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AgriVet **Tourism**

AgriVETourism

Enhancing Sustainable Agritourism through Vocational
Education and Training for Rural Development

TRAINER'S MANUAL

*For face-to-face, online, or hybrid
delivery*



Executive Summary

Purpose and Use of this Trainer's Manual

This Trainer's Manual is the complete training resource of the AgriVETourism project (Project Reference: 2024-2-BG01-KA210-VET-000267044), bringing together all six training modules developed to address the skills gaps identified among agritourism operators and aspiring rural entrepreneurs in Bulgaria, Greece, and Italy. It is designed to equip Vocational Education and Training (VET) trainers, facilitators, and rural development practitioners with everything needed to deliver high-quality, practice-oriented training sessions, whether face-to-face, online, or in a hybrid format.

Why this manual exists

The 2025 comparative skills-gap report, based on field research across 15 agritourism facilities in the three partner countries, identified ten recurring skill gaps -- from certifications and digitalisation to economic viability, sustainable agricultural practices, and visitor experience design. This manual translates those findings into six practical, modular training units that trainers can deliver directly, without requiring prior academic background in business or tourism.

What the manual contains

Each of the six modules follows the same evidence-based structure mandated by the project's official guidelines: a module overview and learning objectives, three core content units (each addressing one skill gap with one practical solution and one tangible output), two case studies (one national and one transnational), three to four hands-on practical exercises with ready-to-use templates, reflective self-assessment questions, homework tasks, and annexes containing a companion slide presentation and AI-assisted research prompts that help trainers localise examples and data to their own country, region, and audience.

The six modules

Module 1 - The "Business" in Agritourism (planning, finance, funding); Module 2 - The "Market" in Agritourism (digital tools and online visibility); Module 3 - The "Product" in Agritourism (quality, certification, and value); Module 4 - The "Agri" in Agritourism (sustainable farming and operations); Module 5 - The "Tourism" in Agritourism (visitor experience and community partnerships); and Module 6 - The "Future" in Agritourism (climate resilience and innovation).

Who should use it

This manual is intended primarily for VET trainers and facilitators preparing to deliver the AgriVETourism curriculum to existing agritourism operators, farmers diversifying into tourism, cooperative members, and VET students or young professionals entering the agriculture and tourism sectors. It also serves rural development organisations and policy stakeholders seeking to understand the curriculum's structure and evidence base.

How to use it

Trainers are encouraged to read each module's overview and suggested delivery flow before a session, adapt timing to the group's needs, use the provided templates rather than improvising new ones, and consult the AI research support annexes to refresh local examples and data ahead of each delivery. Every module is self-contained and can be delivered independently, allowing flexible scheduling across face-to-face, online, or blended formats.

AgriVETourism Project

Enhancing Sustainable Agritourism through Vocational Education and Training

MODULE 1

The “Business” in Agritourism

From Idea to Income

Trainer’s Manual

For face-to-face, online, or hybrid delivery

Module Overview

This module helps agritourism operators and aspiring young professionals understand the financial basics of running a small agritourism business. It covers four practical areas: shaping a viable business idea, knowing what your business actually costs (including the costs most people forget), setting prices that reflect real value instead of guessing, and finding support — both through funding programmes and through low-cost actions that do not require a grant.

Each unit produces a simple template that learners fill in and keep. The content draws on real examples from Bulgaria, Greece, and Italy, but the method applies to any European rural context.

This module includes:

- **4 units**, each addressing one specific skill gap with one practical solution and one tangible output
- **4 practical exercises** producing templates that learners complete and keep
- **2 case studies** — one from Bulgaria, one from Italy — following a common structure for easy comparison
- **4 take-home templates** (Agritourism Business Canvas, Monthly Financial Plan, Price Card, Funding & Next 60 Days Plan)
- **Self-assessment questions** for personal reflection (not scored)
- **Facilitation guidelines and trainer resources** for each unit
- **Homework tasks** for learners to complete after the session
- **Annexes** including a ready-made slide presentation and a curated resources collection

Presentation Package

A ready-made slide presentation accompanies this manual. It follows the unit structure described here and is designed for face-to-face, online, or hybrid delivery. The presentation includes introduction slides, content slides for each unit, exercise instructions, case studies, and closing activities.

The full Presentation Plan with slide content, trainer scripts, and facilitation notes is provided in Annex 1. The table below shows which slides correspond to each section of the module.

Module Section	Slides	Content
Introduction	Slides 1–3	Module title, overview of 4 units, ice-breaker activity
Unit 1: Shape Your Business Idea	Slides 4–7	Business model concept, canvas fields, worked example, Exercise 1
Unit 2: Know Your Numbers	Slides 8–12	Iceberg of costs, income sources, seasonality, profit formula, Exercise 2

Unit 3: Set the Right Price	Slides 13–16	Pricing by instinct, floor price, value chain, add-ons, Exercise 3
Unit 4: Find the Money, Start Small	Slides 17–20	CAP/LEADER in plain language, funding by country, diversification, Exercise 4
Closing	Slides 21–25	Case Study 1, Case Study 2, self-assessment, homework, key takeaways

Slide numbers are indicative. Trainers may adjust the order or add/remove slides based on their group and delivery format. See Annex 1 for the detailed Presentation Plan.

Each unit follows the same formula:

ONE skill gap → ONE practical solution → ONE tangible output

Unit	Skill Gap	Solution	Output
Unit 1: Shape Your Business Idea	No structured business concept	Agritourism Business Canvas	Completed Business Canvas
Unit 2: Know Your Numbers	No cost tracking, no profit awareness	Monthly Financial Plan method	Completed Monthly Financial Plan
Unit 3: Set the Right Price	Pricing by instinct, undervaluation	Price Card method	Completed Price Card
Unit 4: Find the Money, Start Small	No funding awareness, passive waiting	2-Track Plan	Completed Funding & Next 60 Days Plan

Target group: Existing agritourism operators, farmers diversifying into tourism, cooperative members; VET students and young professionals in agriculture and tourism

Estimated learning time: 3 hours

Delivery format: Suitable for face-to-face, online, or hybrid delivery. Requires printed or digital templates for exercises.

Horizontal EU priority: Rural development, short supply chains, EU Green Deal alignment (integrated into Unit 4)

Learning Objectives

By the end of this module, learners will be able to:

1. Map their agritourism business idea using a structured one-page canvas
2. Identify the fixed, variable, and hidden costs of an agritourism operation
3. Complete a monthly profit/loss overview for their business or a realistic scenario
4. Build a price for one product or experience using a structured method: floor price + value premium + add-ons
5. Explain why selling an experience brings more income than selling a raw product
6. Name at least two funding sources available in their country
7. Commit to one practical action they can start within 60 days

Suggested Delivery Flow (approx. 3 hours)

This is a realistic timing guide for face-to-face delivery. Trainers should adjust based on group size, energy, and whether the optional exercise is included.

If time is short: shorten the case study discussion. Do not cut the exercises — the 4 completed templates are the deliverable.

A Note on Trainer Research Support

This module is based on EU-level evidence, project research, and established agritourism practice. At the end of each unit, trainers will find an AI research support section alongside the verified resource list. These are ready-to-use prompts that trainers can copy into a free AI tool (ChatGPT, Gemini, or similar) to gather local examples, recent data, and up-to-date references for their specific country, region, and participant group.

How to use the AI research prompts

- Copy the prompt into a free AI tool and replace the placeholders with your local details
- Always prefer recent and credible sources — official statistics, government publications, EU databases
- Simplify the AI output before using it in class — remove jargon, shorten, check it fits your audience
- Verify facts, dates, prices, and programme names before presenting them as current information
- These prompts are a starting point for preparation, not a substitute for trainer expertise

Block	Duration	Notes
Introduction and ice-breaker	10 min	Welcome, check templates are distributed
Unit 1: Shape Your Business Idea + Exercise	40 min	Canvas exercise is 25 min — the longest
Unit 2: Know Your Numbers + Exercise	35 min	Content 15 min + financial plan exercise 20 min
Short break	10 min	
Unit 3: Set the Right Price + Exercise	30 min	Content 15 min + price card exercise 15 min
Unit 4: Find the Money + Exercise	30 min	Content 15 min + funding plan exercise 15 min
Case studies + discussion	15 min	Choose 1 or 2 case studies to discuss
Self-assessment + closing	10 min	Reflection, homework, feedback forms
Total	~3 hours	Including break

Unit 1 — Shape Your Business Idea

Slides: 4–7 (see Annex 1 — Presentation Plan)

Skill gap	No structured business concept. Experienced operators run on instinct and habit — they have never put their business model on paper. Students and aspiring operators have ideas but no framework to test whether those ideas are realistic.
Practical solution	A one-page Agritourism Business Canvas — an adapted version of the Business Model Canvas with 9 fields, tailored to the realities of small-scale agritourism.
Tangible output	A completed Agritourism Business Canvas.

Canvas Journey Note

This is the first draft of the canvas — not the final version. Learners will return to it after every module and update the fields that connect to what they have just learned. By the end of Module 6, the canvas will be complete, tested, and ready to use. Encourage learners to keep their canvas safe and bring it to every session.

Tip: ask learners to use a different colour each time they update the canvas. This makes the evolution visible — they can see how their business idea grew across the programme.

Key Concepts Explained

What is a business model?

A business model is simply the logic of how your business works — what you offer, who you offer it to, and how you make money from it. It is not a 50-page plan. For a small agritourism operator, it can fit on one page.

Example: A family near Melnik offers vineyard visits, wine tasting, and direct wine sales. Their business model is: “visitors come for the experience, stay for the wine, and buy bottles to take home.” Three lines — that is a business model.

What is a value proposition?

Your value proposition is the answer to: “Why would someone come to MY farm instead of going somewhere else?” It is not about being the cheapest. It is about what makes your place special.

Example: “We are the only saffron farm in the region where visitors can pick saffron by hand and learn how it is processed.” That is a value proposition — it is specific, it is real, and nobody else nearby offers it.

What are customer segments?

These are the different types of people who might visit you. They have different needs and different willingness to pay. You do not need to serve all of them — but you need to know which ones you are aiming for.

Example: A farm might attract three segments — urban families looking for a weekend escape, visitors from a neighbouring region on day trips, and retired Northern Europeans looking for authentic rural experiences. Each group wants something slightly different.

What are channels?

Channels are how people find out about you and how they book. This can be as simple as word of mouth and a Facebook page, or it can include a website, Booking.com, WhatsApp, a local tourism office, or partnerships with tour operators.

Example: A small rural guesthouse gets 60% of bookings from a Google Maps listing and reviews. They did not pay for advertising — they just made sure their listing was complete and asked guests to leave a review.

What are key resources?

Everything you already have that the business depends on — land, buildings, equipment, family labour, local knowledge, recipes, tradition. Most small operators underestimate what they already own.

Example: “My grandmother’s recipe for homemade wine and the 80-year-old cellar” — that is a key resource. You cannot buy it. Your competitors do not have it.

What are key activities?

The things you actually do to make the business work — growing, producing, hosting, cooking, guiding tours, maintaining the property, posting on social media.

Example: For a small agriturismo in Umbria, key activities are: olive cultivation, oil production, cooking classes, guest reception, and Instagram posting. Five activities — everything else is secondary.

What are key partnerships?

Other people and organisations you work with — suppliers, neighbouring farms, restaurants that buy your products, local guides, the tourism office, your LAG office.

Example: Two neighbouring farms share a delivery van and a Facebook page. Neither could afford these alone. Together, they reach twice the market at half the cost.

What is a cost structure?

All the money that goes out of your business — fixed costs (rent, insurance, loans), variable costs (food, materials, seasonal labour), and hidden costs (your own time, maintenance, small repairs). This will be covered in depth in Unit 2.

Example: A small guesthouse operator in the Rhodope mountains calculated her costs and discovered that cleaning supplies and laundry alone cost €120/month — something she had never tracked.

What are revenue streams?

All the ways money comes into your business. Most agritourism operators have one or two. The most resilient have three to five.

Example: An Italian agriturismo earns from rooms, cooking classes, oil tastings, direct product sales, and one harvest event per year. Five streams — no single bad month can break the business.

The Agritourism Business Canvas — 9 Fields

Field	Question It Answers
1. Value Proposition	What makes your place worth visiting? What is special?
2. Customer Segments	Who comes? Who do you want to attract?
3. Channels	How do people find you and book?
4. Customer Relationships	How do you keep guests coming back?
5. Key Resources	What do you already have — land, buildings, skills, tradition?
6. Key Activities	What do you actually do — grow, host, cook, guide, sell?
7. Key Partnerships	Who do you work with — neighbours, suppliers, local networks?
8. Cost Structure	What does it cost to run this? (overview — detailed in Unit 2)
9. Revenue Streams	How does money come in? How many ways?

Practical Exercise — Build Your Agritourism Business Canvas

Objective	Map your business idea (or existing business) on one page
What learners do	Fill in all 9 fields of the printed canvas template. Write short, concrete answers — not essays. Each field: 2–5 bullet points maximum.
For experienced operators	Map your existing business as it is now. Be honest — if a field is weak or empty, that is useful information.
For students / aspiring operators	Map a business idea. It can be real or based on the scenario provided by the trainer.
Time	25 minutes (20 work + 5 sharing)
Debrief	Each learner names: their strongest field (what they have) and their weakest field (what they need to work on)

Do's and Don'ts

Do	Don't
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Start with what you already have — land, skills, tradition, family knowledge	Do not try to offer everything to everyone from day one
Be specific about who your visitors are — age, origin, what they want	Do not write “everyone” as your customer segment
Think about what makes you different from the guesthouse down the road	Do not copy your neighbour’s model without understanding why it works for them
Include your own time and labour as a real cost from the start	Do not assume family labour is “free” — it has a value
Test your idea small before investing — one weekend event, one tasting, one small group	Do not wait until everything is “perfect” before starting

Optional Exercise — The 3-Sentence Business Pitch

Use this exercise when time allows (15 minutes) or as an energiser after the main canvas exercise. It works well with mixed groups and produces immediate, visible results.

Objective

Each participant describes their agritourism business (real or planned) in exactly 3 sentences: (1) What I offer, (2) Who comes and why, (3) How they find me. If a participant cannot complete all three, the gaps show exactly which canvas fields need more work.

Time

15 minutes (5 minutes writing + 10 minutes presentations and feedback)

How it works

- Each person writes 3 sentences on a card or piece of paper — no more, no less
- Read them aloud to the table (30 seconds per person)
- The table gives feedback: “The sentence I liked most was...” and “The sentence I would improve is...”
- If someone cannot write sentence 3 (how they find me), that links directly to Module 2 — digital tools

Why this works

It forces clarity. If you cannot say it in 3 sentences, you do not have a clear business model yet. The feedback from the table is more valuable than any textbook — real people telling you what they understood and what they did not.

Trainer facilitation tips

- Strictly enforce 3 sentences — not 5, not a paragraph. The constraint is the point.
- If someone reads a vague sentence (“we offer quality products”), ask the table: “Would you book this?” — the answer is always no.
- Pair operators with students — students ask the questions a visitor would ask.
- If the group is large, do this at tables (4-5 people) rather than with the whole room.

Adaptation note

This exercise works in any setting and any language. The 3-sentence structure is universal. Only the examples and products are local.

Examples to Use

- **A saffron farm that built a business model around a single unusual crop: cultivation + cosmetics production + educational visits. A clear value proposition that nobody nearby can copy.**
- **Italy:** A third-generation olive farm in Umbria — 9 fields filled naturally over three generations, but they only wrote them down recently and discovered their weakest field was “channels” (too dependent on one platform).
- **A cooperative of four small producers in a rural area — each has a weak canvas individually, but together they fill each other’s gaps (one has rooms, one has products, one has a van, one speaks English).**

Adaptation Guidance

The 9-field canvas works for any agritourism context. Trainers should prepare 1–2 local examples showing a filled-in canvas so learners can see what a completed one looks like before they start their own.

Facilitation Guidelines — Unit 1

Before the session

- Print one Agritourism Business Canvas template per participant (A3 format if possible — gives more writing space)
- Print 2–3 pre-filled scenario sheets for learners without an existing business
- Prepare one completed canvas as a visual example (flipchart or projected) — use a fictional but realistic farm
- Have flipchart paper and markers available for the debrief

How to start the unit

Open with a question, not a lecture. Ask the room: “Can anyone describe their business in three sentences — what you offer, who comes, and how they find you?” Let 2–3 people try. Most will struggle to be concise. That is the point — this is why we need a canvas. Say: “If you cannot describe your business in three sentences, you do not have a clear model yet. That is what we fix now.”

Room setup

Tables of 4–5 people. Mix experienced operators with students where possible. Each table should ideally have participants from at least two countries (if applicable).

During the exercise

- Walk around the room. The fields people struggle with most are usually “Value Proposition” and “Customer Segments.” Push gently: “What do visitors say they liked most? That is probably your value proposition.”
- Students may feel they have nothing to write. Remind them the scenario sheet is their starting point — and that imagining a business is exactly how real businesses begin.
- If someone finishes early, ask: “Which field has only one item? That is your risk area.”

How to close the unit

Quick round — each person names their strongest field and their weakest. Write the “weakest” answers on a flipchart. You will likely see patterns (channels, partnerships, and revenue streams are almost always weak). Say: “These weak spots are exactly what the rest of this module helps you fill.”

Materials checklist

- Printed Business Canvas templates (1 per person)
- Pre-filled scenario sheets (3–5 copies)
- One completed example canvas (flipchart or projected)
- Pens and markers
- Flipchart for debrief notes

Unit 1 — AI Research Support for Trainers

What to research

Business model canvas examples from agritourism operations in your region. Local value propositions that work. Common mistakes operators make when describing their business. Real examples of agritourism diversification.

