



**Trainer /
Facilitator's Guide
to using
SMALLHOLDER
PRODUCER Open
Education
Resources**

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SUSTAINABLE SMALLHOLDERS EU

01: Foreword



Passionate and talented, most smallholders are exceptionally good at what they do – producing/breeding/growing artisanal produce rooted in the land and local communities with strong ethical, environmental and heritage values. Where some fall down, to no fault of their own, though is in their lack of basic entrepreneurial skills and their inability to embrace and market the local/heritage value of their produce. **Our Open Education Resources will address this NEED.** Read on.

The Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) of the United Nations defines smallholders **as small-scale farmers, pastoralists, forest keepers and fishers who manage areas of less than 10 hectares.**

- Smallholder farms are characterised by family-focused motives, and it is usually the families who are responsible for everything from production to farm maintenance.
- Operating to high environmental and welfare principles, smallholders produce and sell high-quality primary products from a landscape and community that is the backdrop of the rural way of life.
- Sustainability is key to smallholder systems that keep many rustic and climate-resilient varieties and rare breeds alive. These smallholders are experimenters, producers of knowledge and researchers in their own right.

In a Eurostat survey from 2016, it was revealed that family farms dominate the structure of EU agriculture in terms of their numbers, their contribution to agricultural employment, and to a lesser degree, the area of land that they cultivate and the value of the output they generate. There were 10.5 million farms in the EU in 2016, with the vast majority (95.2 %) classified as family farms.

- Most farms (93 %) in the EU in 2016 were farms with only family workers.
- The main challenges facing family farms often reflect issues that are common for all types of small business:
 - access to resources (such as land, capital and upskilling)
 - access to markets (particularly in relation to the bargaining power of small farms in the food chain).

The Sustainable Smallholders EU Project wants to change this and offer support, knowledge and tools to empower Smallholders across Europe.

It will equip smallholders (and those who educate/support them) with skills and knowledge to improve the viability of their holdings by championing the local/heritage value of their produce and improving their other basic entrepreneurial skills such as business planning, financial literacy, marketing and sales.



How this Course will respond to needs...

The Sustainable Smallholder EU (SSEU) Curriculum responds to the needs of European smallholder farmers whose low levels of education and poor technological skills pose a serious obstacle. Other challenges and needs are:

- Limited access to markets. Smallholders are characterised by large numbers of very small businesses which presents a major sourcing issue for purchasers and poor bargaining power on the smallholders' behalf.
- Poor access to credit. Financial institutions often view smallholders as unattractive clients due to insufficient collateral and the small size of loans requested by farmers.
- Lack of training suitable to their needs. Traditional classroom courses do not meet the needs of busy, time-poor smallholders who are often lone workers.

SSEU also responds to the needs of Sustainability, Farming and Community Education Bodies and trainers like you, who offer training and support to the farming sector but lack the knowledge/pedagogical strategies to provide niche outreach support, training and guidance to promote the economic viability and sustainability of smallholdings. By engaging with you and your organisations from the project outset, we have been able to equip you with the tools to embed SSEU resources as part of your adult education offering.

The impact at a local level by providing access to highly innovative yet accessible training resources is that we position these Smallholder farmers with the skills from which to improve the viability of their holdings by championing the local/heritage value of their produce, transforming their supply chain management, guiding them through finances & funding and enhancing their farms as businesses through the use of digital technology. In doing this we will enable positive action and far-reaching impact that spreads across the EU as an increase of viable, sustainable smallholdings will improve the viability and a tangible contribution to European Food security and the global food demand in a resource-scarce world.



02: About the SSEU Project Curriculum

What is SSEU all about? Spotlight on the Open Education Resources (OERs) that make up this course.

According to The Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) of the United Nations Smallholders are small-scale farmers, pastoralists, forest keepers, and fishers who manage areas of less than 10 hectares.

