



# SmartFarmer



**Improving skills for Smartfarming as an innovative tool  
for rural development and economic growth**

**LLP LdV TOI project 2013-1-CY1-LE005-03114**

## **Learner's Guide**

April 2015



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## **SmartFarmer**

**Improving skills for Smartfarming as an innovative tool for rural development and economic growth**



<b>Work Package 3:</b>	Adaptation of the training programme
<b>Product/Deliverable:</b>	Learner's Guide

<b>Version:</b>	1.2	<b>Date:</b>	21/04/2015
<b>Type:</b>	Support Material		
<b>Distribution:</b>	Project Partners		
<b>Responsible Partner:</b>	Agricultural Research Institute		
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<b>Approved by:</b>	All project partners	<b>Date:</b>	22/04/2015



## Identification Sheet

Project Ref. No	2013-1-CY1-LE005-03114
Project Acronym	SmartFarmer
Project Full Title	Improving skills for Smartfarming as an innovative tool for rural development and economic growth

Keywords	e-platform, learner's guide, trainees
Abstract	This guide provides an overview of the training material comprising the e-platform, that was developed within the framework of Leonardo da Vinci TOI project SmartFarmer.

Disclaimer	This project has been funded with support from the European Commission. This Guide reflects the views only of the author, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein.
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## 1. INTRODUCTION

This guide provides an overview of the training material comprising the e-platform (<http://e-platform.smartfarmerproject.eu/>), that was developed within the framework of Leonardo da Vinci TOI project SmartFarmer. The Learner's guide is a useful tool in the hands of the trainees, as it explains the content and the breakdown of the core elements presented in the modules/units, and provides insight information to them for further study. For this reason the writing is in plural second-person sentence.

The e-platform is provided in five languages: English, Greek (Ελληνικά), Spanish (Español), Latvian (Latviski) and Portuguese (Português).

The main target group consists of farmers or potential farmers interested in the production and marketing of superfoods.

The SmartFarmer e-platform, as shown in Figure 1, can be found at the following web location <http://e-platform.smartfarmerproject.eu/>

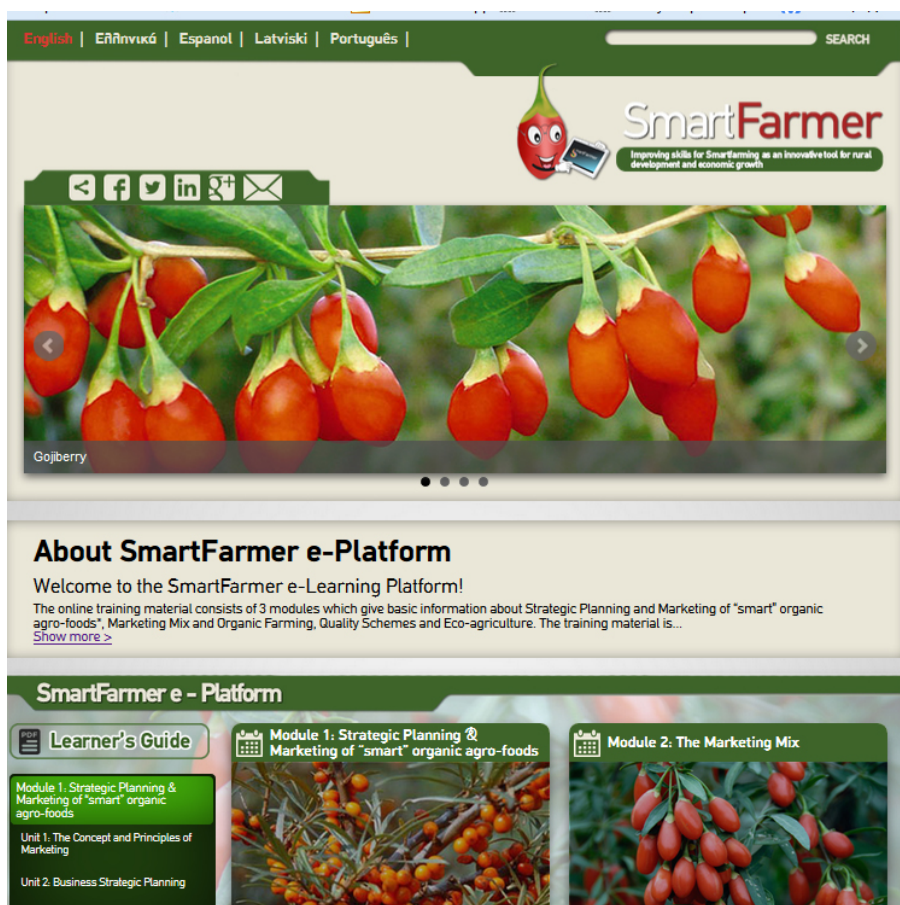


Figure 1. The SmartFarmer e-Platform welcome page

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## 2. E-PLATFORM “HOW-TO”

The e-platform is available in English and in the four project partners languages: Greek, Latvian, Spanish and Portuguese. To select the appropriate language use the language bar located on the top of the e-platform, as shown in Figure 2 below. The selected language is highlighted in red font color.