Why this matters for delivery

The canvas exercise works best when the trainer can point to local examples. A vineyard in your region is more convincing than a generic European case.

AI prompt for the trainer

Copy into ChatGPT, Gemini, or similar:

"I am training small agritourism operators in [country/region] on business model thinking. Give me: (1) 3 examples of clear value propositions from agritourism operations in [country/region], (2) the 3 most common mistakes small operators make when describing their business, (3) 2 examples of successful agritourism diversification in [country] — what they added and why it worked. Keep the language simple and practical."

Trainer check before use

- Check that examples are realistic for a small operator, not a large estate
- Verify that any named businesses or programmes actually exist



- Simplify the language — rewrite marketing terms in plain words
- Make sure diversification examples match what is legally possible in your country

Unit 2 — Know Your Numbers

Slides: 8–12 (see Annex 1 — Presentation Plan)

Skill gap	No systematic cost tracking. Personal and business money mixed. Hidden costs — own labour, off-season bills, maintenance, small repairs — are not counted. Most operators cannot say whether they made a profit or a loss last year. Young learners have no real-world cost awareness.
Practical solution	The Monthly Financial Plan — a one-page template that captures costs (fixed, variable, hidden), income by source, profit or loss, a season note, and compliance costs for each month of the year.
Tangible output	A completed Monthly Financial Plan template.

Key Concepts Explained

What are fixed costs?

Costs that stay the same whether you have 5 guests or 50 guests in a month. They do not change with activity — you pay them regardless.

Example: Rent or mortgage on your property, annual insurance, licence fees, loan repayments, internet subscription. A small guesthouse pays €150/month insurance whether anyone stays or not.

What are variable costs?

Costs that go up or down depending on how many guests you have or how much you produce. More activity = higher variable costs.

Example: Food for guest meals, cleaning supplies, laundry, fuel for transport, seasonal staff wages. If you host 20 people for a tasting instead of 10, you need more wine, more cheese, more napkins.

What are hidden costs?

Costs that are real but that most small operators never write down. They are “below the waterline” of the iceberg.

Example: Your own working hours (if you worked the same hours for someone else, they would pay you). Small repairs you do yourself. Wear and tear on equipment. The electricity to heat water for guests. One operator calculated that laundry and cleaning products alone cost €120/month — she had never tracked it.

What is seasonality?

The pattern of when your business earns money and when it does not. In most European rural areas, agritourism income is concentrated in 4–6 months. But costs — especially fixed costs — run all 12 months.

Example: In most of Southern and Southeast Europe, the active season is roughly April to October, but varies by region. Mountain areas may have a shorter summer season. Coastal areas often extend into late autumn with a shoulder around olive harvest.

What is a profit/loss calculation?

Income minus all costs (fixed + variable + hidden) equals your profit or your loss. If the number is negative for one month, that can be normal (winter). If it is negative for the full year, the problem is structural — you are running a hobby, not a business.

Example: A small farm with €450 income in June, €300 fixed costs, and €150 variable costs has exactly zero profit that month. They need either more income or lower costs just to break even.

What are compliance costs?

Money you spend to meet legal requirements — licences, inspections, hygiene certificates, categorisation fees, food safety documentation. Easy to forget when planning, but real and often annual.

Example: In Bulgaria, the accommodation categorisation process has a fee and requires specific conditions. In Italy, agriturismo registration involves regional rules that vary. In Greece, tax and licensing for food service add to the baseline cost.

Content Focus

The “Iceberg” of Costs

What you see above the waterline: seeds, food, raw materials. What sits below: tax, insurance, marketing, cleaning, maintenance, depreciation, compliance, and your own working hours. “Your time has a price, even if nobody pays you for it.”

Income Sources

Most operators depend on one source. Businesses that survive have at least three — accommodation, food/tastings, activities, direct product sales. Not large streams — just different ones.

The 12-Month Reality

Trainers should anchor this to local seasonality. Use a visual 12-month timeline colour-coded: green (earning), yellow (some activity), red (costs only). Most learners have never seen their year mapped this way.

The Profit Formula

Income – Fixed costs – Variable costs – Hidden costs = Profit or Loss. Simple — but most people have never written it down for a full year.

Practical Exercise — The Monthly Financial Plan

Objective	Build a 12-month cost-income overview
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What learners do	Fill in a one-page template: monthly costs (fixed, variable, hidden), income by source, profit/loss, a season note, compliance cost line. Circle the months in the red.
For experienced operators	Use real numbers. Estimates marked with “?” are fine.
For students / aspiring operators	Use a pre-filled scenario provided by the trainer.
Time	20 minutes (15 work + 5 sharing)
Debrief	Each learner names one hidden cost they had not counted and one risk month.

Do's and Don'ts

Do	Don't
Write down every cost, even the small ones — they add up faster than you think	Do not mix personal money and business money — even if it is all “the same pocket”
Count your own working hours and give them a price (at least minimum wage)	Do not treat your own time as free — this is the most common mistake in small agritourism
Plan your budget for 12 months, not just for the season	Do not spend summer income as if winter does not exist
Track compliance costs separately — they are easy to forget and hard to avoid	Do not ignore licence fees, inspections, and insurance renewals — they come every year
Check your numbers every month, even if roughly — a 5-minute review prevents a year-end surprise	Do not wait until December to discover you lost money in March

Examples to Use

- **A vineyard with accommodation, tastings, and a museum. How spreading income across 4 sources changes the monthly picture. Thermal/mineral water nearby as a “winter weapon” still unused.**
- **Italy:** An agriturismo where five income streams mean no single bad month is fatal — but the owner still tracks costs monthly because “even five streams can leak.”
- **A cooperative where shared costs (equipment, marketing, a van) change each member's monthly snapshot dramatically compared to working alone.**

Adaptation Guidance

Trainers should replace or supplement examples with local equivalents. The key message — separate your costs, map your income, look at the full year — applies in every European rural context.

Facilitation Guidelines — Unit 2

Before the session

- Print one Monthly Financial Plan template per participant
- Print 2–3 pre-filled scenario sheets (same business as Unit 1 scenario, now with cost and income figures)
- Prepare a simple “iceberg” visual — drawn on flipchart or projected
- Have calculators available (or confirm participants can use phones)
- If possible, prepare a completed 12-month snapshot example to show what the finished template looks like

How to start the unit

Draw or show the iceberg image. Ask: “What does it cost to run your farm or guesthouse? Give me examples.” Write answers on the flipchart — above the line if obvious, below if hidden. Most answers will be above. Then say: “Now let me add a few you probably forgot...” and add: your own working hours, maintenance, cleaning products, small repairs, compliance fees, bank charges. Count the items below the line. There are always more.

During the exercise

- The biggest blocker is “I do not know the exact number.” Repeat: “Write your best guess and mark it with a question mark. A guess is better than a blank cell.”
- Help with variable cost estimation: “How much do you spend when one guest comes? Think about food, cleaning, extra water and electricity.”
- Some participants will discover they are losing money. Do not dramatise. Say: “Now you know. That is the first step to changing it.”

How to close the unit

Each person shares one hidden cost they had not counted and one risk month. If time allows, ask: “Who has more than 3 months in the red?” This bridges to Unit 3 (pricing) and Unit 4 (funding).

Materials checklist

- Printed Monthly Financial Plan templates (1 per person)
- Pre-filled scenario sheets (3–5 copies)
- Iceberg visual (flipchart or projected)
- One completed example snapshot (optional but helpful)
- Calculators or phones
- Pens

Unit 2 — AI Research Support for Trainers

What to research

Typical cost structures for small agritourism operations in your country. Hidden costs operators commonly forget. Seasonal income patterns for your region. Compliance costs specific to your national regulations.

Why this matters for delivery

Cost levels, insurance rates, and seasonal patterns vary across Europe. A trainer with localised numbers — even approximate ranges — makes the financial plan exercise much more credible.

AI prompt for the trainer

Copy into ChatGPT, Gemini, or similar:

"I am training small agritourism operators in [country/region] on cost tracking and financial planning. Give me: (1) a realistic monthly cost breakdown for a small agritourism farm with 3-5 rooms in [country], (2) the typical seasonal pattern — which months have income, which have costs only, (3) the main compliance costs an operator faces in [country] (licences, inspections, categorisation, insurance). Use approximate ranges in EUR. Keep it practical."

Trainer check before use

- Verify cost ranges against your own knowledge of local prices
- Check compliance requirements against current national legislation
- Make sure the seasonal pattern matches your specific region
- Remove items that do not apply to very small operators (under 10 beds)

Unit 3 — Set the Right Price

Slides: 13–16 (see Annex 1 — Presentation Plan)

Skill gap	Prices set by instinct, by copying the cheapest neighbour, or by fear of “charging too much.” Own labour and experience value not included. No difference between weekday and peak pricing. No understanding of how processing and experience add value beyond the raw product.
Practical solution	The Price Card method — calculate a floor price (cost-based minimum), add a value premium (story, packaging, experience), identify 2 add-ons, and set a peak/weekday split.
Tangible output	A completed Price Card.

Key Concepts Explained

What is a floor price?

The lowest price you can charge without losing money. It is based on your real costs — everything it takes to produce or deliver the product or experience, including your own time. Below this number, every sale is a loss.

Example: A jar of homemade jam costs €1.80 in ingredients, €0.50 in packaging, €0.30 in energy, and €1.00 in your labour (30 minutes at minimum wage). Floor price: €3.60. If you sell it for €3.00 “because that is what the neighbour charges,” you lose €0.60 on every jar.

What is a value premium?

The extra amount you can charge above the floor price because of what your product or experience means to the buyer — the story behind it, the setting, the way it is presented, the feeling it creates.

Example: The same honey — sold in a plastic bag at the roadside for €5/kg, or sold in a labelled glass jar with a card about the bees and the valley at a farm visit for €10. Same honey. Double the price. The difference is packaging, story, and setting.

What are add-ons?

Small extras that increase the total price without increasing costs significantly. They work because the guest is already there, already engaged, already in a buying mood.

Example: A wine tasting costs €12/person. Add-on 1: a take-home bottle at a “tasting discount” (€7 instead of €9). Add-on 2: a printed recipe card for the local cheese (€0.20 to print). The €12 visit becomes €19+ without changing the experience much.

What is peak/off-peak pricing?

Charging more when demand is higher (weekends, holidays, festivals, harvest season) and less when demand is lower. This is standard practice across European tourism and helps smooth income.

Example: A farm visit costs €10/person on a Thursday and €14/person on a Saturday. Nobody finds this unfair — hotels, airlines, and restaurants do it everywhere.

What is the value chain?

The idea that each step of processing and presentation adds value — and therefore allows a higher price. Raw material < processed product < experience built around the product.

Example: Raw grapes (€1/kg) → Bottled wine (€7/bottle) → Wine tasting at the vineyard with a view and a story (€25/person). The grapes are the same. The value multiplied 25 times.

Content Focus

Why Pricing by Instinct Does Not Work

Common mistakes: pricing below your own cost without knowing it. Copying the cheapest competitor. Charging the same in August and in February. Not including your time. “Low prices do not attract better guests. They attract guests who complain more.”

Floor Price — Step by Step

Worked example: a farm breakfast or a tasting session. List every cost. Add margin. That is the minimum. If the market will not pay it, the product costs too much to make — it is not “too expensive.”

The Value Chain in Action

Raw product → processed product → experience. This is the single most important concept in agritourism pricing. Show it with local examples.

Add-ons and Peak Pricing

Two small extras that raise the ticket. Weekday vs weekend pricing. Both are normal, both are fair, both improve income without increasing effort proportionally.

Practical Exercise — Build Your Price Card

Objective	Create a structured price for one product or experience
What learners do	Pick one item. Calculate floor price. Add value premium with justification. Identify 2 add-ons. Set weekday and peak price.
For experienced operators	Use a real product or experience from their own business.
For students / aspiring operators	Price a scenario product (e.g., a 90-minute wine tasting for 8 people with a take-home bottle).
Time	15 minutes (10 work + 5 comparison at the table)
Debrief	Who priced highest? Who priced lowest? Why?

Do's and Don'ts

Do	Don't
Always calculate your floor price before deciding what to charge — know your minimum	Do not set a price by looking at what the cheapest competitor charges
Include your own labour in the cost calculation — your time is worth at least minimum wage	Do not forget to count your own hours — “I did it myself” is not the same as “it was free”
Charge more for experiences than for raw products — the story and setting have real value	Do not feel guilty about adding a value premium — guests pay for the experience, not just the product
Set different prices for weekdays and weekends/holidays — demand is different, prices should be too	Do not charge the same price year-round — August and February are not the same market
Offer add-ons that cost you little but add perceived value (recipe cards, samples, photo spots)	Do not overcomplicate add-ons — keep them simple and easy to deliver

Examples to Use

- **An almond farm — raw almonds → tahini → educational visit. Three price points from one crop. Also: comparing local honey prices with a well-known tourism region — same quality, different price, different packaging.**

- **Italy:** An agriturismo breakfast — including own products in the room price turns a meal into a daily product showcase and sales channel. Cooking class at €45/person — ingredient cost is €3, the rest is experience.
- **Greece:** A small olive oil producer who started selling at €4/litre at the roadside and now sells at €12/litre in branded bottles at food festivals. Same oil, different presentation.

Adaptation Guidance

The pricing method is universal. Trainers should use local products and local price levels in the worked examples. The value chain concept works with any agricultural product — olives, lavender, cheese, saffron, honey, wine, herbs.

Facilitation Guidelines — Unit 3

Before the session

- Print one Price Card template per participant
- Prepare the value chain visual: raw product → processed product → experience (with price at each step)
- If possible, bring real products for comparison (e.g., honey in a plastic bag vs branded jar)
- Prepare a completed Price Card example to show before the exercise

How to start the unit

Hold up two products (or show photos): the same honey in a plastic bag and in a branded jar. Ask: “How much would you pay for this one? And this one?” The answers will be different. Then say: “The honey is the same. The bees are the same. So what are you actually paying for?” Let them answer — packaging, story, presentation, trust. Say: “That is what we call a value premium. And most of you are not charging for it.”

During the exercise

- The most common problem is that participants price too low. Ask: “Did you include your time? How many hours does this take?” Recalculate with them.
- If the group is international, ask one Italian or Greek operator to share their price for a comparable product. Let the comparison speak.
- For add-ons, give concrete examples: recipe card (€0.20), small sample, photo opportunity, “certificate of participation.”

How to close the unit

Ask: “How many of you set a higher price than what you currently charge?” Most hands will go up. Say: “That gap between your current price and the price you just calculated — that is the money you are leaving on the table every day.”

Materials checklist

- Printed Price Card templates (1 per person)
- Value chain visual (flipchart or projected)
- Real products for comparison (if available) or photos
- One completed example Price Card
- Completed Monthly Financial Plans from Unit 2 (participants’ own)
- Pens, calculators/phones

Unit 3 — AI Research Support for Trainers

What to research

Typical pricing for agritourism experiences in your region. Value chain examples using local products. Price comparison between your country and neighbouring countries. Add-on ideas that work locally.

Why this matters for delivery

Pricing is the most sensitive topic. Operators undercharge and resist raising prices. Local price comparisons — especially cross-border ones — are the most powerful tool to show the gap.

AI prompt for the trainer

Copy into ChatGPT, Gemini, or similar:

"I am training small agritourism operators in [country/region] on pricing. Give me: (1) typical price ranges for common agritourism experiences in [country] — room per night, wine tasting, cooking class, farm tour, (2) the same prices in [neighbouring country] for comparison, (3) 3 value chain examples using a local product from [region] — raw → processed → experience price, (4) 5 simple add-on ideas for small farms. Keep it practical with EUR prices."

Trainer check before use

- Verify price ranges by checking actual listings on Booking.com for your area
- Make sure cross-country comparison is fair — similar quality and setting
- Check that value chain examples use products that actually grow in your region
- Test the add-on ideas — would they work on a real local farm?

Unit 4 — Find the Money, Start Small

Slides: 17–20 (see Annex 1 — Presentation Plan)

Skill gap	Operators have heard of EU funding but believe it is “for big companies” or “impossible paperwork.” Many wait for a large grant and do nothing in the meantime. Young learners have no awareness of funding systems. Low knowledge of diversification options that need little or no investment.
Practical solution	The 2-Track Plan — Track A: identify one realistic funding route and prepare the basics. Track B: pick one low-cost action you can start in the next 60 days without any funding.
Tangible output	A completed Funding & Next 60 Days Plan.

Key Concepts Explained

What is the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP)?

The EU’s main framework for supporting agriculture and rural areas. It provides funding for farmers, food producers, and rural communities across all EU member states. It is not one programme — it is a large system with many sub-programmes.

Example: Under the CAP, a small farm can receive support through the CAP for diversifying into tourism, improving energy efficiency, or marketing local products — if they know where to apply and meet the basic conditions.

What is LEADER / CLLD?

A bottom-up approach to rural development funded through the CAP. LEADER works through Local Action Groups (LAGs) — local organisations that decide which small projects get funded in their area. It is specifically designed for small-scale, community-level projects.

Example: A local LAG funded a small signposting project for local farms open to visitors. The application was short, the budget was small, and the decision was made locally — not in the capital or in Brussels.

What is a LAG (Local Action Group)?

A partnership of local public and private organisations that manages LEADER funding in a specific area. Your LAG is your first point of contact for rural development funding.

Example: “Go to your LAG office. Introduce yourself. Ask: what calls are open right now? They are there to help — that is their job.”

What is the RDP (Rural Development Programme)?

The national programme through which each EU country distributes its share of CAP rural development funds. Each country has its own RDP with its own priorities and application rules.

Example: Bulgaria has the National Rural Development Programme (NRDP). Italy has regional PSR programmes. Greece operates through its national CAP strategic plan.

What is income diversification?

Adding new ways to earn money without abandoning your core agricultural activity. The goal is to reduce dependence on a single income source.

