



Agri-multifunctionality II
Sistema de adaptación a la multifuncionalidad para jóvenes agricultores

TEACHING GUIDE FOR TRAINERS

CONTENTS

01. About the Project	3
1.1. 01.1. Multifunctionality and the Agri-Multifunctionality II project	3
01.2. Partners	5
02. Case Study Methodology	5
03. System Work Dynamics	9
03.1. General Work Dynamics	9
03.2. Organizational Dynamics	11
04. Case Studies	12
05. Annex I. Reference Bibliography and Queries	14

01. ABOUT THE PROJECT

This is the Training Guide of the Agri-Multifunctionality II project designed as a working instrument for teachers and tutors to facilitate the understanding of multifunctional activities and their implementation by farmers.

The main aim of the training system is to provide European Young Farmers with a learning tool for adaptation to multifunctionality. This tool is based on Case Studies, representing successful examples carried out by other Young Farmers.

In this way the farmers will learn by means of practical examples of multifunctionality implemented by colleagues and they will evaluate what are the problems linked to these kinds of initiatives and what results could be achieved.

01.1. MULTIFUNCTIONALITY AND THE AGRI-MULTIFUNCTIONALITY II PROJECT

Multifunctional Agriculture (MFA) became widely known because of its relevance to international trade in the 1990s. With the Agenda 2000 reform and the European Council of Luxembourg, MFA became a policy concern at national and European levels. The European Union made sustainability and multifunctionality key objectives of its CAP. This reorientation is expressed in the so-called 'European model of agriculture' which was described by the European Commission. It aims at a farming sector that serves rural communities, reflecting their rich tradition and diversity, and whose role is not only to produce food but also to guarantee the viability of the countryside as a place to live and work, and as an environment in itself.

Having been debated for almost two decades now, the meaning of the term "Multifunctional Agriculture" still changes depending on who uses the term and where it is used. MFA is not a well-defined, simple, clear and operational concept, but an open, discursive, bridge or platform concept. It can be seen as a response to the challenge of rural limitations, be they economic, environmental, social or cultural as well as a consequence of the changing needs and demands of consumers and society regarding agriculture and rural

areas. There is an increasing demand for quality food production, for environmental, ecological and landscape values, and for social and cultural aspects. Although the agricultural market situation has definitely become more complex, there are nevertheless possibilities for European farmers as sellers of goods and services.

Agriculture is an integral component of the economy, society and environment. Individual producers and producer groups can not operate if they are isolated. Thus, agriculture both influences and is influenced by community and economic developments. Identification of modern European society with authentic agriculture and agricultural goods should be facilitated by a close connection between production and supply of these goods.

Whether and how MFA is developing in a specific region depends on the degree of the challenges in the region concerned. For example, Eastern European agriculture is characterised by diversity and regional disparities. Economically speaking, there are huge differences between subsistence-oriented farms, market-oriented family farms, and former agricultural cooperatives.

Maintaining existing farms depends on a variety of economic, social and demographic factors. At present the profile of European farmers is ageing. Farms run by young people are on average more profitable and young farmers are more willing to adopt innovative solutions and use environment-friendly farming methods. Many farmers have already strategically engaged in existing as well as new activities.

Deepening activities are attempts to add more value to products through organic farming, on-farm processing and short supply chains. In *Broadening*, farmers develop new activities, such as the management of nature and landscape, or agri-tourism. *Regrounding* activities are possible by cost-reduction through alternative use and valorisation of internal farm resources.

Economic factors are among the most important driving forces for farmers to pursue multifunctionality, but there are many others. The genuine tradition of European agriculture is continuous progress and development. MFA has to develop while respect regional cultures. Not every concept works in every region, it must instead be adapted to specific contexts and needs. In the long term, it is not the highest yield, but the optimum benefit that counts. Through

adjusted training and learning, together with visionary thinking, young European farmers should be able to supply saleable goods and services all around the core of their occupation: farming.

The AgriMultifunctionality II project aims to address the problems of an ageing farm workforce and the ongoing flow of young people out of the countryside, both of which are serious challenges to the sustainability of the European rural economy.

The short-term target group of the project is young farmers, the long-term target group being institutions, decision-makers and organisations dealing with agriculture at European, national and local levels. The protection of existing jobs and the creation of new rural jobs will be immediate consequences of the project, which will contribute to stopping the exodus from rural areas and to providing better opportunities for young farmers in rural areas. In the long term, an enhanced economic diversification is expected to make rural areas more attractive and competitive.