Smallholders are key contributors to food security and nutrition, producing most of the food in many regions of the world and producing more food and nutrition in the world's most populous, and food-insecure regions. Their farms are better at promoting social equity and community well-being and have advantages in terms of environmental sustainability and addressing climate change. This in part derives from their greater attachment to local communities and landscapes, which foster a higher level of interest and care for the natural environment and climate upon which they rely for agricultural production.

SSEU is an Erasmus+ Strategic Partnership project which focuses on the development of and sustainability of Smallholdings as viable businesses across Europe, and it promotes an understanding of the close relationship between heritage value and business growth. It consists of a set of open educational resources created for facilitators and trainers, published online, and free to download and use.

The Sustainable Smallholders EU project wants to empower and equip smallholders with skills and knowledge to improve their smallholding as a business. Our Guidebook to Sustainable Development focuses on the latter two actions. In this course, we focus on the business side of your smallholding and how to help you grow as an enterprise.

Sustainable Smallholders will empower and equip smallholders with skills and knowledge to:

- **Future proof** their smallholdings: improving their long-term viability & use of the heritage value of their produce/livestock as a USP
- Increase their **profitability** via: the use of more efficient and lucrative distribution channels & learning how to respond to consumer demands
- To **improve their ongoing environmental, climate action, and biodiversity work** by focusing on their approaches to food security, food waste; and sustainable agriculture
- To **increase and diversify** the way smallholders contribute to global food demand in a resource-scarce world

Sustainable Smallholders EU also responds to the needs of Sustainability, Farming and Community Education Bodies that offer training and support to the farming sector but lack the knowledge/pedagogical strategies to provide niche outreach support, training and guidance to promote the economic viability and sustainability of smallholdings.



03: General Instructions for Trainers

1. Methodological Approach

The SSEU TRAINING PACKAGE is the first holistic VET approach to empower and equip smallholders (and those who educate & support them) with skills and knowledge to improve the viability of their holdings by championing the local/heritage value of their produce, transforming their supply chain management and enhancing their environmental/climate action contributions in line with the UN's sustainable development goals.

This course aims to facilitate smallholders with tailored and targeted resources to help them increase the bottom line and make their smallholding become visible as a business and therefore become more sustainable.

It does this by combining a curricula-based approach, which can be adopted in teaching and training by VET/Adult Training organisations, with a modular approach.

2. General Instructions

Please read this guide thoroughly before conducting the training. For classroom, flipped or blended delivery please:

- Download, review & revise course resources for the training as necessary. Allow adequate training time for sessions. The link you need is: <https://www.small-holders.eu/>
- Localise training content with case studies and information on local supports for your students/learners
- Ensure that each participant completes exercises embedded in Modules – these provide valuable learning.
- Allow time for the review of exercises and provide a feedback loop

3. Instructional Approach

The Open Education Resources have been designed to accommodate a range of teaching styles and cultures.

As a common thread, each module is presented with the following design:

- The topic is introduced briefly before delving into the subject matter.
- Information and current best practices on the topic are presented, moving from general definitions to more detailed applications, enabling the scope of the topic to be understood.
- Knowledge is reinforced, and skills are developed as students/learners participate in practical exercises or study questions

04: Course Delivery Options

a. Traditional Classroom Training & Tools required

Classroom training remains one of the most popular training techniques for building skills capacity. Typically, it is instructor-centered face-to-face training that takes place at a fixed time and place. SSEU Toolkit project tools, suggested use and additional resources required can be outlined as ...

Classroom Tool	Suggested Use in the Classroom	Additional Resources Required
PowerPoint © presentation	Training materials are developed in PowerPoint. We suggest that these will be displayed on a large screen for classroom delivery	Laptop/ Computer Projector Large screen / wall
Videos	Videos are used to explain certain sections of the training content and to present case studies for discussion.	Audio / sound system
Whiteboard or Flip Chart	Invite learners to write on the board or ask them for feedback that you write on the board	Pens / markers

Suggested delivery mechanisms:

- **Small group discussions:** Break the participants down into small groups and give them case studies or work situations to discuss or solve. This allows for knowledge transfer between learners.
- **Q & A sessions:** Informal question-and-answer sessions are most effective with small groups and for updating skills rather than teaching new skills. These should be used frequently across course delivery.
- **Multimedia:** Multimedia training materials tends to be more provocative and challenging and therefore, more stimulating to the adult mind. Trainers should ensure that all imbedded tools are used to their full potential.
- **Interactive tools:** The engagement of students can be easily achieved by using interactive tools. An example of a free tool is [Kahoot!](#) which is a game-based learning and trivia platform used in classrooms, offices, and social settings. You can compile a quiz, which can be answered by the students on their phones/tablets/computers. It is possible to get immediate feedback and results.