Figure 2. Use the e-platform Language Bar to select the content language

You can connect with us, using the Social Media tools available on the e-platform (illustrated in Figure 3). Specifically you can use: ShareThis, Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, Google+ and e-mail.



Figure 3. Social Media tools





Each Module and Unit is explained in section 3 that follows. At this point we would like to explain to you how to use the SmartFarmer e-Platform.

Each Module/Unit has an introductory text. Following the introductory text there is a button entitled “Download the full unit”. Once you click on that button, the complete Unit appears in PDF format, as shown in Figures 4 and 5, respectively.



Figure 4. Unit description



Figure 5. Complete Unit in PDF format, as downloaded from the e-platform



This Learner's Guide is available in electronic format on the e-platform, as shown in Figure 6 below.



Figure 6. The Learner's Guide button

If you would like to contact us and share any comments or suggestions about the e-platform you can use the Contact Us form available.

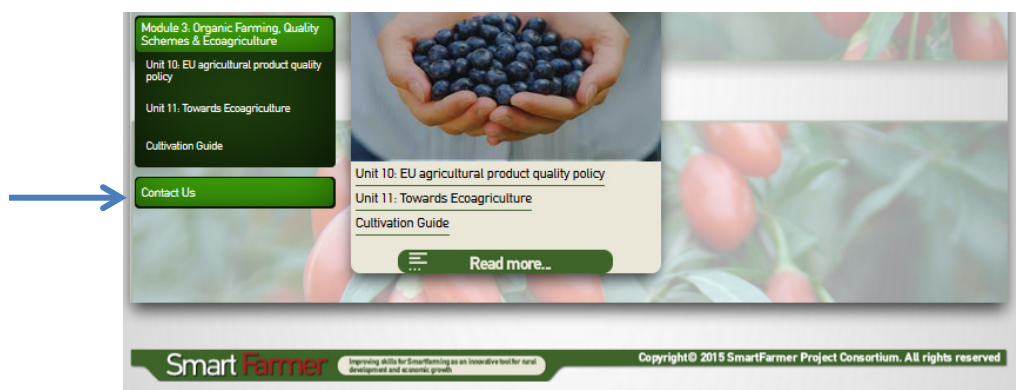


Figure 7. The Contact us button

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The Contact Us form is shown in Figure 8. All of the following items should be filled in, before submitting the form: your name, e-mail address, the subject and the body of your message. Once you click on the “Submit” button, the email will be sent to the e-platform administrator.

**SmartFarmer e - Platform**

**Learner's Guide**

**Module 1: Strategic Planning & Marketing of "smart" organic agro-foods**

- Unit 1: The Concept and Principles of Marketing
- Unit 2: Business Strategic Planning
- Unit 3: Designing Business and Marketing Strategies and Plans

**Module 2: The Marketing Mix**

- Unit 4: Product
- Unit 5: Price
- Pricing Tool
- Unit 6: Promotion / Promotional tools
- Unit 7: Place /Distribution
- Unit 8: Lauterborn's 4Cs
- Unit 9: Cooperation

**Module 3: Organic Farming, Quality Schemes & Ecoagriculture**

- Unit 10: EU agricultural product quality policy
- Unit 11: Towards Ecoagriculture
- Cultivation Guide

**Contact Us**

**Contact Us**

Name

Email

Subject

Message

**SUBMIT**

Figure 8. The e-platform Contact Us form



### 3. MODULES AND UNITS

“Smart” agro-foods (superfoods) are foods with very high nutritional value defined by their antioxidant capacity and their overall health benefits. This group of superfoods consists of goji berry, blueberry, black chokeberry (aronia melanocarpa), hippophae, spiroulina, aloe vera and many other foods. In the context of the SmartFarmer project, these foods are considered to be cultivated with environmentally friendly practices and to provide economic benefits to the producers of the mountainous and less favoured areas.

The online training material consists of 3 modules which give basic information about Strategic Planning and Marketing of “smart” agro-foods, Marketing Mix and Organic Farming, Quality Schemes and Eco-agriculture.