01.2. PARTNERS

The project partnership is comprised of the following organisations:

Granaforma S.L.: the project coordinator	SPAIN
CEJA (European Council of Young Farmers)	BELGIUM
IfLS (Institute for Rural Development Research)	GERMANY
CIPA-AT Umbria (Agriculture Vocational Educational Centre and Technical Assistance of Umbria)	ITALY
ASAJA-Granada (Young Farmer Association)	SPAIN

For more information about the partners please check the project web page:

[.agri-multifunctionality.](#)

02. CASE STUDY METHODOLOGY

The case study approach is frequently used in many disciplines, such as management, business, law and medicine. It has also been accepted in the field of ethics. This methodology is based on the use of actual experiences and situations. The learners make a training process on the basis of experiences and real life situations, allowing them to build their own knowledge in a context that brings them closer to their environment. This method is based on active participation and constructive and collaborative discussions.

Each case study recounts complex real life situations based on data essential for the analytic process. It provides a good opportunity for learners to develop the skills necessary in real-life situations, such as: observation, listening, diagnosis, decision-making and participation in co-operation-oriented and group process-oriented activities.

Each case study describes an actual complex professional experience in which real factors, such as time, location and/ or financial elements are taken into account. In some cases, the results may be gratifying, whereas in others, bad luck or planning may play major role leading to unsatisfactory results. It is based on protocols describing different activities, such as participant statements (questionnaires, formal interviews and debriefings), medical history (anamnesis), balance sheets, newspaper clippings or personal notes. These activities include any additional information, documents, opinions, objective evidence or status plans. Lastly, the description provides information on the case study. Anyone who wants to analyse a case study and achieve a satisfactory solution must use this information.

The use of case studies for training is based on certain premises. Authors like Parr and Smith (1998), and Asopa and Beye (1997), have stated that:

- The *analysis of a practical situation* during learning activities allows learners to better understand theoretical information from the

analysis of a practical situation.

- The classes, which are *active and challenging*, focus on the discussion of concepts from different viewpoints, without personal attacks or antagonisms.
- Given that real life situations are complex, different *group working skills*, such as, negotiation, conflict management, decision-making and effective communication, can be implemented.

For the most part, case studies or analysis require collaborative *group discussions*. In most cases, these discussions reflect the manner in which *actual decisions* are made in a professional real-life context.

As discussions are the key element of the case study methodology, one must bear in mind the characteristics of a "good" discussion. Christensen (1987) states, regarding this topic, that a discussion must be a learning experience whereby the learners may:

- understand a specific situation;
- apply both a global and a specific approach to the situation analysis;
- be aware of the relationship between concepts, functions and processes;
- analyse and understand a situation from a multidimensional viewpoint;
- be action-oriented.

This means:

- to accept conflicts;
- to be aware not only of what is critical or essential, but also possible;
- to have the will and strength to make decisions;
- to be capable of translating objectives into action plans;
- to be aware of the limits and means available to implement actions.

As for the institutional scope of application, it should be noted that case

studies are intended mainly for use in higher education institutions and for specific training for professionals. They are rarely used in secondary general education or technical schools. Please note: The case study methodology is used when the participants have a certain level of knowledge regarding the topic in question.

Case studies are appropriate for sharing knowledge on actions and decisions, in particular, in the fields of legal, economic, political, clinical, clerical and technical practices.

In short, this didactic working method is of significant interest to learners involved in fields requiring theoretical and practical training. There are five basic reasons vouching for its efficiency:

1. The learners can develop further their mental skills by assessing real-life situations and applying the concepts, rather than simply learning the concepts from theoretical examples that are frequently out of line with reality.
2. The learners learn to develop new concepts, and implement well-established ideas in a new context. Therefore, the learners who use this method are better trained than people who have only memorized the existing concepts.
3. The learners can assimilate better the ideas and concepts required to solve the problems that arose in the documented, real-life case studies.
4. Team work and interaction with other learners, which are requisite for case study methodology, are effective training tools for the human dimension of management.
5. This technique allows the learners to participate actively in their own learning process, facilitating the exchange of opinions, beliefs, attitudes and values, and fostering the development of the following skills:

- Capacity for in-depth observation of reality.
- Understanding of social phenomena and events.
- Conceptualization of the relationship between theory and action.
- Decision-making.
- Collaborative work.

03. WORK DYNAMICS FOR THE TRAINING SYSTEM

The importance of using case studies to stimulate the working dynamics of the training system and achieve as many planned objectives as possible is worth mentioning.

Each of the following actions is, above all, a proposal aimed at providing classroom guidance to the trainer; providing him or her with hints that may be used, if necessary, as a supporting feature.