04: Course Delivery Options

b. Online Learning

This delivery method uses Internet technologies embedded in the SSEU learning platform to deliver a broad array of solutions to enable learning.

The project platform is a multilingual, interactive site. The online learning facility incorporates best practice in online learning so that while the learning objective remains the same (or similar) the user interface and experience can be radically different as befits the medium.

c. Other Teaching Methodologies

Flipped Classroom

In a Flipped Classroom learners study module content prior to the class with a focus on exercises and assignments in class. The classroom transfer of knowledge makes way for online instruction outside the classroom. This creates more room for practicing in class, for extra explanations when needed, and offers the possibility to dive deeper into the materials during class time.

Blended Learning

Blended Learning combines online digital media with traditional classroom methods. It requires the physical presence of both teacher and student, with some element of student control over time, place, path, or pace. Learners still attend a classroom setting with a teacher/trainer present, face-to-face classroom practices are combined with computer-mediated activities regarding content and delivery. Blended learning is most used in professional development and training settings.

Collaborative/Peer-to-Peer Learning

Collaborative learning is an educational approach to teaching and learning that involves groups of learners working together. Examples of boosting collaborative and peer-to-peer learning are:

Peer review: Peers in the classroom are brought together to jointly evaluate the work by one or more people of similar competence to the producers of the work. Peers not only assess the performance of each other but also share their experience and know-how.

Google Docs: This online collaboration tool facilitates the creation of meaningful documents. All group members can work at the same time (real-time) on the same document, from any location on various devices. Changes are automatically saved in documents as being typed upon. It is possible to monitor the revision history of a document where you also can see who made a specific change. The value of Google Docs as a learning resource is that group members can also share documents, chat, and comment on the same.

“Innovations that are guided by smallholder farmers, adapted to local circumstances, and sustainable for the economy and environment will be necessary to ensure food security in the future”