Example: A vineyard that only sold wine at the market now also offers weekend tastings, sells directly from the farm, and hosts one grape-picking event per autumn. Three new income streams, no major investment.

What is a cooperative or shared-cost model?

Two or more operators sharing costs — equipment, marketing, transport, or staff — to reduce individual expenses.

Example: “In parts of Italy, farmers share a delivery van, a social media manager, and a joint stand at food festivals. Their fixed costs are half of what they would pay alone.”

Content Focus

CAP / LEADER / RDP in Plain Language

What they fund, who can apply, what the process looks like. No jargon. “LEADER is for exactly the kind of small project you are thinking of.”

Where to Look — By Country

Presented as a reference card. Each country has its own rural development programme, LEADER/CLLD structure, and cross-border cooperation options. Trainers should research the specific programmes available in their region measures. Trainers in other countries prepare a local equivalent.

Low-Cost Ideas That Do Not Need a Grant

Seasonal tastings, small workshops, a farm shop corner, harvest-day events, a packaged “visit + taste + buy” offer, shared marketing with a neighbour.

Light Touch on Certifications

PDO, PGI, eco-labels — learners do not need them to start, but knowing they exist helps when planning ahead. Detailed coverage in Module 3.

EU Angle (Practical, Not Theoretical)

Funding favours projects showing environmental responsibility, local supply chains, and community benefit. “If you use local products, reduce waste, and employ local people, you already have half the language a funding application needs.”

Practical Exercise — My Funding & Next 60 Days Plan

Objective

Identify one funding route and one immediate low-cost action

What learners do	Two tracks on one template. Track A: one funding programme, documents likely needed, who to contact, target date. Track B: one action in the next 60 days without funding — what, first step, start date.
For experienced operators	Both tracks based on their real situation.
For students / aspiring operators	Track A: same. Track B: reframed as “first step to test my idea” (organise a small event, visit an agritourism business, create a social media page for a concept).
Time	15 minutes (10 work + 5 sharing — each person states their 60-day action in one sentence)
Debrief	Public commitment: each person says their 60-day action aloud.

Do’s and Don’ts

Do	Don’t
Visit your local LAG office — it is free, it is their job, and they know what is open	Do not assume EU funding is only for large companies or people with connections
Start with a small, realistic project for your first application — learn the process on something manageable	Do not wait for the “perfect” big grant — you will wait forever and do nothing
Have your basic documents ready in advance (registration, tax ID, property documents, a 1-page concept)	Do not start an application the week before the deadline — you will miss something
Do one low-cost action in the next 60 days — test an idea before investing in it	Do not confuse “I have no funding” with “I cannot start” — many good first steps cost nothing
Talk to other operators who have received funding — their experience is more useful than any manual	Do not try to navigate the funding system alone — ask for help from your LAG, municipality, or a project like this one

Examples to Use

- **Bulgaria:** A LEADER-funded project — signposting, marketing materials, or a small renovation.
- **A cross-border project connecting farms in neighbouring regions through a shared food or wine route.**
- **Italy:** A GAL-supported farm diversification — how the local action group helped a small operator add a cooking class and market it.

Adaptation Guidance

Funding landscapes differ across countries. Trainers must prepare a local funding reference card before delivery. The 2-track method works universally.

Facilitation Guidelines — Unit 4

Before the session

- Print one Funding & Next 60 Days Plan template per participant
- Prepare a country-specific funding reference card — one page per country showing 3–4 relevant programmes
- If possible, invite a local LAG representative or someone who has received LEADER funding
- Prepare 3–4 low-cost diversification examples on a flipchart

How to start the unit

Ask: “Who here has ever applied for EU funding or any public grant?” Count hands. Usually very few. Then ask: “Who thinks the process is too complicated for them?” More hands. Say: “LEADER was designed for people exactly like you. Small projects, local decisions, manageable paperwork. The problem is not that it is too hard. The problem is that nobody told you where the door is. Today I show you the door.”

Then ask: “Who is waiting until they have funding before starting anything new?” Say: “That is the trap. Waiting for money is the most expensive thing you can do — it costs you time. So today we work on two tracks.”

During the exercise

- Track A: Many will not know which programme to choose. Point to the reference card and help narrow down.
- Track B: Push for specifics. “What exactly? By when? What is the first thing you do tomorrow morning?”
- For students, Track B is key. Help reframe as a test, not a commitment.
- If a LAG representative is present, give them 5–10 minutes.

How to close the unit

Each person states their 60-day action in one sentence. Write them on a flipchart. This creates public commitment. Close with: “You now have four documents: a canvas, a snapshot, a price card, and a plan. That is more business planning than most agritourism operators ever do. Use them.”

Materials checklist

- Printed Funding & Next 60 Days Plan templates (1 per person)
- Country-specific funding reference cards
- Low-cost diversification ideas list (flipchart or projected)
- Guest speaker from LAG or experienced applicant (optional but recommended)
- Participants’ completed Canvas, Snapshot, and Price Card from earlier units

- Pens, flipchart for 60-day actions

Unit 4 — AI Research Support for Trainers

What to research

Current LEADER/CLLD calls open in your region. LAG contact details for your area. National rural development programme priorities. Low-cost diversification examples that worked for small farms.

Why this matters for delivery

Funding information goes stale quickly. A trainer who arrives with the name of the local LAG, current open calls, and one real funded project transforms this unit from theory into action.

AI prompt for the trainer

Copy into ChatGPT, Gemini, or similar:

"I am training small agritourism operators in [country/region] about EU funding and starting small. Give me: (1) the LAG covering [region/municipality] with contact details, (2) 2-3 current or recent LEADER/CLLD calls relevant to agritourism in [country], (3) 3 low-cost diversification actions a small farm can start in 60 days without any grant, (4) the key documents needed for a LEADER application in [country]. Keep it actionable."

Trainer check before use

- Verify LAG names and contacts via the EU CAP Network LAG Directory
- Confirm any funding calls are actually current — AI may cite expired calls
- Check document requirements match your country's actual application process
- Make sure "60-day action" ideas are genuinely feasible with zero budget

Case Studies

Each module includes exactly two case studies. Each follows the same structure for easy comparison and cross-country transfer.

Case Study 1 — Bulgaria: The Day-Trip Farmstop

A wine-growing region in Southern Europe

Context	A small family vineyard in a warm, dry region. Wine production, 3 guest rooms, basic kitchen. Relies mainly on summer accommodation and selling wine at the local market. Minimal marketing — word of mouth and a Facebook page.
Offer	A “Farmstop” day-trip package — structured 2-hour visit including vineyard walk, tasting of 3 local wines with cheese, option to buy bottles directly. Accommodation offered separately for weekend visitors.
Target guests	Weekend visitors from the nearest city (2–3h drive), day-trippers from a neighbouring region (1–1.5h), small organised groups.
Channels	Facebook page, Booking.com (rooms only), WhatsApp for direct group bookings, local tourism office, word of mouth.
Pricing logic	Farmstop package: €12/person (floor price approximately €7 — margin from experience value). Room: €25–30/night. Wine at farm: 20% above local market price.
Seasonality	Active May to October. No winter offer. Thermal water resources 15 minutes away, not integrated into the business.

3 Lessons Learned

1. The day-trip package earns more per hour of work than room nights.
2. Booking.com takes 15% and shares no guest contact data. Direct bookings through WhatsApp keep the full amount and build a guest list.
3. Four to five months of zero income with ongoing fixed costs is the single biggest financial risk — and the easiest to start addressing with even one off-season event.

What to Copy Tomorrow

Package a structured short visit with a clear duration and price. Set up WhatsApp Business. Test one winter weekend concept.

Discussion Prompt

“If you were starting this from zero, which part would you build first — and why?”

Case Study 2 — Italy: The Agriturismo Rhythm

Umbria / Southern Italy

Context	A family olive farm, 5 rooms, third generation. Fixed weekly schedule — cooking class Wednesdays, tasting Fridays. The agricultural calendar drives the tourism, not the other way around.
Offer	Rooms with breakfast (featuring own products), cooking class, olive oil tasting, direct product sales (oil, preserves, honey), seasonal harvest event in November.
Target guests	Northern European tourists (DE, UK, NL), domestic visitors from Rome/Milan, food tourism groups, occasional winter corporate retreats.
Channels	Own website, Airbnb, Agriturismo.it, Instagram, local food festivals, 2 tour operator partnerships.
Pricing logic	Room: €70–90/night including breakfast with own products (breakfast = product showcase). Cooking class: €45/person. Oil at farm: 2x supermarket price with story and packaging.
Seasonality	Peak: April–October. Shoulder: olive harvest events (November). Winter: small-group cooking classes, corporate retreats, online product sales.

3 Lessons Learned

1. Fixed experience days simplify operations and create predictability. Guests book around the farm’s schedule.
2. Five income sources mean no single bad month is fatal.
3. Story and packaging doubled the price of the same olive oil.

What to Copy Tomorrow

The fixed-day rhythm — pick 2 days per week for activities. The experience markup logic. Harvest as a bookable event, not just work.

Discussion Prompt

“Which of these five income sources would you try first with limited money but good land and good products?”

Practical Exercises — Summary

#	Title	Linked to	Time	Output
1	Build Your Agritourism Business Canvas	Unit 1	25 min	Completed Business Canvas (9 fields)
2	The Monthly Financial Plan	Unit 2	20 min	12-month cost-income overview
3	Build Your Price Card	Unit 3	15 min	Price Card with floor price, value premium, add-ons, peak/weekday split
4	My Funding & Next 60 Days Plan	Unit 4	15 min	Funding route + one immediate low-cost action with date

All exercises include a variant for learners without an existing business.

4 Take-Home Templates

#	Template	What It Captures
1	Agritourism Business Canvas	9 fields: value proposition, customers, channels, relationships, resources, activities, partnerships, costs, revenue
2	Monthly Financial Plan	Costs (fixed, variable, hidden), income by source, profit/loss per month, season note, compliance cost line
3	Price Card	Floor price, value premium, final price, peak/weekday split, 2 add-ons, short justification
4	Funding & Next 60 Days Plan	Track A: funding programme, documents, contact, date. Track B: low-cost action, first step, start date

The Business Canvas — A Living Document

The Agritourism Business Canvas created in Unit 1 is not a one-time exercise. It is a living document that grows with each module of the programme.

After each of the six modules, learners should take out their canvas and update it with what they have just learned. New knowledge about digital tools, product value, sustainable practices, visitor experiences, or future trends — all of it feeds back into the canvas. Fields that were weak or empty in the first draft gradually fill in. By the end of the programme, the canvas is no longer a draft — it is a tested, complete business concept on one page.

Instructions for trainers delivering any module:

At the end of each module, ask learners to take out their Business Canvas from Module 1 (5 minutes). Ask them: “What did you learn today that changes something on your canvas? Update it now.” This takes very little time but keeps the connection between modules visible and practical.

Tip: ask learners to use a different colour pen each time they update the canvas. This makes the evolution visible — they can see how their business idea grew across the programme.

A one-page Canvas Journey handout is provided for learners (see Annex 3). Distribute it at the end of Module 1 so they know what is coming and why the canvas matters beyond today.

Self-Assessment

Five reflection questions. Personal and practical, not scored.

1. Looking at your Business Canvas — which field is your strongest and which needs the most work?
2. How many of your costs were “below the waterline” — things you had not counted before today?
3. Looking at your Monthly Financial Plan, which months are your weakest? What could you do about them?
4. Is your price based on calculation or on feeling? What would you change on your Price Card?
5. What is your 60-day action — and when exactly will you start?

Trainer Notes

On the mixed audience

If the group includes both experienced operators and students, seat them together. Operators bring reality and practical knowledge. Younger learners bring questions, digital skills, and fresh perspective. Both learn from the exchange.

On resistance to numbers

Some learners will say “I do not know my costs.” Tell them: a guess with a question mark is better than a blank cell. The point is awareness, not accounting precision.

On the Business Canvas

Some experienced operators will resist — “I know my business, I do not need to write it down.” Ask them to try it anyway. Most discover at least one weak field. For students, the canvas is essential — it turns a vague idea into something concrete.

On cross-country dynamics

When operators from different countries compare prices, the differences are often striking. Do not rush past these moments — they are some of the most valuable learning in the module.

On timing

The Business Canvas exercise (25 min) is the longest and tends to generate discussion. Keep the debrief focused — one strength, one weakness per person. If behind schedule, shorten the comparison discussion in Unit 3.

On templates as deliverables

The four templates are the real output of this module. If a learner leaves with all four filled in, the module worked — regardless of how much theory they absorbed.

On adaptation

The examples are anchored in Bulgaria, Greece, and Italy (the project partner countries). Trainers in other contexts should replace examples with local equivalents. The methods, templates, and exercises transfer to any European rural agritourism setting.

On homework

The homework section is provided separately (see next section). Encourage learners to complete at least one task before the next session. If you are delivering this module as a standalone event with no follow-up, ask learners to set a personal deadline and share it with someone from their table — peer accountability works.

Homework for Attendees

These tasks are designed to be completed after the training session. They help learners apply what they have learned to their own real situation. Trainers should present these at the end of the module and encourage learners to complete at least one before the next session or within 2 weeks.

Task 1 — The Real Cost Check (linked to Unit 2)

Choose your most popular product or service (a jar of jam, a guest night, a tasting session — whatever you sell most). Calculate its exact cost, step by step:

- List every ingredient or material that goes into it
- Add energy costs (electricity, gas, fuel) — even if estimated
- Add packaging, labels, or any presentation costs
- Add your own working time — how many minutes or hours does it take you? Value your time at the local minimum wage.
- Add a share of your fixed costs (insurance, rent, equipment wear) — divide your monthly fixed costs by the number of products or services you deliver in a month

Write down the total. Compare it with what you currently charge. If the cost is higher than your price, you are losing money on every sale.

Bring the result to the next session. If there is no follow-up session, share it with someone from your training group within one week.

Task 2 — The Competitor Walk (linked to Units 1 and 3)

Visit one agritourism business near you — as a guest, not as a competitor. It can be a farm, a guesthouse, a wine cellar, a farm shop. While you are there, observe:

- What do they offer? How is it packaged?
- What do they charge? Is the price visible?
- What is the experience like — from the moment you arrive to the moment you leave?
- What would you do differently?
- What could you learn from them?

Write a half-page note with your observations. If possible, take a few photos (with permission). This is not about copying — it is about seeing your own business through fresh eyes.

Task 3 — The 60-Day Check-In (linked to Unit 4)

You wrote a 60-day action on your Funding & Next 60 Days Plan during the session. This task is simple:

- Put the start date in your calendar or phone — today, not “someday”
- Tell one person about it (a family member, a colleague from the training, a friend) — public commitment makes it harder to postpone
- After 60 days, check: did you do it? If yes — what happened? If no — what stopped you?

If your training programme has a follow-up session, bring this update. If not, send a short message to your trainer or to a fellow participant.

Task 4 — Complete Your Business Canvas at Home (linked to Unit 1)

During the session, you filled in your Business Canvas quickly. Now take it home and revisit it with more time:

- Are any fields still empty? Try to fill them — or write down what you need to find out
- Show it to someone who knows your business (a family member, a partner, a friend). Ask them: “Does this look right? What am I missing?”
- If you are a student, show it to someone who runs a real agritourism business and ask for their honest feedback

A good Business Canvas is never finished on the first attempt. It gets better every time you revisit it.

Task 5 (optional) — The Price Experiment (linked to Unit 3)

If you have an existing product or experience, try this:

- Raise the price by 10–20% for one week or for a specific group of guests
- Add one simple add-on (a recipe card, a small sample, a photo opportunity)
- Observe: did anyone complain? Did you lose any customers? How much more did you earn?

Most operators who try this discover that nobody noticed the price increase — and the add-on made guests feel they were getting more. The money you have been leaving on the table becomes very visible.

This task is for operators with existing sales only. Students can plan a hypothetical price experiment for their scenario business instead.

Annexes

Annex 1 — Presentation Plan (Slides)

The slide presentation accompanying this module is provided as a separate file. It is designed for use in face-to-face, online, or hybrid delivery and follows the unit structure of this manual.

The presentation includes:

- Introduction slides (module title, overview, ice-breaker activity)
- Content slides for each of the 4 units
- Exercise instruction slides with visual previews of each template
- Case study slides
- Self-assessment and closing slides

The slide content, trainer scripts, and facilitation notes for each slide are detailed in the Presentation Plan document.

See separate file: Module 1 — Presentation Plan and Slide Content

Annex 2 — Resources Collection

This annex provides 18 verified, trainer-ready resources to support delivery of Module 1. All links were checked on 5 March 2026. Only stable, primary, and official sources are included.

How to use in class

Print the PDFs marked as print-priority (cost snapshot, pricing/experience design guide, CAP at-a-glance, Ecolabel checklist, food waste roadmap, Tourism Act extract) and keep the rest as QR links for after the session. Most items are short PDFs or simple web pages that work on a phone.

How to adapt examples to your area

Trainers should replace the examples in this module with references from their own country and region. Use local destinations, crops, products, and tourism patterns. Ask learners: "What is the nearest attraction that brings day-trippers to your area?" to make the content transferables. Use the example from the EU CAP Network. When funding comes up, keep it simple: “Local Action Group first” for small projects, and the Commission tourism funding guide for the wider EU landscape.

For a mixed BG/GR/IT classroom: use the same business logic across countries (cost snapshot → floor price → value premium → season split) and treat compliance differences as country homework.

Unit 1 Resources (Costs / Income)

- **RuralInvest Toolkit** — FAO — fao.org/in-action/ruralinvest/toolkit/en/

Use the “feasibility snapshot” logic to structure the cost exercise. Greece: add stronger weekend/holiday peaks. Italy: factor in agriturismo compliance costs.

