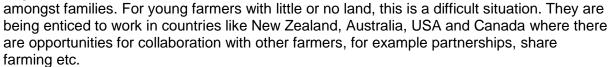
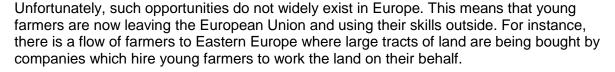
## Alan Jagoe: Europe's young farmers need help finding land

From the perspective of farming and the agricultural industry, exciting times are on the horizon. A growing world population, new and emerging markets and a demand for quality, safe and sustainable food production are challenges that need to be met. In every member state of the European Union, agricultural colleges and universities have seen an increase in demand for agricultural education. So what is the problem?

Currently, only 6% of European young farmers are under the age of 35. In contrast, one in four is older than 65. In Ireland for example there are as many farmers under 35 as over 80! Damming statistics for a generation of farmers who need to feed the world.

Land mobility is a huge issue, too. Many farms have been fragmented because the land has been divided up





Some member states have been taking action. France uses the "Safer model" to give priority to young farmers when land is sold. In Ireland, recently a "land mobility service" was set up to act as a brokerage between young farmers and older farmers in setting up various collaborative arrangements. And finally, the European Commission has also realised the problem. For the first time ever, it has have included a specific provision for young farmers in the common agricultural policy.

While there are obstacles and issues that need to be resolved, the future looks bright. As young farmers we are optimistic for the future of our industry.

Alan Jagoe is a young farmer from Ireland. He has served as President of Irish Young farmers (Macra na Feirme) and is Vice President of CEJA (European council of young farmers).