However, the trainer is ultimately the person responsible for selecting the instruments and methodologies that he/she deems appropriate, and determining whether the above mentioned elements should be used.

03.1. GENERAL WORK DYNAMICS

Action 1

The first proposed action is to examine and work with all the case studies provided by the system.

We will start by choosing a country, and continue by developing and working case by case until all the case studies have been completed, and then go on to the remaining countries.

Action 2

Depending on the target audience and the characteristics of the learners, we should give priority to the cases that best comply with the profile, that is to say, according to themes or sectors, trying to use all the cases but prioritising the

most appropriate for each participating country.

Action 3.

The third option is to allow the learner to choose the working method, that is to say to go through the training system freely. We must always take into account the number of learners in the group, since this action cannot be carried out in large groups or groups of more than 15 persons, as each learner/case demands personalized attention.

Structure / layout of training session

We propose the following orderly arrangement of the training session:

1. In-depth presentation of the case study by the trainer based on the objectives, level of the learners and available time.
2. Reading of the case documents.
3. Case analysis in plenary session.
4. Annotation of the facts on the blackboard.
5. Analysis of facts.
6. The trainer shall direct/moderate the discussion towards the training objectives.
7. Identification of problems and proposal of solutions.
8. Implementation of proposed exercises and problems.
9. The group shall draw relevant conclusions from the analysis and solve the problem.
10. Each learner shall adapt the outcome to his or her farming context, stating what can be improved upon and implemented.
11. The learners will be asked to gather more information on the issue via the Internet or in nearby libraries.

Recommendations

- It is important for the trainer to refrain from expressing his or her own opinions prior to working on the case study.
- One should bear in mind that in some cases there is no single solution.
- The weaknesses of group analysis should be highlighted.

- A favourable atmosphere for discussion should be established.
- Remarks and discussions must be recorded.
- The training process should be directed towards the objectives via discussions and questions.
- Highly simplified or very detailed mock case studies should be avoided.

03.2. ORGANIZATIONAL DYNAMICS

We have submitted several proposals aimed at organizing the work and development of the system, with the objective of assisting in the implementation of the training activities.

Schedule

As a rule, and to make the most of the training sessions, the training sessions should usually last two hours, although more time can be given if necessary.

Classroom distribution

Since this is an electronic system, each learner must have a separate computer with a CD-ROM drive and the basic software installed, such as Adobe Acrobat Reader, Microsoft Office, etc.

The trainer must have his or her own computer, and a projector to explain the cases and contents to the learners in joint sessions.

Tailored work

One of the special characteristics of this system is that each learner can work from home in a tailored work environment. This will allow the learner to train at any time of the day.

Each case study included in the system has a question section for consideration and case work on which the learner can work at any time and anywhere.

This allows the trainer to work on an individual basis with a small group of

learners, multiplying the number of contacts with each learner and going more deeply into each topic. We recommend the use of the Internet and/or libraries to obtain more information on the subject, and to enrich the learning experience.

04. CASE STUDIES

This training system is based on agricultural case studies based on multifunctional experiences carried out by European Young Farmers.

A total of 63 case studies from 21 countries have been incorporated in the training tool.

Each case has the same format, and is based on the same idea and/or concept.

Each Case Study is divided in thirteen sections:

- Introduction: introductory page on the case study.
- Promoter's profile: information on the young farmer.
- Farm data: summary description of the farm, such as size, address, year of establishment, etc.
- Previous situation: information on the situation of the farm prior to the multifunctional experience.
- Multifunctional experience: details of the multifunctional activities implemented.
- Results: information about the outcome of the multifunctional activities implemented.
- Promoter's competences: a list of the responsibilities that the promoter has or should have.
- Promoter's advice: promoter's recommendations for other young farmers.
- Strengths and weaknesses: the strengths or positive elements and weaknesses or negative elements of multifunctionality in a particular farm that should be taken account when implementing multifunctional activities.
- Queries and considerations: proposed exercises (an average of four questions or considerations) on the proposed case study; to be developed by the learners.

- Recommended training: a list of recommended training actions to enhance farmers' knowledge and skills.
- Links: introductory and explanatory annotations on each case.
- Multifunctional criteria: the characteristic of the multifunctional activities described in the case study are classified according to multifunctional criterias.
- Key words: some key words that characterize the case study listed.

The case studies may be consulted on-line, on the CD-ROM and a PDF file may be generated in order to print a paper copy.

05. ANNEX I. REFERENCE BIBLIOGRAPHY AND QUERIES

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The CD-ROM includes an extensive bibliography on multifunctionality that may be complementary to the one provided.