- **E-learning series: RuralInvest** — FAO eLearning Academy — elearning.fao.org/course/Ruralinvest-series-en

Trainer prep or optional homework: short modules explaining investment analysis in simple terms. Same learning units for all countries.

Unit 2 Resources (Pricing / Experience Design)

- **Creating Successful Agritourism Experiences: A Practical Guide** — EBRD + FAO Investment Centre (2024) — activate.org

Core Unit 2 resource for packaging and pricing justification. Greece: swap in olive oil/honey/wine activities. Italy: use as validation of farm-first logic.

- **Global Report on Food Tourism** — UN Tourism / UNWTO (2012) — webunwto.s3.eu-west-1.amazonaws.com

Use 2–3 pages to explain why guests pay more for food stories. Greece: link food tourism to authenticity and seasonality. Italy: use as benchmark.

Unit 3 Resources (Funding / Diversification)

- **At a glance: Bulgaria’s CAP Strategic Plan (updated)** — European Commission, DG Agriculture (2025) — agriculture.ec.europa.eu

Use as a map for realistic rural support pathways. Greece/Italy: use the equivalent national CAP Plan factsheet from the same site.

- **Guide on EU funding for tourism** — European Commission, DG Mobility & Transport — transport.ec.europa.eu

Shows learners where EU tourism-relevant funding sits. Greece/Italy: encourage cross-border partnering through packages and routes.

- **LAG Directory** — EU CAP Network — eu-cap-network.ec.europa.eu/networking/leader/lag-directory

Use live in class: find the right Local Action Group contact for LEADER/CLLD funding. Same workflow for all countries — search your region and save the contact.

Compliance Resources

- **Act on Tourism (Bulgaria) — English translation** — European Commission repository (2018) — commission.europa.eu

Trainer reference for Bulgarian categorisation, definitions, and tourism obligations. Greece/Italy: use as comparison — not for legal use, but to show that all countries have similar structures.

- **National Tourism Register portal** — Ministry of Tourism of Bulgaria — ntr.tourism.government.bg

Practical demo: how to check a categorised site and what information is public. Greece/Italy: do the same exercise with your national register.

Sustainability Resources

- **Tourist Accommodation User Manual (EU Ecolabel)** — European Commission, DG Environment (2022) — environment.ec.europa.eu

Low-cost action list for water, energy, and waste. Print-priority. Greece: focus on heat/water stress actions. Italy: focus on energy efficiency and waste sorting.

- **UN Tourism Global Roadmap for Food Waste Reduction in Tourism** — UN Tourism (2025) — pre-webunwto.s3.eu-west-1.amazonaws.com

Simple structure: procurement → preparation → consumption → redistribution. Greece/Italy: adapt redistribution options to local donation rules.

Digital Visibility

- **Google Business Profile Help** — Google — support.google.com/business

The one place for setup steps: add/claim, verify, post, respond to reviews. Same system and same pain points for all countries.

Country Anchors

- **Your country: local tourism destination pages from your national or regional tourism authority**

Use your nearest visitor attraction as the anchor. Ask learners: "What is the nearest place that brings visitors to your area?" — that is your packaging opportunity.

- **Greece: Agritourism inspiration page** — Visit Greece — visitgreece.gr/inspirations/agritourism

Quick product idea bank — activities you can sell as experiences. Bulgaria: translate into local crops (vineyard, herbs, dairy).

- **Italy: Law No. 96/2006 on agritourism (English text)** — FAOLEX (2006) — faolex.fao.org

Explains the Italian farm-first logic (why offers must link to agriculture). Use as comparison, not for legal advice.

Case Studies and Examples

- **Diversification of rural activities in Borino, Bulgaria** — EU CAP Network (Good Practice database) — eu-cap-network.ec.europa.eu

Bulgarian analogue example of rural tourism diversification. Use as pattern: one flagship attraction + supporting services. Greece/Italy: same pattern applies.

Videos and Webinars

- **EU Ecolabel webinar on tourist accommodation (recording)** — European Commission Streaming Service (2024) — webcast.ec.europa.eu

Show 3–5 minutes to motivate “green = savings + credibility.” All countries: focus on quick wins (LEDs, water flow reduction).

- **Good Practice Webinar on sustainable rural tourism** — Rural Pact Community Platform (2025) — ruralpact.rural-vision.europa.eu

Policy-to-practice bridge: how EU rural tourism ideas translate to real farms. Use as discussion trigger for all countries.

Annex 3 — Canvas Journey Handout

A one-page learner handout showing how the Agritourism Business Canvas evolves across all 6 modules. Distribute to learners at the end of Module 1.

The handout includes: a table mapping each module to the canvas fields it updates, practical instructions for the “Canvas Check” activity after each module, and the key message: Module 1 = first draft → Module 6 = finished business plan.

See separate file: Canvas Journey Handout (provided as a printable one-page document).

AgriVETourism Project

Enhancing Sustainable Agritourism through Vocational Education and Training

MODULE 2

The “Market” in Agritourism

Reaching Guests with Digital Tools

Trainer’s Manual

For face-to-face, online, or hybrid delivery

Module Overview

This module helps agritourism operators and aspiring professionals understand how to find and attract visitors using digital tools. It is designed for people who may have little or no digital experience, and it focuses on three practical steps: building a basic online presence, using social media to tell the story of the farm, and using simple digital and AI tools to communicate offers and handle bookings.

Every unit produces a template that learners fill in and keep. The content draws on real examples from Greece, Bulgaria, and Italy, but the methods apply to any European rural context.

This module includes:

- 3 units, each addressing one specific skill gap with one practical solution and one tangible output
- 3 practical exercises producing templates that learners complete and keep
- 2 case studies — one from Greece, one from Bulgaria — following a common structure for easy comparison
- 3 take-home templates (Digital Profile Checklist, 1-Month Content Calendar, Online Offer Card + Ready Replies)
- Self-assessment questions for personal reflection (not scored)
- Facilitation guidelines and trainer resources for each unit
- Homework tasks for learners to complete after the session
- Annexes including a ready-made slide presentation reference and a resources collection

Presentation Package

A ready-made slide presentation accompanies this manual. It is designed for face-to-face, online, or hybrid delivery and follows the unit structure described here. The presentation includes introduction slides, content slides for each unit, exercise instructions, case studies, and closing activities.

The full Presentation Plan with slide content, trainer scripts, and facilitation notes is provided in Annex 1. The table below shows which slides correspond to each section of the module. Slide numbers are indicative. Trainers may adjust the order or add/remove slides based on their group and delivery format. See Annex 1 for the detailed Presentation Plan.

Module Section	Slides	Content
Introduction	Slides 1–3	Module title, overview of 3 units, ice-breaker: “Can someone find your farm online right now?”
Unit 1: Building a Basic Digital Presence	Slides 4–7	What digital presence means, Google Business Profile, website vs social media, profile checklist, Exercise 1
Unit 2: Using Social Media to Attract Visitors	Slides 8–11	What to post, how often, visual storytelling, content calendar, Exercise 2

Unit 3: Selling and Communicating Online (with Simple AI Tools)	Slides 12–17	WhatsApp Business, booking tools, AI for writing offers and replies, Exercise 3
Closing	Slides 18–22	Case Study 1, Case Study 2, self-assessment, homework, key takeaways

Each unit follows the same formula:

ONE skill gap → ONE practical solution → ONE tangible output

Target group: Existing agritourism operators, farmers diversifying into tourism, cooperative members; VET students and young professionals in agriculture and tourism

Estimated learning time: 3 hours

Delivery format: Suitable for face-to-face, online, or hybrid delivery. Requires printed or digital templates for exercises.

Horizontal EU priority: Digitalisation, rural development

Unit	Skill Gap	Solution	Output
Unit 1: Building a Basic Digital Presence	Weak or nonexistent online presence	Digital Profile Checklist	Completed Digital Profile Checklist
Unit 2: Using Social Media to Attract Visitors	No structured social media strategy	1-Month Content Calendar	Completed Content Calendar
Unit 3: Selling and Communicating Online (with Simple AI Tools)	No online sales tools, low digital confidence	Online Offer Card + Ready Replies	One AI-written offer + 5 guest replies

Learning Objectives

By the end of this module, learners will be able to:

- Set up or improve a Google Business Profile for their farm or agritourism operation
- Identify what makes an effective online presence and what visitors look for before booking
- Create a simple 1-month social media content plan using practical post ideas
- Use visual storytelling to present their farm authentically and attractively online
- Apply at least one free AI tool to write an offer description and a set of ready guest replies
- Choose one online selling or booking channel that fits their business size and audience

Suggested Delivery Flow (approx. 3 hours)

This is a realistic timing guide for face-to-face delivery. Trainers should adjust based on group size, energy, and whether the optional exercise is included.

If time is short: shorten the case study discussion. Do not cut the exercises — the 3 completed templates are the deliverable.

Block	Duration	Notes
Introduction and ice-breaker	10 min	Welcome, check templates are distributed

Unit 1: Building a Basic Digital Presence + Exercise	40 min	Key concepts 20 min + checklist exercise 20 min
Unit 2: Using Social Media to Attract Visitors + Exercise	35 min	Key concepts 15 min + content calendar exercise 20 min
Short break	10 min	
Unit 3: Selling and Communicating Online + Exercise	35 min	Key concepts 15 min + offer + reply exercise 20 min
Case studies + discussion	15 min	Choose 1 or 2 case studies to discuss
Self-assessment + closing	10 min	Reflection, homework, feedback forms
Total	~3 hours	Including break

A Note on Trainer Research Support

This module is based on EU-level evidence, project research, and current agritourism digital marketing practice. At the end of each unit, trainers will find an AI research support section. These are ready-to-use prompts that trainers can copy into a free AI tool (ChatGPT, Gemini, or similar) to gather local examples, recent data, and up-to-date references for their specific country, region, and participant group.

How to use the AI research prompts

- Copy the prompt into a free AI tool and replace the placeholders with your local details
- Always prefer recent and credible sources — official statistics, government publications, EU databases
- Simplify the AI output before using it in class — remove jargon, shorten, check it fits your audience
- Verify facts, platform names, costs, and programme details before presenting them as current information
- These prompts are a starting point for preparation, not a substitute for trainer expertise

Unit 1 — Build Your Digital Presence

Slides: 4–7 (see Annex 1 — Presentation Plan)

Key Concepts Explained

What is a digital presence?

Your digital presence is everything that exists about your farm online — what comes up when someone searches for your name or your area. It includes your Google listing, any social media pages, a website if you have one, and reviews left by guests. If none of these exist, you are invisible to anyone who searches online before visiting.

Example: A small herb farm in Kentriki Makedonia had no website and no social media. A visitor who had heard about them by word of mouth tried to find them on Google and found nothing.

They booked somewhere else instead. Three months later, the farm added a Google Business Profile and a Facebook page. Within two weeks, they received their first online enquiry.

What is Google Business Profile?

Google Business Profile (formerly Google My Business) is a free tool that lets businesses appear in Google Search and Google Maps. When someone types “agritourism near me” or your farm name, your listing can appear with your address, photos, opening hours, and reviews. It is the single most important digital step for a local business.

Example: A lavender farm near Veria set up a Google Business Profile in one afternoon at no cost. Within a month, they appeared in local searches for “farm visits Imathia.” Visitors started calling directly from the listing.

Website vs social media — what is the difference?

A website is a permanent home for your business information — it is always there, always yours, and you control everything on it. Social media (Facebook, Instagram) is where you talk to people in real time — it is more active and interactive, but you depend on the platform’s rules and algorithms. Both are useful. You do not need both on day one — start with whichever feels more manageable.

Example: An agritourism guesthouse in Northern Greece uses Facebook as their main online channel because most of their guests are older visitors from Greece who use Facebook. A younger operator nearby uses Instagram and reaches guests from Germany and the Netherlands. The right platform is the one your guests already use.

What should an online profile include?

At minimum, your online profile — whether on Google, Facebook, or a website — should answer five questions a visitor will ask: Who are you? Where are you? What can I do there? How much does it cost? How do I book or contact you? If any of these are missing, you lose potential guests.

Example: A farm website with only a phone number and a vague description (“welcome to our beautiful farm”) gets very few enquiries. A profile with clear photos, a specific offer (“2-hour olive harvest experience, €18/person, Saturdays 10:00–18:00”), and a WhatsApp contact link gets three times as many. The information is what converts interest into bookings.

Why do reviews matter?

Online reviews are the digital version of word of mouth. They influence decisions more than any description you write yourself. A farm with 12 positive reviews is trusted more than one with zero reviews, even if it is newer. You do not need hundreds of reviews — even 5 or 10 genuine reviews make a significant difference.

Example: An agritourism family in the Pelion peninsula started asking guests to leave a Google review before they left. Within one season they had 18 reviews. Their visibility in local searches doubled. One review mentioned the herb garden specifically — which led three new guests to book specifically for that experience.

Content Focus

The Digital Presence Gap in Agritourism

Most small agritourism operators in rural Greece and across Southern Europe have either no online presence or a very incomplete one: a Facebook page created years ago and never updated, a Google listing with no photos, or a website that does not work on a mobile phone. This gap is not a technical problem — it is a knowledge problem. Once operators understand what to do and why, most can complete the basic steps themselves.

The Five-Step Digital Profile

Trainers should walk learners through these five steps in order. Each step is free and takes less than one hour:

Step 1: Claim or create your Google Business Profile. Search your farm name on Google. If a listing exists, claim it. If not, create one at business.google.com. Fill in name, address, category (agritourism / farm stay / farm shop), phone, and opening hours.

Step 2: Add at least 5 photos. Exterior of the farm, one activity or experience, your main product, a welcoming detail (table set for breakfast, garden, animals), and a portrait or human element. Photos are the first thing visitors look at.

Step 3: Write a clear, honest description (under 300 words). What do you offer? What is special? Who is it for? Use simple language. Avoid “beautiful” and “exquisite” — use specific, true details instead.

Step 4: Add your contact information and a booking method. A phone number is minimum. A WhatsApp link (wa.me/your_number) is better. An email works too. If you have a booking page, link it.

Step 5: Ask your first 5 guests for a Google review. Send them a direct link to your review page. Do not offer incentives — just ask politely and thank them.

Website vs Social Media — Which First?

For most small agritourism operators just starting their digital presence, a Facebook or Instagram page is faster to set up than a website, easier to update, and where many of their guests already are. A website becomes important when you want to control your full booking process or when you need to present detailed information. A simple free website (Google Sites, Wix, WordPress.com) is better than no website — but the Google Business Profile and one social media page come first.

What “Complete” Looks Like

A complete basic digital presence means: a verified Google Business Profile with photos and contact info, at least one active social media page with an updated profile and recent posts, and a way to contact or book (phone, WhatsApp, or link). A learner who achieves these three things has already surpassed most local competitors.

Practical Exercise — My Digital Profile Checklist

Skill gap	Weak or nonexistent online presence. Most operators do not know what a complete profile looks like or how to build one step by step.
Practical solution	A Digital Profile Checklist — a one-page template that maps what a complete online

	presence looks like and tracks what is already done, what is missing, and what the next step is.
Tangible output	A completed Digital Profile Checklist with a clear next-step action for each gap identified.
Objective	Audit your current digital presence and identify the most important gaps to fill
What learners do	Go through the checklist line by line. For each item, mark: Done / Partially done / Not done. For every item marked Not done, write one next step (e.g., “create Google listing this weekend”).
For experienced operators	Use your real business. You may discover gaps you did not know existed.
For students / aspiring operators	Map a scenario business. Decide which steps you would do first and in what order.
Time	20 minutes (15 minutes work + 5 minutes sharing)
Debrief	Each learner shares their biggest gap and their first action. Write gaps on a flipchart. Look for patterns — they are almost always the same: no Google listing, no photos, no reviews.

Do's and Don'ts

Do	Don't
Start with Google Business Profile — it is free, it is where most visitors search, and it is the single most important step	Don't try to do everything at once — one complete profile is better than three incomplete ones
Use real photos of your actual farm, products, and activities — authenticity matters more than professional photography	Don't use stock photos or images that do not reflect your real place — guests feel misled when they arrive
Keep your contact information up to date — nothing loses a booking faster than an unreachable phone number or a closed email	Don't leave your profile without a clear way to contact or book
Ask real guests to leave real reviews — even a few genuine reviews are more powerful than any paid advertising	Don't write fake reviews or ask family members to write them — platforms detect them and they damage trust
Check and update your profile at least once per season — opening hours, photos, and offers change	Don't create a profile and then forget it — outdated information is worse than no information

Examples to Use

Greece: A family herb farm in Kentriki Makedonia with no digital presence. After one afternoon setting up a Google Business Profile and a Facebook page, they received three

enquiries in the first two weeks — two from domestic visitors and one from a German family who had searched specifically for herb farms in Northern Greece.

Italy: A small agriturismo in Calabria whose owner used her phone to take 10 photos on a Sunday morning — light through the olive trees, breakfast table, the view from the terrace — and uploaded them to Google. Her profile views tripled within a month. No professional photographer. No cost.

Cross-country insight: Operators who list on Google Maps receive on average 3–5 times more enquiries than those who do not. The difference is not size or quality — it is visibility.

Adaptation Guidance

The digital profile steps are the same across all three countries. Trainers should use local search examples: ask learners to search for their own business or a local competitor on Google during the session. What comes up — or does not come up — is the most convincing demonstration. In regions with lower internet connectivity, the offline checklist still applies: photos can be prepared, descriptions can be written, and profiles set up when connectivity is available.

