between a specific seeker and owner.

May include:

- Purchase/sale transaction support
- Lease drafting/negotiation
- Management agreement
- Facilitated meetings
- Advisor team bldg. (legal, other)
- Specific TA/referral
- Site visits
- Farmer recruitment
Support Services

Services that build seeker [and owner] competencies to engage in farm acquisition

- **Business/financial/acquisition planning**
- Land use planning, farm design
- Estate/succession/transfer planning
- Tenure option information
- Lease education
- Land protection/easements
- Landowner education, information
- Other
Helping Farm Seekers

- Three-legged stool
  - Education
  - One-on-one TA/consulting and support
  - Property lists
Seeker education

- Workshops
- Educational materials (guides, tools, workbooks, samples, templates, etc.)
- Online courses:
  - Acquiring Your Farm
  - leasing tutorial
  - FarmLASTS curriculum
Innovation

- Investor research (LAP) & next steps
- PDR and OPAV: LAP report
- Leasing improvements: LAP report
- Policy recommendations: LAP report
Innovation

- Multiple operators: SARE project
- Land base for regional food security
- Land reclamation/restoration
- Housing (farmer and labor)
For more information

- www.landforgood.org
- Info@landforgood.org
- www.newenglandfarmlandfinder.org
- www.uvm.edu/farmLASTS

Thank you!