Bill Gates



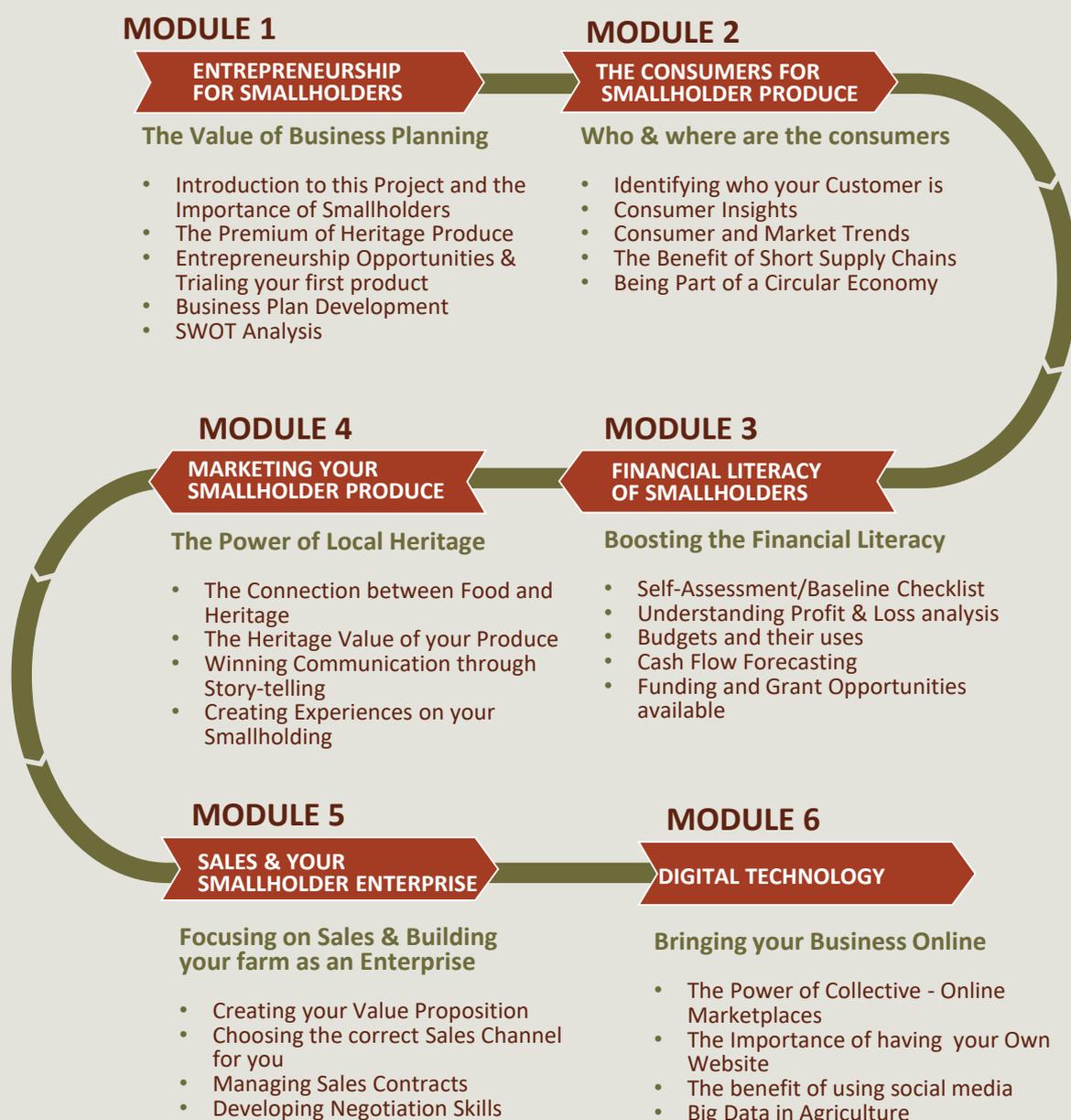
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05: Course Content Overview

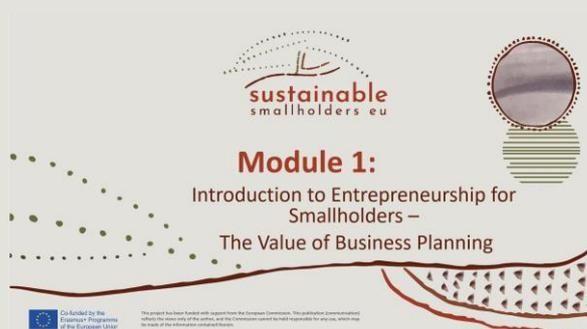
Modules

The Curriculum comprises six modules structured as a progressive journey...



05: Course Content Overview

Let's look at the modules in much more detail...
Course content detailed overview