Facilitation Guidelines — Unit 1

Before the session

Print one Digital Profile Checklist template per participant

Prepare a projected or printed example of a “complete” Google Business Profile for a local or representative agritourism farm (use a real one if possible, with permission)

Test a Google Business Profile search on your own phone before the session: search for a local agritourism farm and be ready to show the result

Prepare 2–3 photo examples: one excellent (clear, real, inviting) and one poor (blurry, dark, no food or people visible)

If possible, have a phone or laptop available so learners can check their own listing live during the exercise

How to start the unit

Open with a search, not a lecture. Pull out your phone and say: “Let me search for agritourism in [local area].” Show the results on a projector or pass the phone around. Ask: “How many of you appear in this search?” Usually very few hands go up. Then say: “That is not a quality problem. That is a visibility problem. And we fix it today.”

During the exercise

Walk around the room. Some learners will discover their Google listing exists but is unclaimed or incomplete — this is a common and easy fix.

For participants without smartphones or internet access: work through the checklist on paper and ask them to set a specific day within the next week to complete each item.

If someone has a fully complete profile: ask them to help a neighbour at their table. Peer learning is faster than trainer explanation.

The most common gap is photos. Say: “You do not need a professional photographer. You need good light, a clean frame, and your real farm. Let me show you what that looks like.”

How to close the unit

Quick round: each person names their biggest gap and the first thing they will do this week. Write the actions on a flipchart. The pattern is almost always the same — Google listing, photos, reviews. Say: “These three things take one afternoon. After that, you exist online. That is the goal of this unit.”

Materials checklist

- Printed Digital Profile Checklist templates (1 per person)
- Projected or printed example of a complete Google Business Profile
- Phone or laptop for live search demonstration
- 2–3 photo comparison examples (good vs poor)
- Pens

Unit 1 — AI Research Support for Trainers

What to research

Current digital presence levels among small agritourism operators in your region. What local visitors search for when looking for agritourism experiences. Which digital platforms are most used by visitors to your area. Examples of agritourism farms in your region with strong or weak digital profiles.

Why this matters for delivery

The digital presence exercise works best when the trainer can point to real local examples — a farm that appeared in search because of their Google listing, or a local farm that nobody can find online. Concrete local examples are far more motivating than generic European statistics.

AI prompt for the trainer

Copy into ChatGPT, Gemini, or similar:

“I am training small agritourism operators in [country/region] on building a digital presence. Give me: (1) the 3 most important digital platforms for reaching agritourism visitors in [country] and why, (2) what visitors from [country/neighbouring countries] typically search for when looking for rural farm experiences, (3) 2 examples of agritourism farms in [country/region] with a strong digital profile — what makes them visible and attractive online, (4) the most common digital mistakes small agritourism operators make in [country]. Keep the language simple and practical.”

Trainer check before use

- Check that platform recommendations match current usage in your specific country — Facebook dominates in some regions, Instagram in others
- Verify that any named farms or businesses actually exist and have the profile described
- Simplify the language — if the AI produces marketing jargon, rewrite in plain words
- Make sure the advice is realistic for an operator with basic digital skills and a smartphone

Unit 2 — Tell Your Story on Social Media

Slides: 8–11 (see Annex 1 — Presentation Plan)

Key Concepts Explained

Why does social media matter for a small farm?

Social media is where agritourism visitors spend time before they travel. They look at photos, read captions, watch short videos, and form opinions about where to go — sometimes months before booking. A small farm with a consistent, authentic social media presence reaches people it would never reach through brochures or tourist offices. And it costs nothing.

Example: A small chestnut farm in Northern Greece had never advertised. The owner started posting one photo per week on Facebook — the harvested chestnuts, the trees in autumn colour, a family meal with chestnut soup. Within one season she had 340 followers. The following autumn, four groups booked visits specifically because they had seen the photos months earlier.

What does “visual storytelling” mean?

Visual storytelling means showing your farm’s life through photos and short videos in a way that makes people feel something — curiosity, appetite, calm, a sense of belonging. It is not advertising. It is showing what is real and what is beautiful about your place. The farm cat sleeping in the sun. Steam rising from a pot of homemade jam. A child’s hands picking strawberries. These are stories without words.

Example: Two agritourism farms with identical products. One posts “Fresh eggs available — call to order.” The other posts a photo of a basket of warm eggs on a wooden table with the caption: “This morning’s collection, still warm. Come and pick yours up.” The second post gets ten times more reactions. The eggs are the same. The story is different.

What should I post?

The simplest question a farm operator can ask before posting is: “What am I doing on the farm today that a visitor might find interesting, beautiful, or delicious?” That is the post. You do not need professional content. You need honest content that is regular and consistent. Post what is seasonal, what is handmade, what is local, what shows the life of the farm.

Example: In May, an olive farm posts about the new growth on the trees. In September, about the harvest preparations. In November, the first cold press of the season. In December, olive oil gift packs ready for the holidays. The product is the same year-round. The story changes every month.

How often should I post?

One to two posts per week on one platform is enough to maintain a visible, active presence. Consistency matters more than frequency. A farm that posts every Tuesday and Friday is more trusted than one that posts ten times one week and then goes silent for a month. Less is more — as long as it is regular.

Example: An agritourism guesthouse in Halkidiki posts every Tuesday (a farm update or seasonal photo) and every Friday (“weekend visit” reminder with a booking link). Two posts per week, planned on Sunday for the whole week. Total time: 30 minutes per week.

What is a content calendar?

A content calendar is a simple plan — one page, one month — that shows what you will post and when. It removes the daily decision of “what do I post today?” and ensures you never go more than a week without posting. It takes 20–30 minutes to plan a whole month.

Example: A herb farm in Western Macedonia plans their April calendar in March: Week 1 — first spring herbs appearing; Week 2 — what visitors can pick and taste; Week 3 — workshop date announcement; Week 4 — “next weekend still available” reminder. Four posts. Four weeks covered. No daily stress.

Content Focus

The Content Formula for Agritourism

The most effective social media content for agritourism farms follows one of three simple formulas:

The Farm Moment: a photo or short video of something real and seasonal happening on the farm right now. Early morning light on the vineyard. The first flowers on the lemon trees. A tractor returning from the field. These require no planning — just observation.

The Offer Reminder: a clear, specific post telling people what they can do, when, and how to book. Not vague (“visit us any time”) but specific (“Saturday harvest morning, 9:00–12:00, €15/person, 4 spots left — message to book”).

The Behind-the-Scenes: a short glimpse into how something is made, grown, or prepared. How honey is extracted. How cheese is aged. How saffron is harvested by hand. These educate and fascinate — and they convert followers into visitors.

The Power of Simple Photos

Professional photography is not necessary. What matters is light, composition, and authenticity. Natural light (outdoors or near a window) is the biggest factor. A clean, uncluttered frame. Real farm elements — not staged or artificial. Most smartphones today produce photos that are good enough if the light is right and the subject is real. Trainers should demonstrate this during the session: take a phone photo of something in the room and show it immediately.

What Not to Post

Blurry or dark photos — they signal low quality even when the product is excellent. Political or unrelated content — keep the page focused on the farm and the experience. Long text blocks — most people scroll without reading. Generic greetings without a farm connection (“Happy Monday!” means nothing on a farm page). Stock photos or images downloaded from the internet — visitors notice and feel misled.

Practical Exercise — My 1-Month Content Calendar

Skill gap	No structured social media strategy. Most operators post randomly when they remember, or not at all. They have no plan for what to show or when.
Practical solution	A 1-Month Content Calendar — a simple one-page template that plans four weeks of social media posts by theme and posting day,

	so the farm is consistently visible without daily decision-making.
Tangible output	A completed 1-Month Content Calendar with at least 8 post ideas planned by week and theme.
Objective	Plan one month of social media content for your farm
What learners do	Fill in the content calendar template: choose a platform (Facebook or Instagram), set two posting days per week, and write 8 post ideas — one sentence each — using the three content formulas (Farm Moment, Offer Reminder, Behind-the-Scenes). Add a photo idea for each post.
For experienced operators	Use real upcoming activities on your farm — harvest dates, workshops, seasonal products.
For students / aspiring operators	Plan for a scenario farm using a scenario sheet provided by the trainer.
Time	20 minutes (15 minutes planning + 5 minutes sharing)
Debrief	Each person shares their favourite post idea from their calendar. Ask: “Which of your eight ideas do you think would get the most reactions — and why?”

Do's and Don'ts

Do	Don't
Post consistently — once or twice a week, every week, is worth more than ten posts in one day and then silence	Don't post only when you need something (bookings, sales) — build presence before you need it
Use your own photos of your real farm, your real products, and your real guests (with permission)	Don't use downloaded photos or images that do not represent your actual place
Write captions that say something specific and true: what, where, when, what it tastes or smells like	Don't write vague captions like “beautiful day at the farm” without any concrete detail
Plan your posts in advance — even a rough monthly plan removes the daily decision and the blank-page panic	Don't try to improvise every post — it leads to inconsistency and burnout
Always include a way for people to take action: message us, click the link, call this number	Don't post without a clear next step — every post is an opportunity to convert interest into contact

Examples to Use

Greece: A peach orchard in Imathia started posting short videos of fruit being picked from the trees each morning. Their Facebook page grew from 40 to 600 followers in one season. They received 23 messages from visitors asking to come during the harvest. All from organic (unpaid) posts taken on a phone.

Bulgaria: A winery near Melnik posts every Friday: a photo from the vineyard, a sentence about the season, and a booking reminder for weekend visits. Simple and consistent. Their Instagram following doubled in six months with no paid advertising.

Cross-country insight: Posts with a specific food product, a seasonal element, and a human hand or face receive significantly more engagement than product-only posts. Authenticity consistently outperforms perfection.

Adaptation Guidance

The content calendar structure and the three post formulas work in any agricultural context. Trainers should help learners identify their own seasonal calendar: what happens on the farm each month? That is their content calendar in outline. In regions with strong seasonal variation, the farming rhythm provides a natural content plan — the trainer simply helps operators see it.

Facilitation Guidelines — Unit 2

Before the session

- Print one 1-Month Content Calendar template per participant

- Prepare 2–3 scenario sheets for learners without a real farm business to plan for

- Prepare one completed example content calendar (for a fictional or representative farm) to show before the exercise

- Find 3–4 social media post examples to show on a projector: two good (real, seasonal, specific) and two poor (blurry, vague, or irrelevant)

How to start the unit

Show the good and poor post examples on the projector without labelling them. Ask: “If you saw these two posts, which farm would you be more likely to visit?” Let the room answer. They will choose the real, specific, seasonal one every time. Then say: “That is visual storytelling. You already know how to recognise it. Now we learn how to do it.”

During the exercise

The most common blocker is “I don’t know what to write.” Ask: “What are you doing on your farm next Tuesday? Take a photo of that. That is your post.”

Encourage learners to think seasonally — what is happening on their farm in the next 30 days? That is the content.

If a learner finishes early, ask: “Which of your 8 posts could include a booking invitation? Rewrite those ones to include a next step.”

For learners who say they are not on social media: ask them to plan for a family member or cooperative member who is. Or frame it as “what would you post if you started today?”

How to close the unit

Quick round: each person reads their favourite post idea from their calendar in one sentence. Then ask: “How many of you could post at least one of these this week?” Almost all hands will go up. Say: “That’s your homework. One post this week. Real photo, real caption, real farm.”

Materials checklist

- Printed 1-Month Content Calendar templates (1 per person)
- Scenario sheets for learners without a real farm (2–3 copies)
- One completed example calendar (projected or printed)
- 4 social media post examples (good and poor) for comparison
- Pens

Unit 2 — AI Research Support for Trainers

What to research

Effective social media content examples from agritourism farms in your region. What types of posts get the most engagement for rural or food-related accounts. Seasonal content ideas for your area (what happens on farms month by month). Common social media mistakes made by small food and farm businesses.

Why this matters for delivery

Social media advice is most convincing when it is local and specific. A post example from a farm in Kentriki Makedonia or Halkidiki is more credible for a Greek audience than a generic European example. Local context also helps trainers give realistic advice about which platforms are most used in the area.

AI prompt for the trainer

Copy into ChatGPT, Gemini, or similar:

“I am training small agritourism operators in [country/region] on social media content planning. Give me: (1) 8 specific social media post ideas for a farm that grows [main crop/product in your region] — one for each week of a two-month period, including what photo to take and what caption to write, (2) the 3 most common social media mistakes made by small farm and food businesses in [country], (3) 3 examples of successful social media content from agritourism or rural food businesses in [country/region] — what they posted and why it worked, (4) which social media platform is currently most used by agritourism visitors in [country] and why. Keep everything simple and practical.”

Trainer check before use

- Check that the suggested platforms match actual usage in your region — AI may suggest platforms that are not dominant locally
- Verify any specific farm examples actually exist and have the profile described
- Make sure the post ideas are realistic for someone with a basic smartphone and no editing software
- Simplify caption suggestions — if the AI writes marketing copy, rewrite it in plain, honest language

Unit 3 — Sell and Communicate Online (with Simple AI Tools)

Slides: 12–17 (see Annex 1 — Presentation Plan)

Key Concepts Explained

What is WhatsApp Business?

WhatsApp Business is a free version of WhatsApp designed for small businesses. It allows you to create a business profile with your farm name, description, opening hours, and a catalogue of offers. You can set up automatic replies (for when you are busy), save quick replies for common questions, and see which messages you have and have not responded to. It is free and most agritourism visitors in Southern and Southeast Europe already use WhatsApp.

Example: A farm in Thessaly switched from a personal WhatsApp to WhatsApp Business. They set up three quick replies: one for booking enquiries, one for directions, one for pricing. Response time dropped from hours to minutes. Bookings that previously fell through because of slow replies were no longer lost.

What is the difference between platforms for selling?

There are several ways to sell or take bookings online — each with advantages and trade-offs:

Direct contact (WhatsApp, phone, email): Free, personal, builds relationships, no commission. Requires you to manage enquiries manually. Best for small operations and personal service.

Booking.com / Airbnb: Large reach, handles payment and reviews. Commission of 15–20%. Does not share guest contact data. Good for accommodation, less suited for day experiences.

Facebook Shop / Instagram Shop: Free, integrated with social media. Good for selling products directly from posts. Requires some setup.

Google Forms / Calendly: Free tools to take booking requests with specific dates and numbers. Not a payment system, but organises enquiries clearly.

Example: A farm with 4 rooms uses Booking.com for room reservations (because of the reach) and WhatsApp for experience bookings (because it is free and personal). The combination works well — Booking.com fills rooms, WhatsApp sells the olive oil tasting and the cooking class at zero commission.

What is basic e-commerce?

E-commerce means selling your products online. For a small agritourism operation, this does not need to be a complex web shop. Basic e-commerce can be as simple as: posting a product on Facebook with a price and a “message to order” call-to-action, a Google Forms order sheet linked from your Facebook page, or a WhatsApp catalogue with product names, descriptions, and prices.

Example: A beekeeper in Northern Greece started offering honey orders through a simple Facebook post each autumn: “This year’s harvest is ready. 1kg jars of thyme honey, €12. Message us to order, we ship across Greece.” Within one week, 47 messages. Total investment: zero.

How can AI help a small agritourism operator?

Free AI tools (ChatGPT, Gemini, or similar, available on your phone) can help you with tasks that used to require a copywriter or marketing professional: writing an offer description in clear English, translating your offer into other languages, creating ready guest replies for common questions, generating post captions for social media, and improving your Google listing description. None of these require technical skills — you type a question and review the answer. Example: A farmstay operator in Makedonia used ChatGPT to write her first offer description in English. She typed: “Write a short description of my farm in Northern Greece. We offer olive harvest experiences, tastings, and two guest rooms. We have a garden, fresh food, and quiet. It is family-run.” The AI wrote a clear, attractive 80-word description. She made three small edits and published it on her Google profile. That week, two foreign guests booked.

One important rule about AI

AI tools write text based on patterns, not facts. They can produce confident-sounding statements that are wrong. Always review AI output before publishing. Check that facts (prices, dates, locations, activities) are correct. If AI writes something you would not say yourself, rewrite it. The AI is a writing assistant, not a decision-maker.

Content Focus

5 Simple Online Tasks That Bring More Bookings

Trainers should walk through these five tasks and demonstrate at least one live during the session:

Task 1: Set up WhatsApp Business. Download the free app, convert your farm phone number to a business account, fill in your profile (name, description, hours, location). Set one automatic greeting for new enquiries.

Task 2: Write your Online Offer Card. One short description of your main experience or product: what it is, what is included, how long it takes, what it costs, and how to book. Under 100 words. Clear and specific. This is the text you use everywhere — Google, Facebook, WhatsApp, email.

Task 3: Create your Ready Replies collection. Write 5–10 short replies to your most common WhatsApp questions: booking enquiry, directions, pricing, food allergies, weather concerns, cancellation policy, thank-you message. Save them in your phone notes so you can paste and send in seconds.

Task 4: Try one AI task on your phone. Open ChatGPT or Gemini. Type: “Write a short offer description for a [your experience] at a [your type of farm] in [your region]. Under 80 words, friendly tone.” Review the result. Edit what does not sound like you. Use it.

Task 5: Update your Google listing description using your new offer text. If you used AI to write the offer card, use the same text (reviewed and edited) for your Google Business Profile description.

Choosing the Right Platform for Your Business

Not every operator needs every platform. The choice depends on: who your visitors are, what you are selling (rooms, experiences, products), and how much time you have to manage enquiries. Trainers should help each learner identify ONE primary channel to focus on and get right, before adding more.