The training material is divided into 11 concise Units. Each Unit includes theory, case studies, practical exercises and sources for further reading. In addition, Unit 5 includes a useful tool for calculating market price. Similarly, Unit 11 includes a simple and concise cultivation guide for key superfoods related to the project.

The SmartFarmer training material can be used for individual, self-directed learning or as supporting material in training courses.

Upon successful completion of the SmartFarmer training programme you will be aware of the essential concepts and principles of marketing and the basics of strategic planning whilst you should be able to design business and marketing strategies and plans. Moreover, you will acquire knowledge about marketing mix strategies and you will be able to define the best approach for your own agribusiness and activities. You will also learn about EU agricultural product quality policy and organic agriculture principles, legislation and certification. Finally, you will be helped to evolve towards eco-friendly cultivation practices.

#### 3.1 Module 1 - Strategic Planning & Marketing of “smart” organic agro-foods

##### 3.1.1 Unit 1 - The Concept and Principles of Marketing

Marketing is an organizational function that includes a set of processes having as essential purpose to find out what your customers want and supplying it to them, in ways that benefit the organisation and its stakeholders.

This first Unit, as illustrated below in Figure 9, will help the reader to understand:

- The meaning of the marketing concept and the functions of marketing;
- The relevance of marketing to the agricultural and agro-food businesses;
- Why it is important to implement the marketing concept.

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Figure 9. Module 1: Strategic Planning & Marketing of “smart” organic agro-foods

To read the whole Unit, click on the “Download the full unit” button and the complete PDF file will open in your browser.

### 3.1.2 Unit 2 - Business Strategic Planning

Strategy can be described as a decision-making process that acts as a unifying element indicating the direction for the actions of an organisation, to achieve defined objectives. Companies may adopt many different strategies, depending on their objectives and resources and their external environment.

This Unit will help the reader to understand:

- What a strategy is and what the generic types of strategies are;
- The role of strategic planning and how strategic planning is carried out;
- The relationships and the differences between the overall business strategic planning and marketing planning.

To read the whole Unit, click on the “Download the full unit” button and the complete PDF file will open in your browser.

### 3.1.3 Unit 3 - Designing Business and Marketing Strategies and Plans

As in any other business, in agribusiness, vision and mission statements can help in defining the purpose of a venture, its goals, and the path to be followed, in order to succeed, as well as guiding the policies and conduct. Vision statements declare what an agribusiness aspires to be, with an

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emphasis on the future of the operation. Mission statements outline the purpose of the business, its customers, stakeholders, and services rendered.

Upon successful completion of this Unit the reader should be able to:

- Define agribusiness mission and vision;
- Analyze the external and internal environment (SWOT analysis and Market Research different methods and tools);
- Set goals and objectives (for the planning period);
- Build a business plan;
- Create a marketing strategy and a marketing plan.

To read the whole Unit, click on the “Download the full unit” button and the complete PDF file will open in your browser.

## **3.2 Module 2 - The Marketing Mix**

### **3.2.1 Unit 4 - Product**

A product is the item offered for sale. A product can be a service or an item. It can be physical or in virtual or cyber form. Each product has a useful life after which it needs replacement, and a life cycle after which it has to be re-invented.

This training Unit will help you acquire knowledge about:

- The product basic features and characteristics;
- The features of agricultural products;
- Added value to the product;
- Product development sequential process and product life cycle;
- The packaging and labelling.

To read the whole Unit, click on the “Download the full unit” button and the complete PDF file will open in your browser.



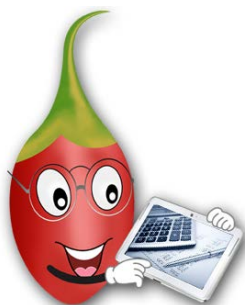
### 3.2.2 Unit 5 - Price

Accurately determined price is one of the key factors in determining whether the customer purchased a product or not, and it is an essential prerequisite for successful marketing of goods and services. Throughout this point you will learn the factors that influence price, the most common pricing strategies and how you can calculate the prices of your products.

Upon successful completion of this Unit, you will be able to:

- Understand what the price is and how it is formed;
- Identify the factors that influence price in your company;
- Calculate the right price for your products.

To read the whole Unit, click on the “Download the full unit” button and the complete PDF file will open in your browser.



#### Pricing Tool

It is very important for you to understand what are your costs and your profit margin. We propose you to calculate your costs and use the Excel file (provided in the e-platform) to calculate prices. You can adjust the table according to market conditions and your pricing strategy.