MODULE 1	INTRODUCTION TO ENTREPRENEURSHIP FOR SMALLHOLDERS – THE VALUE OF BUSINESS PLANNING
Overview	This module lays the foundations for the whole Sustainable Smallholder course. Here you will commence your journey for growth and/or sustainability as a smallholder. You will view your smallholding as an enterprise and the value and opportunities that lie within it. You will gain insight into your enterprise using several tools that will accompany you on this fact-finding mission.
Learning Objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Understand the importance of Smallholders ✓ Gain confidence in your heritage ✓ Understand the process of launching your product ✓ Understand the who – what – how of Smallholding Management so that you can start writing your Business Plan ✓ Learn how to communicate the business plan to key stakeholders important to your enterprise’s success ✓ Develop the confidence and capability to further adapt the plan to address changing market needs as they arise ✓ Analyse your business through SWOT
Topics Covered	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Introduction to this Project and the Importance of Smallholders ▪ The Premium of Heritage Produce ▪ Entrepreneurship Opportunities & Trialing your first product ▪ Business Plan Development ▪ Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats
Case Studies	➤ Promoting the use and recycling of “Ugly Food”
Suggested Assessments	Slide 12: Student / learner Reflection – The Beginning Slide 33: EXERCISE: YOUR PRODUCTION PLAN or WORKFLOW Slide 72: Writing your BUSINESS PLAN
Further Resources	<p>The genius of frugal innovation</p> <p>Navi Radjou: Creative problem-solving in the face of extreme limits</p> <p>The Hidden beauty of Ugly Food</p> <p>Strategyzer Canvas Tools</p> <p>Business Model Canvas Explained</p> <p>Business Plan Template from Enterprise Ireland</p> <p>Business Plan Template with useful hints</p> <p>Teagasc Step by Step Guide to doing the figures</p>

05: Course Content Overview

Using Trends to your Advantage...



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A trend is a general direction into which something is changing, developing, or veering toward.

”



Module 2:

Who and where are the consumers for smallholder produce



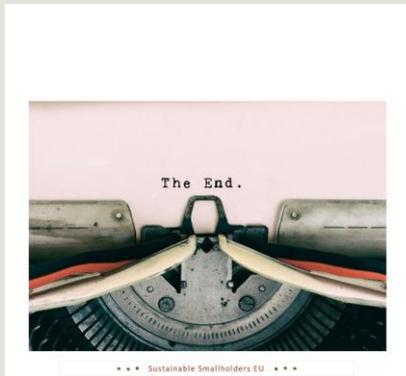
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MODULE 2	WHO AND WHERE ARE THE CONSUMERS FOR SMALLHOLDER PRODUCE
Overview	In this module, we want to learn more about the consumers of Smallholder produce. To do this it is important for us to understand what our customers need and how we can meet these needs. Insights and trends help us to discover the consumer’s motivation and therefore opportunity lies within this knowledge for you as smallholders
Learning Objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Get familiar with your ideal customer ✓ Gain the skills to define the problem in depth ✓ Understand the different methods of market research ✓ Get familiar with the different market trends ✓ Analyse the different food supply chains ✓ Understand circular economy
Topics Covered	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Identifying who your Customer is ▪ Consumer Insights ▪ Consumer and Market Trends ▪ The Benefit of Short Supply Chains ▪ Being Part of a Circular Economy
Case Studies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ British case study Ahimsa ➤ What is happening in food waste in UK? ➤ What is happening in food waste in Ireland? ➤ Hello Fresh – Germany ➤ Convenience: Easy But Not Speedy Home Cooking Solutions – UK company Gousto ➤ Direct Sales Example – Chef’s Farms ➤ Direct Sales Example - Mad Yolk Farm, Ireland ➤ Collective Sales – An OPEN FOOD NETWORK
Suggested Assessments	<p>Slide 6: Sample Customer Journey Map</p> <p>Slide 10: Understanding Customers – Through Empathy Maps</p> <p>Slide 11: Empathy Map</p> <p>Slide 79: Student / learner Reflection</p>
Further Resources	<p>Empathy - YouTube</p> <p>Understanding Customers - An Introduction to Customer Empathy Mapping</p> <p>Understanding Today's Organic Consumers</p> <p>Tutorial on the basic of Google trends</p> <p>Food innovation - Six secrets</p> <p>Global Consumer Health and Wellness Revolution</p> <p>Horse meat scandal in 2013</p>

05: Course Content Overview



Did you know?
Nationally, funders/lenders estimate that between **50 - 60%** of all applications they receive are immediately turned down because they are ineligible and do not meet clearly laid out guidelines.