Practical Exercise — Write Your Offer and Ready Replies

Skill gap	No online sales tools and low confidence in digital communication. Most operators rely on word of mouth and phone calls. They lose bookings because they cannot describe their offer clearly in writing or respond quickly to enquiries.
Practical solution	The Online Offer Card + Ready Replies — a practical template that produces one clear offer description and a set of pre-written replies for the most common guest questions. Both can be used immediately on WhatsApp, Google, and Facebook.
Tangible output	A completed Online Offer Card with one offer description (under 100 words) and at least 5 ready guest replies.
Objective	Write one offer and five ready replies that you can use immediately
What learners do	Part A: Write or improve their main offer description using the Offer Card template. If they use an AI tool, they type a prompt and edit the result. Part B: Write 5 ready replies for their most common guest questions, using their own words (or AI-improved versions).
For experienced operators	Use their real offer and real guest questions — the ones they receive most often.
For students / aspiring operators	Write for a scenario farm or for an offer they would like to create.
Time	20 minutes (15 minutes writing + 5 minutes sharing one offer aloud)
Debrief	Two or three learners read their offer aloud. The room gives feedback: “Would you book this?” and “What is one thing you would add or change?”

Do's and Don'ts

Do	Don't
Set up WhatsApp Business — it is free, your guests already use it, and it is the most natural communication channel for small agritourism operators in Southern Europe	Don't use your personal WhatsApp for business — it mixes personal and professional, and you lose business-specific features
Write your offer clearly: what is included, how long, what it costs, how to book — one specific sentence for each	Don't write vague offers (“visit our beautiful farm”) without telling people what actually happens and what they get

Create a small collection of ready replies for your most common questions — response time is one of the biggest factors in converting enquiries to bookings	Don't take more than 24 hours to reply to an enquiry — most visitors will have booked elsewhere by then
Use AI to write a first draft and then edit it to sound like you — the editing is the important step	Don't publish AI output without reviewing it — always check that the information is accurate and the tone matches your farm
Start with one platform and do it well before adding more — WhatsApp + Google is enough to start	Don't try to be on every platform at once — it leads to half-maintained profiles that hurt more than help

Examples to Use

Greece: A saffron farm near Kozani received most enquiries through Facebook messages. Every reply took 20–30 minutes because the owner wrote each one from scratch. After setting up WhatsApp Business with five ready replies, response time dropped to under 5 minutes. Booking conversion improved because enquirers received a professional, warm reply immediately.

Bulgaria: A farmstay near Melnik listed on Booking.com but lost all experience bookings (tastings, tours) to competitors. They switched experience bookings to WhatsApp and used a short, AI-assisted offer description on Facebook. Experience bookings tripled in one season — at zero commission.

Cross-country insight: In Greece, Bulgaria, and Italy, the most common reason an interested visitor does not book is a slow or unclear response. Not price. Not quality. Speed and clarity. Ready replies and a clear offer card solve both problems directly.

Adaptation Guidance

The offer card and ready replies are universal — only the content changes. In regions where visitors come mainly from the same country, the offer can be in the local language only. In regions with significant international visitors (coastal areas, borders, tourist routes), offering an English version is important and AI makes this easy. Trainers should ask: “Where do your visitors come from?” to help learners prioritise language.

Facilitation Guidelines — Unit 3

Before the session

Print one Online Offer Card + Ready Replies template per participant

Test the AI demonstration on your own phone before the session — make sure you know how to open ChatGPT or Gemini and type a prompt

Prepare a backup plan in case internet is not available: print 2–3 example AI outputs (offer descriptions, ready replies) that learners can adapt manually

Prepare a short one-page comparison of booking platform options (Booking.com, Airbnb, WhatsApp, Google Forms) as a reference

How to start the unit

Ask: “How many of you have received an enquiry from someone who was interested but never booked?” Most hands will go up. “What happened?” Usually: slow reply, unclear offer, no easy

way to confirm the booking. Say: “Today we fix that. By the end of this unit you will have a clear offer description and a set of ready replies. That gap between interest and booking will be much smaller.” Then demonstrate the AI tool live: open it on your phone, type a prompt, show the result. Say: “This took 30 seconds. Now you try.”

During the exercise

Part A (offer): Some learners will try to include everything. Say: “Pick ONE experience or product. Just one. 80 words. If it is good, you can write the second one at home.”

Part B (replies): Help learners identify their most common real questions. Ask: “What do people ask you most often?” The answers are usually: pricing, directions, what to bring, what is included, and how to cancel. Those are the five replies to write.

Walk around and help people who struggle with the AI tool. The most common issue is not knowing what to type. Help them phrase the prompt in simple words.

If internet fails: use the printed example AI outputs. Ask learners to adapt them to their own farm by changing the product, location, and price.

How to close the unit

Ask 2–3 learners to read their offer aloud. After each one, ask the room: “Would you book this? What would make you even more likely to book?” This teaches critical evaluation — both of their own work and of AI output. Close with: “You now have a profile checklist, a content calendar, and an offer with ready replies. That is more digital marketing preparation than most agritourism operators in Europe have done. Use it this week.”

Materials checklist

- Printed Online Offer Card + Ready Replies templates (1 per person)
- Phones with internet access (for AI tasks)
- Backup: 2–3 printed example AI outputs in case internet fails
- Booking platform comparison reference (1 page, printed or projected)
- Pens

Unit 3 — AI Research Support for Trainers

What to research

Which booking and communication tools are most commonly used by small agritourism operators in your country. What commission structures exist for the main platforms. Real examples of agritourism operators who improved bookings through WhatsApp or direct contact. Any local or national digital support programmes for rural businesses.

Why this matters for delivery

Platform choices differ across Europe. What works in Greece may not be the same as what works in Bulgaria or Italy. Trainers who arrive knowing which platforms are genuinely popular with local agritourism visitors give much more useful advice.

AI prompt for the trainer

Copy into ChatGPT, Gemini, or similar:

“I am training small agritourism operators in [country/region] on online selling and communication tools. Give me: (1) the 3–4 most commonly used online booking or communication channels for small agritourism and farm stay operations in [country], with commission rates and pros/cons, (2) the 5 most common questions that agritourism visitors ask before booking in [country] — these will become the ready replies, (3) an example AI prompt that a farm operator could use to write a short offer description for [local product or experience type], (4) any national or EU digital support programmes available to small rural businesses in [country] for setting up online sales. Keep everything simple and actionable.”

Trainer check before use

- Verify platform commission rates — these change frequently and AI may cite outdated figures
- Check any national support programmes are still active and accepting applications
- Test the example AI prompt yourself and review the output before the session
- Make sure the five common guest questions match your specific audience — international visitors ask different questions than domestic ones

Case Studies

Each module includes exactly two case studies. Each follows the same structure for easy comparison and cross-country transfer.

Case Study 1 — Greece: From Invisible to Booked

A herb farm and small guesthouse in Imathia, Kentriki Makedonia

Context	A family-run herb farm with 2 guest rooms near Veria. The farm grows lavender, oregano, thyme, and sage. They produce herb teas, dried herbs, and small soap products. The rooms were mostly used by family friends. The owner, a woman in her 50s, had no smartphone until two years ago and had never posted on social media.
Challenge	The farm had no Google listing, no social media page, and no way for visitors to find or contact them online. The owner relied entirely on local word of mouth. Outside her immediate area, she was completely invisible. A regional tourism initiative highlighted that 73% of visitors to her prefecture searched online before visiting any rural destination. She was not appearing in any of those searches.
Solution	With help from a local digital support workshop: (1) created a verified Google Business Profile with 8 photos taken on her

	phone on a sunny morning — the herb garden, the drying room, the breakfast table, the view, the soap products; (2) opened a Facebook page and posted twice per week following a simple content calendar; (3) set up WhatsApp Business with three quick replies for booking, directions, and pricing; (4) wrote a short offer description in Greek and, with AI help, in English.
Outcome	Within three months: 14 Google reviews (all positive), 280 Facebook followers, and 9 room bookings from people who found her online — 6 domestic, 3 from Germany. Total investment: zero. Time spent: approximately 3 hours for setup and 30 minutes per week for social media.

3 Lessons Learned

Setup time is short but impact is lasting. The Google Business Profile took one afternoon. Three months later it was generating bookings. Phone photos are enough. All 8 photos were taken on a basic smartphone in natural light. The farm was the subject — authenticity did the rest. Foreign visitors exist even in small inland areas. Three of the nine bookings came from Germany — visitors who specifically searched for herb farms in Northern Greece.

What to Copy Tomorrow

Create your Google Business Profile today. Take 5 photos on your phone this week. Set up one ready reply in WhatsApp for your most common question.

Discussion Prompt

“If someone searched for your farm on Google right now, what would they find — and what would you want them to find instead?”

Case Study 2 — Bulgaria: The Weekly Post That Filled the Season

A vineyard with agritourism guesthouse near Sandanski, Southwest Bulgaria

Context	A vineyard and guesthouse with 4 rooms and a small wine-tasting room. The operator had a Facebook page with 80 followers and posted irregularly. He used Booking.com for room reservations but received no bookings for wine tastings or farm experiences, despite running them for guests who asked. He did not know how to promote the experiences online.
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Challenge	The experiences — vineyard walks, wine tastings, harvest participation — were invisible online because they were never described, priced, or promoted anywhere. Booking.com listed only rooms. Facebook posts were occasional and did not mention the experiences. Visitors who discovered the tastings by accident were enthusiastic, but no one could find them in advance.
Solution	Using a content calendar and a simple offer card: (1) wrote a clear offer for the “Vineyard Afternoon” experience — 2.5 hours, vineyard walk, tasting of 4 wines, light snack, €20/person, maximum 8 guests, Fridays and Saturdays; (2) posted every Friday with a photo from the vineyard and the offer details; (3) set up WhatsApp Business for experience bookings (Booking.com remained for rooms only).
Outcome	By end of season: 34 Vineyard Afternoon bookings (all through WhatsApp, zero commission), 420 Facebook followers (up from 80), and a waiting list for the October harvest weekend. Room bookings also increased because visitors saw the experiences on Facebook and booked rooms to stay for the full weekend. Total cost: zero. Time: 30 minutes per week.

3 Lessons Learned

An invisible offer generates zero bookings. The tastings existed — they just had no online description. Making them visible was the only change needed.

Booking.com is not the right tool for experiences. WhatsApp is free, personal, and generates no commission. Separating room and experience booking channels improved both.

One consistent post per week compounds over a season. Forty-two posts over one season — all simple and real — built an audience from 80 to 420 followers. No paid advertising.

What to Copy Tomorrow

Write your first offer card for your most popular experience or product. Post it on Facebook this Friday with one good photo. Add a WhatsApp link for bookings.

Discussion Prompt

“Which of your activities or products could be turned into a bookable offer this week — without any investment beyond writing it down?”

Practical Exercises — Summary

All exercises include a variant for learners without an existing business.

#	Title	Linked to	Time	Output
1	My Digital Profile Checklist	Unit 1	20 min	Completed checklist showing what is done, what is missing, and the next step for each gap
2	My 1-Month Content Calendar	Unit 2	20 min	Content calendar with 8 post ideas planned by week and theme
3	My Online Offer Card + Ready Replies	Unit 3	20 min	One offer description (under 100 words) + 5 ready guest replies

3 Take-Home Templates

#	Template	What It Captures
1	Digital Profile Checklist	All elements of a complete online presence: Google listing, photos, contact info, reviews, social media, website. Status (done / partial / not done) and next action for each.
2	1-Month Content Calendar	Four weeks of planned social media posts: platform, posting days, post theme, photo idea, and caption outline for each post.
3	Online Offer Card + Ready Replies	A clear, bookable offer description (under 100 words) and 5–10 pre-written replies for the most common guest questions.

The Business Canvas — Module 2 Update

After completing this module, learners should update their Agritourism Business Canvas from Module 1. Module 2 directly strengthens two canvas fields:

Field 3: Channels — now learners know which digital channels they will use and how

Field 4: Customer Relationships — now learners have tools for communicating with guests before and after visits

Take out your canvas. Spend 5 minutes updating these two fields with what you learned today. Use a different colour pen if you are tracking canvas updates across all 6 modules.

Trainer note: Remind learners to bring their canvas to every session. If this is the first module they are attending, distribute a blank canvas and ask them to fill in fields 3 and 4 as part of today’s session.

Self-Assessment

Five reflection questions. Personal and practical, not scored.

What is the biggest gap in your current digital presence — and what is the first thing you will do about it this week?

Looking at your content calendar: which of the 8 posts would be the easiest to start with?

What is stopping you from posting it today?

Which online communication tool best fits the way you already work — and what would you need to set it up?

Did you try the AI tool during the session? What did it produce? Would you use it again — and for what?

If you had 30 minutes this weekend to improve your farm’s online presence, what exactly would you do?

Trainer Notes

On the mixed digital skill level

Expect a very wide range — from participants who have never posted on social media to those who manage their own Instagram account daily. Seat them mixed where possible. More experienced digital users can support neighbours during exercises. Do not let the session become a tech support session for the least confident — move forward and flag individual help for the break.

On resistance to digital tools

Some experienced operators will say “I manage without all this.” Acknowledge it: “Yes, and you clearly run a good business. This is not about replacing what works. It is about reaching the people who cannot find you because they search online first.” The case studies are your most powerful tool here — show a real example of an operator similar to them who added one digital step and gained real bookings.

On the AI exercise

The AI demonstration is the most unpredictable part. Some learners will be excited, others uncomfortable. Keep it simple: one task, one tool, one result. If the internet fails: use the printed backup examples and ask learners to adapt them to their own farm by changing the product, price, and location. The editing exercise is actually more valuable than the generation — it teaches critical reading and personalisation.

On templates as deliverables

The three templates are the real output of this module. If a learner leaves with all three filled in — Digital Profile Checklist, Content Calendar, and Offer Card + Ready Replies — the module worked, regardless of how much theory they absorbed. Protect the exercise time. It is not optional.

On timing

Unit 3 (online selling + AI) tends to run over time because of the AI demonstration and the interest it generates. If behind schedule, shorten the case study discussion, not the exercises.

On adaptation

The examples are anchored in Greece (Kentriki Makedonia) and Bulgaria. Trainers in other contexts should replace examples with local equivalents. The methods, templates, and exercises transfer to any European rural agritourism setting.

Homework for Attendees

These tasks are designed to be completed after the training session. They help learners apply what they learned to their real situation. Trainers should present these at the end of the module and encourage learners to complete at least one before the next session or within 2 weeks.

Task 1 — Claim Your Space on Google (linked to Unit 1)

Within 3 days of this session, complete the following:

Search your farm name on Google. Does a listing come up?

If yes: claim it (if unclaimed), add or update your photos (minimum 5), and check your contact information and opening hours are correct.

If no: go to business.google.com and create a new listing. Fill in all fields. Add photos.

Send one message to a recent guest asking them to leave a Google review. Paste the direct link to your review page.

Bring the result to the next session: show the listing on your phone. If there is no follow-up session, send a screenshot to your trainer or a fellow participant within 2 weeks.

Task 2 — Post Your First Calendar Post (linked to Unit 2)

You planned a 1-Month Content Calendar in the session. Now post the first item from it.

Take a real photo on your farm — something seasonal, something honest, something that shows the life of your place.

Write a short caption (2–3 sentences): what it shows, what makes it special, and one way to take action (visit, book, message).

Post it on your Facebook or Instagram page.

Note: how many reactions and comments did it get? Did anyone send a message?

This task costs nothing and takes 20 minutes. The goal is to break the inertia — the first post is always the hardest.

Task 3 — Send Your First Ready Reply (linked to Unit 3)

The next time you receive an enquiry on WhatsApp, Facebook, or email:

Use one of the ready replies you wrote during the session.

If you need to, edit it slightly to fit the specific enquiry.

Note: how did it feel? Was the reply faster than usual? Did the guest respond positively?

If you have not received an enquiry yet, send your Offer Card description to one person you think might be interested — a past guest, a local contact, or a community group. Observe the response.

Task 4 — The Competitor Search (linked to Unit 1)

Search for agritourism or farm stays in your area on Google and on Facebook. Look at what comes up:

How complete is the profile of the top result? Photos, contact, description?

How many reviews do they have? What do the reviews say?

What do they post on social media? How often?

What is their offer? Is it clear and specific or vague?

Write three observations: one thing they do well, one gap you see, one thing you could do better. This is not about copying — it is about learning from what is already working.

Task 5 (optional) — Try All 5 AI Tasks (linked to Unit 3)

In the session you tried one AI task. Now try the other four at home:

Write a second offer description for a different product or experience

Translate your main offer into English (if it is not already)

Generate 5 more ready replies for questions you receive often

Generate 3 post captions for your social media calendar using an AI tool

Save the results in your phone notes. Edit anything that does not sound like you. Share the best result with a fellow participant from the training.

Annexes

Annex 1 — Presentation Plan (Slides)

The slide presentation accompanying this module is provided as a separate file. It is designed for use in face-to-face, online, or hybrid delivery and follows the unit structure of this manual.

The presentation includes:

Introduction slides (module title, overview of 3 units, ice-breaker: “Can someone find your farm online right now?”)

Content slides for each of the 3 units

Exercise instruction slides with visual previews of each template

Case study slides (Greece and Bulgaria)

Self-assessment and closing slides

See separate file: Module 2 — Presentation Plan and Slide Content

Annex 2 — Resources and References

How to use this resources section

This module follows the project approach: instead of a list of links for learners to browse, the focus is on AI-assisted trainer preparation. The AI prompts at the end of each unit are the primary research tool. Use them before each delivery to gather local, up-to-date examples and data. The references below are supporting resources for trainers who want verified sources for specific claims.

Unit 1 Resources (Digital Presence)

Google Business Profile Help — support.google.com/business
Official guide for setup, verification, and management. Use the setup checklist directly in class.
Digital Economy and Society Index (DESI) — European Commission — digital-strategy.ec.europa.eu
Country-level data on digital skills and SME digitisation. Use to anchor the “why this matters” opener for your region.
Digital Transformation of Rural Areas — EU CAP Network — eu-cap-network.ec.europa.eu
Good practice examples of rural businesses adopting digital tools.