Click on "Download the full unit" to download the SmartFarmer Pricing Tool

### 3.2.3 Unit 6 - Promotion / Promotional Tools

In order to sell a product, to increase the profit and multiply the number of satisfied customers it is necessary to develop a successful promotion, by defining a promotional mix, identify the target audiences and establish communication through the selected communication channels.

Upon successful completion of this Unit, you will be able to:

- Find out how to develop successful promotion;
- Identify the target audiences;
- Establish the communication objectives and define the message;
- Select the communication channels;

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- Define the promotion mix.

To read the whole unit, click on the “Download the full unit” button and the complete PDF file will open in your browser.

### **3.2.4 Unit 7 - Place /Distribution**

Distribution (or “Place”) is one of the four traditional elements of the marketing mix. The options concerning the distribution channels are critical and have deep influence on all other marketing decisions. Therefore, distribution should be integrated with the global marketing plan, to ensure the focus on the target markets.

This Unit is intended to help the reader to:

- Understand the importance and functioning of the distribution channels;
- Learn how to choose the best distribution channels for a farm or agro-business and;
- Understand that the principles of the distribution channels systems are applicable both to the domestic and foreign markets.

To read the whole Unit, click on the “Download the full unit” button and the complete PDF file will open in your browser.

### **3.2.5 Unit 8 - Lauterborn’s 4Cs**

This Unit is intended to help the reader to be aware of the Lauterborn’s 4Cs model and to compare it with the traditional 4Ps approach.

Upon successful completion of this Unit, you will be able to:

- Understand the concept of the 4Cs model;
- Describe the 4 elements of the 4Cs model;
- Identify the basic differences between 4Ps and 4Cs models;
- Include the 4Cs model elements in your business and marketing plan;
- Reset your perceptions around what you are creating and offering to the market;
- Apply the 4Cs approach in the business framework.

To read the whole Unit, click on the “Download the full unit” button and the complete PDF file will open in your browser.



### **3.2.6 Unit 9 - Cooperation**

This Unit talks about cooperation...To cooperate means "working together"; but, with whom are you supposed to cooperate? And why? Why should you work with someone else? For what reason? You could think "I'm fine as I am".

In this Unit we explain the benefits that small businesses get from cooperation. Whether you are a small producer who wants to break into the market, or you are a business owner already established and with a certain turnover, we will show you that working together with other companies and organizations opens up a wealth of possibilities.

To read the whole Unit, click on the "Download the full unit" button and the complete PDF file will open in your browser.

## **3.3 Module 3 - Organic Farming, Quality Schemes & Ecoagriculture**

### **3.3.1 Unit 10: EU agricultural product quality policy**

During last decades the consumer trust in food quality has drastically decreased, mainly because of the growing ecological awareness and several food scandals. In these demanding circumstances, the EU regards the promotion and assurance of food quality as an important instrument for EU farmers to increase their competitiveness and profitability.

This Unit will help the learner to acquire knowledge about:

- Organic Agriculture Principles, Legislation and Certification;
- Quality Standards;
- PDO, PGI and TSG products.

To read the whole Unit, click on the "Download the full unit" button and the complete PDF file will open in your browser.

### **3.3.2 Unit 11: Towards Ecoagriculture**

Unit 11 starts by providing a background and context for Ecoagriculture. The main chapters combine theory with general approaches and information for eco-friendly cultivation practices.

The ultimate objective of Unit 11 is the learner to fully understand that his/her production to be economical, competitive and sustainable should be ecological. This approach is one of the basic key aspects of Smartfarmer's training programme.

To read the whole Unit, click on the "Download the full unit" button and the complete PDF file will open in your browser.



### **Cultivation Guide**

Unit 11 includes a simple and concise Cultivation Guide aiming to provide some useful tips/guidelines to the Learner for the cultivation of key superfoods (blueberries, raspberries/blackberries, goji berries, aronia and strawberries).

Click on "Download the full unit" to download the SmartFarmer Cultivation Guide.



#### 4. SMARTFARMER PROJECT CONSORTIUM

The project partners are the following:

		<a href="#">Agricultural Research Institute (ARI - Cyprus)</a>
		<a href="#">Cyprus University of Technology (CUT - Cyprus)</a>
		<a href="#">Union “Farmers Parliament” (ZSA – Latvia)</a>
		<a href="#">Harokopio University of Athens (HUA - Greece)</a>
		<a href="#">Greek Superfoods Cooperation (Efkarpon - Greece)</a>
		<a href="#">Development and Innovation Network (RCDI - Portugal)</a>
		<a href="#">Fundacion Maimona (FM - Spain)</a>

Should you have any questions about this Learner’s Guide or wish to learn more about the project please feel free to contact us online at <http://www.smartfarmerproject.eu/>