

# Matchmakers put people with farmland

By Carlos Alcalá, Sacramento Bee

Putting farmers onto underused land was once a matter of creating homesteads.

Now it has entered the computer age, with nonprofits using the Internet to match farmland with growers.

The need, advocates say, comes in part from an aging farm population.

California farmers age 65 or older outnumber farmers under 35 by 9 to 1, said Liya Schwartzman, Central Valley coordinator for California FarmLink, one of those nonprofit groups.

“In many cases, their children don’t want to go into farming,” she said. “We need more beginning farmers right now.”

At the same time, many landowners are hoping to preserve the land for agriculture, not development, and want to help younger farmers – not large agribusiness.

It led to a dating service of sorts for farms.

“We’re kind of a Match.com, a little bit,” Schwartzman said.

**Read the whole story**