Unit 2 Resources (Social Media and Visual Storytelling)

Instagram and Facebook Business Help — [business.instagram.com /](https://business.instagram.com/)
business.facebook.com
Official guides for setting up business accounts and creating content.
Agritourism inspiration — Visit Greece — visitgreece.gr/inspirations/agritourism
Quick reference for what agritourism experiences in Greece look like to an outside visitor.
Creating Successful Agritourism Experiences: A Practical Guide — EBRD + FAO / Agtivate — agtivate.org
Practical content on experience design, packaging, and communication.

Unit 3 Resources (Online Selling and AI Tools)

WhatsApp Business Help — business.whatsapp.com
Official setup guide for WhatsApp Business. Walk learners through the profile setup using this guide.
AI Tools for Small Businesses — ChatGPT: chat.openai.com / Gemini: gemini.google.com
Both are free on a smartphone. Gemini is available in Greek and Bulgarian, which may be useful for non-English-speaking participants.
Guide on EU Funding for Tourism — European Commission — transport.ec.europa.eu
For trainers connecting digital investment to funding possibilities. Relevant when discussing platforms that can be part of a LEADER application.

Country Anchors

Greece: Kentriki Makedonia Regional Tourism — visitcentralmacedonia.gr
Local agritourism and rural destination examples for Northern Greece.
Bulgaria: EU CAP Network Good Practice database — eu-cap-network.ec.europa.eu
Real examples of digital adoption and rural tourism development in Bulgaria.

Italy: Agriturismo — agriturismo.it

The main Italian agritourism association platform. Use to show how Italian operators present their offers online — a useful benchmark for offer card design.

Annex 3 — Canvas Journey Reminder

This is Module 2 of 6. The Agritourism Business Canvas from Module 1 should be updated after each module. After Module 2, learners update:

Canvas Field	What to Update After Module 2
Field 3: Channels	Add the digital channels you will use: Google Business Profile, Facebook/Instagram, WhatsApp, Booking.com, other
Field 4: Customer Relationships	Add how you will keep in touch with guests: ready replies, content calendar posts, review requests, seasonal updates

Ask learners: “Take out your canvas. Spend 5 minutes updating these two fields. Use a different colour pen if you are tracking your canvas updates across the programme.”

Module 1: first draft → Module 2: channels and relationships → Module 6: finished business plan

Annex 4 — Quick Reference: Digital Tools Comparison

Tool	Cost	Best for	Commission	Skill level needed
Google Business Profile	Free	Being found in local searches; showing reviews and photos	None	Basic
Facebook Page	Free	Local audience; updates; event promotion; direct messages	None	Basic
Instagram	Free	Photo-driven storytelling; younger visitors; hashtag discovery	None	Basic to medium
WhatsApp Business	Free	Direct booking enquiries; ready replies; personal communication	None	Basic
Booking.com	Free to list	Accommodation bookings with international reach	15–20%	Basic
Airbnb	Free to list	Room and experience bookings;	3% host fee	Basic to medium



		international visitors		
Google Forms / Calendly	Free	Structured booking requests (dates, numbers, preferences)	None	Basic
ChatGPT / Gemini	Free (basic)	Writing offers, ready replies, translations, captions	None	Basic

Note: Platform features and commission rates may change. Always verify current terms before recommending a specific platform to learners.

AgriVETourism Project

Enhancing Sustainable Agritourism through Vocational Education and Training

MODULE 3

The “Product” in Agritourism

Quality, Certification, and Added Value

Trainer’s Manual

For face-to-face, online, or hybrid delivery

Module Overview

This module introduces participants to the concept of the agritourism “product” as a combination of certification, and value-added experiences. Participants learn how certifications improve credibility, how administrative requirements work, and how to transform agricultural products into compelling agritourism offerings.

This module aims to equip learners with the skills to: choose appropriate certifications understand administrative and certification processes and transform agricultural products into value-added experiences

The module is structured into three units:

- **Unit 1 — Choosing the Right Certification**
- **Unit 2 — Understanding Requirements & Documentation**
- **Unit 3 — Adding and Communicating Product Value**

This module includes:

- **3 units**
- **3 exercises**
- **2 case studies**
- **Final Self-assessment questions** for personal reflection

Each unit follows the same formula:

ONE skill gap → ONE practical solution → ONE tangible output

Unit	Skill Gap	Output
Unit 1: Choosing the Right Certification	confusion around certification options	Certification Decision Checklist
Unit 2: Understanding Requirements & Documentation	fear of bureaucracy	Personal Certification Roadmap
Unit 3: Adding and Communicating Product Value	selling raw products without added value	One value-added product idea + short product story

Target group: Existing agritourism operators, farmers diversifying into tourism, cooperative members; VET students and young professionals in agriculture and tourism

Estimated learning time: 2.5 hours

Delivery format: Suitable for face-to-face, online, or hybrid delivery. Requires printed or digital templates for exercises.

Horizontal EU priority: EU Green Deal, climate adaptation, sustainable rural development, digital transition

Why this module matters — the facts (trainer opener, 2–3 minutes)

- Making Strategic Certification Choices
- Navigating Complex Administrative Requirements
- Transforming and Communicating Value

Learning Objectives

By the end of this module, learners will be able to:

1. Distinguish between product and process certifications
2. Evaluate which certification fits their business
3. Identify advantages and limitations of certification
4. understand key administrative requirements
5. describe the certification process
6. identify available support resources
7. design a value-added product idea
8. improve product presentation and packaging
9. create a compelling product story

Suggested Delivery Flow (approx. 2.5 hours)

This is a realistic timing guide for face-to-face delivery. Trainers should adjust based on group size, energy, and whether the optional exercise is included.

Block	Duration	Notes
Opener: Why this matters — the facts	10 min	Evidence snapshot, set the forward-looking tone
Unit 1: Choosing the Right Certification	35 min	Content 15 min + exercise 20 min
Unit 2: Understanding Requirements & Documentation	35 min	Content 15 min + exercise 20 min
Short break	10 min	
Unit 3: Adding and Communicating Product Value	35 min	Content 15 min + exercise 20 min
Self-assessment + closing	5 min	Reflection, homework, feedback forms
Total	~2.1 hours	Including break

If time is short: shorten the case study discussion or drop the optional exercise.

Unit 1 — Choosing the Right Certification

Slides: 5–31

Skill gap	confusion around certification options
Practical solution	trainer guides participants through a structured real-world application: Identify one product; Apply unit concepts to the selected product; Discuss feasibility and barriers; Define one actionable next step
Tangible output	Certification Decision Checklist

Key Concepts Explained

Types of certification

An overview of the different types of certification is provided, identifying the difference between process and product certification. The different types of certification are then explained, along with when they make sense.

Practical Exercise - Certification Decision Checklist

Objective	Help learners evaluate whether a quality certification (PDO, PGI, Organic, etc.) is appropriate for their product and business strategy
What learners do	Participants complete the Certification Decision Checklist individually, then discuss their answers in small groups and justify their final decision
For experienced operators	Ask participants to apply the checklist to their real product and estimate certification costs, timeline, and potential market benefits
For students	Provide example products (e.g., olive oil, cheese, processed food) and ask students to apply the checklist to one case study
Time	5 minutes individual work + 10 minutes group discussion + 5 minutes plenary feedback (Total: 20 minutes)
Debrief	Trainer asks participants what factors influenced their decision, highlights trade-offs (cost vs. value), and summarizes when certification is strategically useful

Do's and Don'ts

Do	Don't
Encourage participants to think about market demand, not just product quality	Don't present certification as always necessary

Ask learners to consider costs, time, and administrative effort	Don't focus only on technical requirements without market context
Ask learners to consider costs, time, and administrative effort	Don't rush the discussion phase (it's where learning happens)
Use real examples from participants when possible	Don't assume all participants know certification schemes
Emphasize that certification is a strategic business decision, not only a technical one	Don't discourage participants whose products are not suitable for certification
Allow participants to change their decision after discussion	Don't overlook cost and administrative burden considerations

Unit 2 — Understanding Requirements & Documentation

Slides: 32–39

Skill gap	fear of bureaucracy
Practical solution	Identify a certification and identify the key steps that you have to pursue in order to start the procedure for obtaining it.
Tangible output	Personal Certification Roadmap for their agritourism business

Key Concepts Explained

Understanding Requirements & Documentation

This unit explains the general procedures required for starting a certification process. It is important to understand that each certification have a specific process that is determined by the specific certification and the procedure to follow depends on the certification body and the national rules.

Practical Exercise — Personal Certification Roadmap

Objective	Help learners understand the administrative requirements and define a realistic certification pathway for their agritourism product.
What learners do	Participants select one product or service and complete a simple roadmap identifying certification type, required documents, timeline, and first steps.

For experienced operators	Work on a real product already in production and identify missing documentation, certification bodies, and estimated costs. Participants define immediate next steps for certification.
For students	Work on a hypothetical agritourism farm scenario. Students choose a product (e.g., olive oil, cheese, honey) and design a basic certification roadmap.
Time	15 minutes (10 work + 5 sharing)
Debrief	Each participant shares: • Selected certification • One challenge identified • First action step • The trainer highlights common barriers and practical solutions.

Do's and Don'ts

Do	Don't
Map Available documents	Start certification blindly
Contact certification body early	Don't contact certification body
Break process into steps	Treat certification as one step
Use external support	Try to manage everything alone
Map available documents	Start certification blindly

Unit 3 — Adding and Communicating Product Value

Slides: 20–33

Skill gap	selling raw products without added value
Practical solution	The trainer guides participants through a structured real-world application: identify an agritourism product and propose strategies for improving its value

Tangible output	One value-added product idea + short product story
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Key Concepts Explained

Adding and Communicating Product Value

This unit explains how to add value to the products of an agritourism. This can be done through transformation, story telling and packagings.

Practical Exercise

Objective	Enable learners to transform a basic agricultural product into a value-added agritourism experience using storytelling and packaging concepts.
What learners do	Participants select one product and design a value-added version, including experience, packaging idea, and short product story.
For experienced operators	Improve an existing product by adding experiential elements such as tastings, farm visits, workshops, or product bundles. Focus on market positioning.
For students	Design a new agritourism product concept from scratch using a fictional or case-study farm scenario.
Time	15 minutes (10 work + 5 sharing)
Debrief	Each participant presents: • Product idea • Value added • Short story The trainer highlights the most market-ready concepts and discusses scalability.

Do's and Don'ts

Do	Don't
Add experiences to products	Sell only raw products
Use simple packaging improvements	Ignore presentation
Tell authentic stories	Use generic marketing language
Highlight local identity	Hide origin of products

Homework for Attendees

These tasks help learners apply what they learned to their real situation.

Homework for Attendees

1. Participants are invited to:
2. Identify one product to improve
3. Evaluate possible certification
4. Design one value-added experience
5. Prepare short product story

AgriVETourism Project

Enhancing Sustainable Agritourism through Vocational Education and Training

MODULE 4

The “Agri” in Agritourism

Sustainable Farming and Operations

Trainer’s Manual

For face-to-face, online, or hybrid delivery

Module Overview

This module focuses on the core agricultural identity of agritourism. It addresses principles of sustainable agriculture and practices, ways of reducing waste and improve energy efficiency. By the end of this module, learners will move from informal knowledge to scientific, resource-efficient practices that improve soil health, reduce waste, and lower energy costs.

This module includes:

- **3 units**, each addressing one skill gap with practical solutions and one tangible output
- **3 exercises** producing outputs that learners complete and keep.
- **2 case studies** — exploring sustainable Agritourism
- **3 take-home outputs** (Climate Risk and Response Plan, Green Improvement Plan, Offer Description + Ready Replies)
- **Final Self-assessment questions** for personal reflection

Each unit follows the same formula:

ONE skill gap → ONE practical solution → ONE tangible output

Unit	Skill Gap	Solution	Output
Unit 1: Basic Sustainable Farming Principles	Reliance on informal knowledge of soil and crops	Principles of soil fertility, cover crops, and rotation.	Crop planning
Unit 2: Waste, Water & Circular Economy Practices	Limited waste and water management practices.	Circular economy, composting, and water saving practices	Waste reduction in Agritourisms
Unit 3: Low awareness of small-scale renewable options	Energy Efficiency and Renewable Options	Renewable energy tech and efficiency "quick wins	Energy consumption identification and energy saving options

Target group: Existing agritourism operators, farmers diversifying into tourism, cooperative members; VET students and young professionals in agriculture and tourism

Estimated learning time: 2.5 hours

Delivery format: Suitable for face-to-face, online, or hybrid delivery. Requires printed or digital templates for exercises.

Horizontal EU priority: EU Green Deal, climate adaptation, sustainable rural development, digital transition

Why this module matters — the facts (trainer opener, 2–3 minutes)

- This module teaches how to make agriculture more sustainable.
- It helps to use less water and reduce waste, improving sustainable farming.

- It explains how to improve soil and make plants grow better.
- It explains how to reduce energy losses and increase renewable energy on the farm.
- It allows you to make agritourism more efficient and environmentally friendly.

Learning Objectives

By the end of this module, learners will be able to:

1. Identify simple sustainable farming practices for agritourism
2. Apply basic soil and compost improvement techniques
3. Learn the principles of composting
4. Design one practical sustainability improvement for your farm
5. Reduce waste and water use in farm operations

Suggested Delivery Flow (approx. 2.5 hours)

This is a realistic timing guide for face-to-face delivery. Trainers should adjust based on group size, energy, and whether the optional exercise is included.

Block	Duration	Notes
Opener: Why this matters — the facts	10 min	Evidence snapshot, set the forward-looking tone
Unit 1: Sustainable Farming Principles + Exercise 1	35 min	Content 15 min + exercise 20 min
Unit 2: Waste, Water & Circular Economy Practices + Exercise 2	35 min	Content 15 min + exercise 20 min
Short break	10 min	
Unit 3 Energy Efficiency and Renewable Options + Exercise 3	35 min	Content 15 min + exercise 20 min
Self-assessment + closing	5 min	Reflection, homework, feedback forms
Total	~2.1 hours	Including break

If time is short: shorten the case study discussion or drop the optional exercise.

A Note on Trainer Research Support

This module is based on EU-level evidence, project research, and established agritourism practice.

Each section includes a ready-to-use prompt that trainers can copy into a free AI tool (ChatGPT, Gemini, or similar) to gather local examples, recent data, and up-to-date references. This is particularly useful for updating climate conditions, visitor trends, funding programmes, and practical local illustrations before each delivery.

Unit 1 — Basic Sustainable Farming Principles

Slides: 5–17

Skill gap	reliance on informal knowledge
Practical solution	Information from formal sustainable farming principles delivered in a easy way
Tangible output	Sustainability Self-Check for the learner's farm

Key Concepts Explained

What is sustainability, how can we achieve sustainable farming?

Sustainability is a development capable of ensuring the satisfaction of the needs of the present generation without compromising the ability of future generations to realize their own.

Sustainability can be achieved in three main areas: environmental, social and economic.

Sustainable farming aims at producing by keeping the fertility of the soil along the time, by reducing the natural resources used and returning elements to the soil, by being economically advantageous and by guaranteeing social equity

Soil fertility

Soil fertility may be expressed as the ability of a soil of making plants grow. It is influenced by physical, chemical and biological components. The soil fertility can be loss if soil is not adequately managed. Fertility loss occurs through degradation, often caused by intensive farming. Over-tilling destroys soil structure, while monocultures deplete specific nutrients. This leads to erosion, salinization, and a "dead" soil that relies entirely on synthetic fertilizers to produce anything, making the farm vulnerable to both economic and climatic shocks. Conservative and sustainable practices allow to regenerate soil fertility and maintain it for a long time.

Sustainable practices

They focus on minimizing soil disturbance, maximizing biodiversity, and keeping the ground covered to sequester CO₂ and improve water retention.

- Cover Crops

Cover crops (like clover, rye, or vetch) are planted not for harvest, but to protect the soil during "off-seasons." They act as a living armor against erosion, suppress weeds naturally, and—in the case of legumes—fix atmospheric nitrogen into the soil, reducing the need for chemical fertilizers in the next cycle.

- Crop Rotation

Crop rotation is the practice of growing different types of crops in the same area across sequential seasons. By alternating crops (e.g., wheat followed by beans), farmers break the life cycles of pests and diseases and ensure that the soil isn't stripped of the same nutrients year after year.

- Minimum Tillage and No-Tillage

These techniques involve reducing or completely eliminating the use of plows. **No-tillage** places seeds directly into the residue of the previous crop. This keeps the soil structure intact, protects the "microbiome" of the earth, and prevents the release of stored carbon into the atmosphere, significantly increasing drought resilience.

- Integrated Crop-Livestock Systems (ICLS)

ICLS brings animals back to the fields in a controlled way. Livestock graze on cover crops or crop residues, and their manure acts as a high-quality, natural fertilizer. This "closed-loop" system mimics natural ecosystems, reducing waste and decreasing the farm's reliance on external inputs like synthetic feed or fertilizers.

Practical Exercise — Crop Planning

Objective	Identify the crops to use on your farm, when to sow/transplant, and their specific resource needs. Identify at least one main crop and what adds value to the final product.
What learners do	For the selected crops: 1. Specify sowing/transplanting dates. 2. Quantify water and fertilizer requirements. 3. Define the "Value Add" strategy (e.g., Organic/DOP certification or transformation into oil, wine, jam, etc.).
For experienced operators	Base the exercise on your current production. Identify one way to reduce water or fertilizer input compared to last year while maintaining quality.
For students	Use a scenario: a small farm with rooms and outdoor tastings in a hot, dry summer region with mild spring and autumn.
Time	20 minutes (15 work + 5 sharing)
Debrief	Each person presents their main crop and its "Value Add."