Module 3:
Boosting the Financial Literacy of Smallholders

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MODULE 3	BOOSTING THE FINANCIAL LITERACY OF SMALLHOLDERS
Overview	Once smallholders have identified how their produce fits into the market and have started developing a business plan, they must access finance: In this module we will discuss topics that will help you to complete your Business Plan and will assist you on journey to assess and improve your financial literacy and consequently the sustainability of your smallholding.
Learning Objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Understand the basic financial concepts for managing a business ✓ Analyse a sample P&L Statement ✓ Understand the sales process ✓ Analyse financial planning for farms and budgets ✓ Understand cash flow and its elements ✓ Gain information on potential sources of funding, grant options and other financial support ✓ Gain the skills to develop your pitch
Topics Covered	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Self-Assessment/Baseline Checklist ▪ Understanding Profit & Loss analysis ▪ Budgets and their uses ▪ Cash Flow Forecasting ▪ Funding and Grant Opportunities available
Case Studies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Cash flow forecast example ➤ Micro Finance Ireland
Suggested Assessments	Slide 8: Analysing a P&L Statement Slide 19: 5 Questions to ask in reviewing your finances
Further Resources	<p>Budget templates Grants and Schemes - Teagasc, Agriculture and Food Development Authority Schemes and Payments Agriculture Food and the Marine Agriculture and Farming, Finance Support to Farmers AIB Business Brexit Impact Loan Scheme (BILS) – SBCI Crowdfunding in Ireland - a short guide</p>

05: Course Content Overview



“
Food is everything we are. It's an extension of nationalist feeling, ethnic feeling, your personal history, your province, your region, your tribe, your grandma. It's inseparable from those from the get-go
 ”

- Anthony Bourdain



MODULE 4	MARKETING YOUR SMALLHOLDER PRODUCE
Overview	<p>In this Module, we start with your Unique Selling Point (USP), the power of local heritage and its connection between food and local heritage. You will learn about the importance of branding, and how you can benefit from sharing your story and creating a heritage value in marketing terms. You will also learn of the benefits of creating customer experiences on your smallholding and how they can enhance your business growth and market share.</p>
Learning Objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Gain an understanding of the food heritage and the value it holds ✓ Learn about the importance of cultural heritage ✓ Gain the skills to use your heritage as a marketing tool ✓ Improve your storytelling skills and learn how to use it in your marketing ✓ Learn how to create a brand story ✓ Understand experience economy ✓ Learn how to create an experience on your smallholding ✓ Understand the importance of listening to your customers
Topics Covered	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The Connection between Food and Heritage ▪ The Heritage Value of your Produce ▪ Winning Communication through Story-telling ▪ Creating Experiences on your Smallholding
Case Studies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ EXAMPLE HERITAGE FOOD FROM IRELAND – Boxyt ➤ Leaf & Root smallholding ➤ Bia Oisin and Aniar smallholding ➤ Rachel Allen - Ireland’s food story ➤ Farm Experiences - Farm Adventure ➤ The Burren Farm Experience
Suggested Assessments	<p>Slide 48: How to create an Experience on your Smallholding</p>
Further Resources	<p>Ukrainian Borsch cooking Gastronomic meal of the French Mediterranean diet Beer culture in Belgium The Art of Neapolitan ‘Pizzaiuolo’ Berlin Call Action Farm Experiences - Farm Adventure The Burren Farm Experience</p>

05: Course Content Overview

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Module 5:
Focusing on Sales & Building your farm as an Enterprise

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Is Power required in Negotiations?

Power in negotiations is important because...

- People believe it is important – and perception is important
- It can affect the ability of the negotiators to make decisions
- Usually, the side with the most power (whether perceived or actual) is likely to achieve more of what they want

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MODULE 5	FOCUSING ON SALES & BUILDING YOUR FARM AS AN ENTERPRISE
Overview	This module places emphasis on the importance of good sales and creating good sales techniques in order to develop your farm as a viable enterprise. We explore the various sale channels so that you are more informed when choosing the right channel for you and we discuss how to manage sales contracts with potential customers and how to negotiate the right contract for you.
Learning Objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Gain an understanding of the value proposition ✓ Learn how to write your value proposition ✓ Gain skills to identify the customer’s problem ✓ Learn how to use the value proposition canvas ✓ Identify the best practices for managing sales contracts with retailers ✓ Develop negotiating skills ✓ Acquire a knowledge of choosing the correct sales channel for you ✓ Recognise common negotiation mistakes ✓ Get the point of the main phases in the negotiation process ✓ Summarise negotiation strategies and techniques
Topics Covered	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Creating your Value Proposition ▪ Choosing the correct Sales Channel for you (B2B, B2C, Collaborative Sales/Sales Networks) ▪ Managing Sales Contracts ▪ Developing Negotiation Skills
Case Studies	Slide 4: Your value proposition
Suggested Assessments	
Further Resources	Value Proposition Worksheet Strategyzer Canvas Value Proposition

05: Course Content Overview

Module 6:
Digital Technology &
Your Smallholder Business

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Be Inspired...An Irish Farm's Website

Beechlaw Organic Farm is an example of a Small Irish farm using its website to:

- highlight what they do
- tell their story
- sell their produce
- Build consumer trust

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MODULE 6	DIGITAL TECHNOLOGY & YOUR SMALLHOLDER BUSINESS
Overview	<p>All businesses, no matter how small, can benefit from the power and potential of technology. Smallholders are small teams by definition and in order to successfully monetise their produce they need all the help they can get.</p> <p>In this Module, you will learn about Online Marketplaces and their relevance to you, why it is important to have your own Website, and how Social Media can help your farm business grow. Finally, we will give you an overview of Big Data and the role it is starting to play in Agriculture.</p>
Learning Objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Learn about online marketplaces and why they might work for you ✓ Recognise the importance of having your own website ✓ Gain an understanding of the digital marketing ✓ Identify the common methods for conducting digital marketing ✓ Understand the social media platforms ✓ Learn about the benefits of using social media channels for your smallholding ✓ Get the point of the Big Data and its role in agriculture
Topics Covered	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The Power of Collective – Online Marketplaces ▪ The Importance of having your Own Website ▪ The benefit of using social media ▪ Big Data in Agriculture
Case Studies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Neighbour-FOOD ➤ Farmsy ➤ The Fruit Brothers ➤ Beechlaw Organic Farm ➤ The Farmers Journal podcast ➤ Winnow
Suggested Assessments	Slide 41: Learner exercise – Importance of social media
Further Resources	<p>The Fruit Brothers The Ultimate Guide to Digital Marketing Top 10 Best Website Builders Trading Online Voucher Schemes 8 tips for hiring a Web designer for your business CIO Shopify Examples Free Business Tools - Online Tools for Small Businesses (shopify.com) How to use Instagram polls for your business The Social Journal (zoho.com)</p>

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06: Useful Links

Project Website	https://www.small-holders.eu/
Supply Chain Collaboration Toolkit	https://www.small-holders.eu/supply-chain-collaboration-toolkit-en/
Guidebook and Good Practices	https://www.small-holders.eu/guidebook-and-good-practices-en/
Project LinkedIn Page	https://www.linkedin.com/company/sustainable-smallholders-eu/
Project Facebook Page	https://www.facebook.com/SustainableSmallholdersEU
Project Instagram Page	https://www.instagram.com/smallholder.sustain/

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07: Sample Timetable

- It is recommended to keep the days to the maximum length indicated in the table below.
- Since the learning materials are quite intense and new to the teachers and learners, it is recommended to spread the information across multiple days.
- For the best processing, you can choose to spread the days across weeks, so for example one day per week.

DAY	TRAINING CONTENT
1	09.00 – 13.00 Module 1 14.00 – 15.30 Module 2
2	09.00 – 13.00 Module 2 14.00 – 15.30 Module 3
3	09.00 – 13.00 Module 3 14.00 – 15.30 Module 4
4	09.00 – 13.00 Module 4 14.00 – 15.30 Module 5
5	09.00 – 13.00 Module 5 14.00 – 15.30 Module 6
6	09.00 – 13.00 Module 6 14.00 – 15.30 Review & Recap

THANK YOU!



<https://www.small-holders.eu>

Follow our journey