Do's and Don'ts

Do	Don't
choose climate-resilient varieties: Select crops (like ancient grains or local olive varieties) that are naturally adapted to your region's specific heat and water constraints.	Do not select "thirsty" crops in dry regions: Avoid high-water-demand crops if your scenario or farm faces frequent summer droughts or if you do not have possibility to use irrigation

align sowing dates with weather shifts: Adjust your schedule based on actual soil temperature and moisture rather than just following traditional calendar dates.	Do not ignore local climate trends
look for "Value Add": Think about transformation (e.g., turning waste fruit into jam or composting residues) to create a secondary income stream while reducing waste.	DON'T forget the "Sustainability Cost" of transformation: If you transform a product, ensure the process doesn't negate your farm's green efforts
aim for certifications (DOP/IGP): Use these as a "Value Add" strategy to justify higher market prices and prove your commitment to the environment	DON'T assume "Green" means "Profitable" without a plan: Sustainability needs a business case. Ensure your chosen certifications or transformations actually reach the right market.

Unit 2 — Waste, Water & Circular Economy Practices

Slides: 20–33

Skill gap	limited waste/water management
Practical solution	Information for reducing waste and improve water management
Tangible output	Waste & Water Reduction Action List

Key Concepts Explained

Circular Economy & The Butterfly Model

The circular economy moves away from the "take-make-waste" mindset, focusing on resource regeneration. Ellen MacArthur's Butterfly Model illustrates this through two wings: the technical and biological cycles. For agritourism, the focus is on the biological cycle, where organic by-products are cycled back into the ecosystem to restore soil health and minimize external inputs.

Agricultural Waste in Agritourism

Agritourism farms typically generate two types of waste: crop residues (prunings, straw, and damaged fruit) and kitchen scraps from the hospitality side. Instead of being discarded, these materials are viewed as valuable feedstocks for energy, animal feed, or natural fertilizers.

Composting and the C/N Ratio

Composting is the aerobic decomposition of organic matter into nutrient-rich humus. It involves a thermophilic phase, where high temperatures sanitize the pile, followed by maturation. The

secret to high-quality compost is the C/N (Carbon-to-Nitrogen) ratio: the ideal balance is roughly 30:1. Too much nitrogen (green waste) causes odors, while too much carbon (brown waste) stalls the process.

Mulching and Green Manure

These techniques protect and feed the soil naturally. Mulching involves covering the ground with organic residues like straw to retain moisture and suppress weeds. Green manure is the practice of growing specific crops—such as legumes—and tilling them directly into the soil to boost nitrogen levels and biomass without chemical fertilizers.

Value Extraction: Essential Oils

Small-scale distillation allows farms to extract high-value essential oils from pruning waste (like lavender, rosemary, or citrus peels). This transforms "green waste" into premium products for cosmetics or aromatherapy, creating a new revenue stream while fully closing the loop of the farm's production cycle.

Water Management in Agritourism

Water management means applying strategies and technologies for improving efficiency in irrigation and reducing water waste. This involves implementing smart irrigation systems, like drip irrigation, to minimize waste, and utilizing rainwater harvesting to collect water.

Practical Exercise — Waste valorization

Objective	Identify waste and by-products generated from the chosen crop and explore practical opportunities to transform them into valuable resources (economic, environmental, or social value).
What learners do	Participants identify the main waste streams and by-products generated along the crop production and processing chain (e.g., residues, unsold products, processing waste, packaging). Using online resources and their own knowledge, they propose feasible waste valorization strategies such as reuse, recycling, transformation, or new product development.
For experienced operators	Base the exercise on your real farm or production system. Identify waste streams currently generated and evaluate realistic valorization opportunities considering available resources, infrastructure, and market access.
For students	Select up to three most relevant waste streams for a small-farm scenario and propose practical valorization solutions. Explain why these options are feasible and what value they could generate.
Time	15 minutes (10 work + 5 sharing)
Debrief	Each participant shares: • One waste stream identified • One valorization solution proposed

- One action they could realistically implement

Do's and Don'ts

Do	Don't
Identify actual by-products and waste generated by the crop (e.g., leaves, stems, rejected produce, processing residues, packaging)	Don't focus only on the main product, the exercise is about waste and by-products, not crop productivity
Consider waste from production, harvesting, storage, processing, and distribution	Don't propose unrealistic technologies. Avoid solutions requiring expensive or highly specialized industrial infrastructure (unless clearly justified)
Consider multiple types of value: Economic value, Environmental value, social value	Don't overlook small waste streams. Even small quantities can become valuable if aggregated or reused
Consider available skills, equipment, and infrastructure	Don't overcomplicate. Simple, low-cost solutions are often the most effective
Look for similar crops or existing practices for inspiration	Don't forget time and labor constraints. A good solution should not create excessive additional workload

Unit 3 — Energy Efficiency and Renewable Options

Slides: 20–33

Skill gap	low awareness of renewable energy
Practical solution	Information for improving renewable energy alphabetization
Tangible output	One realistic energy improvement idea

Key Concepts Explained

Renewable Energy

Renewable energy refers to energy produced from natural sources that are continuously replenished, such as sunlight, wind, water, and biomass. Unlike fossil fuels, these sources do not run out and generally have a lower environmental impact. Renewable energy plays a key

role in reducing greenhouse gas emissions, improving energy independence, and supporting the transition toward more sustainable and resilient energy systems.

Energy Self-Production and Consumption Opportunities in Agritourisms Agritourisms offer several opportunities for energy self-production and self-consumption through renewable technologies suited to rural environments. Photovoltaic systems are the most common and cost-effective solution, using available roof or land surfaces to generate electricity from sunlight. Micro-wind turbines can also be effective where wind conditions are favorable, particularly with newer small-scale vertical-axis designs. Biomass systems allow the production of heat and electricity from agricultural waste through anaerobic digestion, especially when sufficient organic material is available or when implemented collaboratively among farms. In some cases, micro-hydroelectric systems can also be developed where watercourses, reservoirs, or old mills exist, providing a continuous and reliable energy source. Together, these technologies enable agritourisms to reduce energy costs, increase sustainability, and improve energy independence.

Energy Storage Challenges

Renewable energy offers many benefits but also presents challenges, particularly intermittency. Energy production does not always match energy demand, requiring careful planning and storage solutions. Batteries are currently the most common storage option, but their production depends on rare earth materials and lithium, which have environmental impacts.

Alternative strategies include demand shifting, which involves using energy when production is highest. For example, energy-intensive processes such as water pumping can be scheduled during peak solar production hours or during windy conditions, improving system efficiency and reducing storage needs.

Battery Trade-offs

Batteries allow renewable energy to be stored and used when needed, increasing energy independence and reliability. However, they involve trade-offs such as high initial costs, limited lifespan, and environmental impacts related to raw material extraction. Additionally, battery recycling and disposal require careful management. For these reasons, batteries are most effective when combined with energy efficiency measures and smart consumption strategies.

Funding Programs for Renewable Energy

Various funding programs support the adoption of renewable energy technologies. These include European, national, and regional funding schemes that provide grants, subsidies, and tax incentives. Agritourisms and agricultural businesses can benefit from financial support for installing renewable energy systems and improving energy efficiency. These programs help reduce investment costs and accelerate the transition toward sustainable energy solutions.

Practical Exercise — Energy waste reduction

Objective	Identify the main sources of energy consumption in an agritourism (e.g. facilities heating, irrigation, storage) and propose practical actions to reduce energy waste and improve efficiency.
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What learners do	Participants analyze energy use across facilities and operations, identify major energy waste points, and propose feasible strategies such as switching to LED lighting, improving insulation, optimizing water heating, using natural shading, or integrating renewable energy systems. They may use online resources and their own experience.
For experienced operators	Base the exercise on your real agritourism or farm. Identify high-energy-use areas, evaluate practical energy-saving measures considering available equipment, infrastructure, and costs, and propose realistic implementation steps.
For students	Focus on up to three main energy-consuming areas in a small-farm or agritourism scenario. Propose practical measures to reduce waste and improve efficiency, explaining feasibility, expected impact, and potential energy or cost savings.
Time	15 minutes (10 work + 5 sharing)
Debrief	Each participant shares: • One high-energy-use area identified • One practical action to reduce energy waste • One measure they could realistically implement in a small-scale or real agritourism setting

Do's and Don'ts

Do	Don't
Identify energy-intensive operations such as heating, cooling, irrigation, lighting, and water storage—these are often where the largest savings are possible.	Avoid ideas that are too expensive, complex, or require unavailable infrastructure—solutions should be implementable in a small or medium agritourism setting.
Propose actions that can realistically be implemented given available resources, equipment, and budget, e.g., installing LED lights, adding insulation, or using natural shading.	Don't overlook low-tech measures. Simple changes, like adjusting thermostat settings, shading windows, or switching off lights when not needed, can be as effective as high-tech solutions.
Consider multiple approaches: Combine behavioral changes (turning off unused equipment) with technological improvements (efficient appliances, renewable energy systems).	Don't ignore maintenance. Old or poorly maintained equipment can waste energy—ignoring this may make any other measures less effective.
Encourage collaboration: hearing how others tackle similar problems can inspire new solutions.	Don't focus only on one area. Energy waste occurs across multiple operations; addressing only one aspect may have limited impact.

Practical Exercises — Summary

#	Title	Linked to	Time	Output
1	Crop Planning	Unit 1	20 min	Identification of the characteristics of 1 main crop and its requirements.
2	Waste valorization	Unit 2	20 min	Identification of waste stream, valorization solution and action that can be realistically implemented
3	Energy waste reduction	Unit 3	20 min	Identification of high-energy-use area, practical action to reduce energy waste, and measure that could realistically implement in a small-scale or real agritourism setting

Self-Assessment

Five reflection questions. Personal and practical, not scored.

1. Which sustainable farming practice could I realistically introduce this season?
2. What are the main types of waste produced on my farm or agritourism (organic waste, crop residues, food waste, packaging)?
3. Could I start composting using materials already available on my farm? What would I need to begin?
4. Which circular economy practice could I realistically implement in the next 1–3 months?
5. Which simple energy-saving action could I implement immediately (LED lighting, insulation, switching-off practices)?

Homework for Attendees

These tasks help learners apply what they learned to their real situation. Complete at least one within two weeks.

Task 1 — Complete the crop selection

After you have identified your main crop and its requirements find other crops for closing the loop. Remember the principles of crop rotation and choose the other crops on the base of when they can be grown, their environmental requirements and if they are renewal crops, improving crops or exhausting crops. You can also try to integrate livestock within the farming system.

Task 2 — Complete the waste valorization

Following the same principles used in class exercise, identify the new discards produced by your new farming system, and find new ways for valorizing the waste.

AgriVETourism Project

Enhancing Sustainable Agritourism through Vocational Education and Training

MODULE 5

The “Tourism” in Agritourism

Visitor Experience, Hospitality, and Community Partnerships

Trainer’s Manual

For face-to-face, online, or hybrid delivery

Module Overview

This module helps agritourism operators and aspiring professionals master the tourism side of their business — designing structured, memorable visitor experiences, communicating their farm’s story with confidence, and building the local partnerships that expand their reach without increasing their costs. It is the fifth module of the programme and the one most directly focused on the visitor’s perspective.

As the organisation responsible for promoting and certifying agri-food products in Greece, iAgroCert brings a particular perspective to this module: the best agritourism experiences are those where the farm’s production story is visible to the visitor. When people understand where their food comes from, how it is grown, and why quality matters, the experience becomes more than a visit — it becomes a connection that builds loyalty, word-of-mouth, and repeat business. Each unit produces a template that learners fill in and keep. The content draws on real examples from Greece, Bulgaria, and Italy.

This module includes:

- 3 units, each addressing one skill gap with one practical solution and one tangible output
- 3 practical exercises producing templates that learners complete and keep
- 2 case studies — one from Greece, one from Bulgaria — following a common structure for easy comparison
- 3 take-home outputs (Visitor Experience Blueprint, Farm Story & Tour Guide Card, Partner Map & Cooperation Plan)
- Self-assessment questions for personal reflection (not scored)
- Facilitation guidelines and trainer resources for each unit
- Homework tasks for learners to complete after the session
- Annexes including a ready-made slide presentation reference and a resources collection

Presentation Package

A ready-made slide presentation accompanies this manual. It is designed for face-to-face, online, or hybrid delivery and follows the unit structure described here. The presentation includes introduction slides, content slides for each unit, exercise instructions, case studies, and closing activities.

The full Presentation Plan with slide content, trainer scripts, and facilitation notes is provided in Annex 1. The table below shows which slides correspond to each section of the module. Slide numbers are indicative. Trainers may adjust the order or add/remove slides based on their group and delivery format.

Module Section	Slides	Content
Introduction	Slides 1–3	Module title, overview of 3 units, opener: “What do your visitors actually remember when they leave?”
Unit 1: Designing Authentic Agritourism Experiences	Slides 4–7	Turning farm activities into experiences, the 4-step experience structure, hands-on formats, Exercise 1

Unit 2: Storytelling, Hospitality & Visitor Engagement	Slides 8–11	Farm story framework, guiding a tour, hospitality basics, Exercise 2
Unit 3: Community Partnerships & Cooperative Marketing	Slides 12–17	Mapping local partners, creating joint offers, simple cooperation agreements, Exercise 3
Closing	Slides 18–22	Case Study 1, Case Study 2, self-assessment, homework, canvas update

Each unit follows the same formula:

ONE skill gap → ONE practical solution → ONE tangible output

Target group: Existing agritourism operators, farmers diversifying into tourism, cooperative members; VET students and young professionals in agriculture and tourism

Estimated learning time: 3 hours

Delivery format: Suitable for face-to-face, online, or hybrid delivery. Requires printed or digital templates for exercises.

Horizontal EU priority: Rural development, sustainable tourism, cultural heritage, community resilience

Unit	Skill Gap	Solution	Output
Unit 1: Designing Authentic Agritourism Experiences	Lack of structured visitor experiences	Visitor Experience Blueprint	Completed Visitor Experience Blueprint
Unit 2: Storytelling, Hospitality & Visitor Engagement	Weak communication with visitors and lack of hosting confidence	Farm Story & Tour Guide Card	Completed Farm Story & Tour Guide Card
Unit 3: Community Partnerships & Cooperative Marketing	Low local visibility and limited cooperation with other businesses	Partner Map & Cooperation Plan	Completed Partner Map & Cooperation Plan

Learning Objectives

By the end of this module, learners will be able to:

Design at least one structured agritourism experience with a clear beginning, middle, and end using what they already have on their farm

Apply the 4-step experience structure to turn any farm activity into a bookable, satisfying visitor programme

Tell their farm’s story in a clear, natural way that connects visitors to the place, the people, and the products

Apply basic hospitality principles to create a welcoming environment that generates positive reviews

Identify at least 3 local businesses or organisations they could partner with, and describe one joint offer they could create together

Update their Agritourism Business Canvas with the visitor profiles and partnership networks developed in this module

Suggested Delivery Flow (approx. 3 hours)

This is a realistic timing guide for face-to-face delivery. Trainers should adjust based on group size, energy, and local context.

If time is short: shorten the case study discussion or trim the opener. Do not cut the exercises — the 3 completed templates are the deliverable.

Block	Duration	Notes
Introduction and opener	10 min	Welcome, module overview, ice-breaker question
Unit 1: Designing Authentic Experiences + Exercise	45 min	Key concepts 20 min + experience blueprint exercise 25 min
Unit 2: Storytelling, Hospitality & Visitor Engagement + Exercise	35 min	Key concepts 15 min + farm story & tour card exercise 20 min
Short break	10 min	
Unit 3: Community Partnerships + Exercise	35 min	Key concepts 15 min + partner map exercise 20 min
Case studies + discussion	15 min	Choose 1 or 2 case studies to discuss
Canvas update + self-assessment + closing	10 min	Canvas fields 2 and 7, reflection, homework
Total	~3 hours	Including break

A Note on Trainer Research Support

This module is based on EU-level evidence, project research, and established agritourism practice. At the end of each unit, trainers will find a guided AI research support section. These are ready-to-use prompts that trainers can copy into a free AI tool (ChatGPT, Gemini, or similar) to gather local examples, current visitor data, and up-to-date references for their specific country, region, and participant group.

How to use the AI research prompts

Copy the prompt into a free AI tool and replace the placeholders with your local details
Always prefer recent and credible sources — official statistics, government publications, EU databases

Simplify the AI output before using it in class — remove jargon, shorten, check it fits your audience

Verify facts, platform names, programme names, and prices before presenting them as current information

These prompts are a starting point for preparation, not a substitute for trainer expertise

Unit 1 — Design Your Visitor Experience

Slides: 4–7 (see Annex 1 — Presentation Plan)

Key Concepts Explained

What is the difference between a farm activity and a visitor experience?

A farm activity is something that happens on the farm — picking herbs, pressing olives, feeding animals, harvesting honey. A visitor experience is the same activity, but designed for someone who has never done it before, structured so they know what to expect, and given meaning so they understand why it matters. The olive pressing has always happened. The experience starts when someone explains what variety is being pressed, lets the visitor feel the weight of the olives, and gives them a small glass of the first cold-pressed oil to taste.

Example: A beekeeper in Pieria had given informal farm tours for years — walking visitors around the hives, answering questions, selling jars of honey at the end. After structuring this into a 60-minute “Hive to Jar” experience with a clear beginning (welcome and safety briefing), middle (hive observation and extraction), and end (tasting of 3 varieties and take-home jar), he was able to charge €22/person instead of nothing. The same activity, given structure and meaning, became a product.

What is the 4-step experience structure?

Every successful agritourism experience — regardless of length or content — follows the same four steps:

Step 1 — Welcome and Set the Scene: Greet visitors by name if possible. Tell them where they are, who you are, and what they will do. One or two sentences about the farm’s story. This step takes 5–10 minutes and makes guests feel expected and valued.

Step 2 — The Activity: The core of the experience — the hands-on element. Visitors do something, not just watch. They pick, press, stir, taste, plant, harvest, or make. The activity should have a clear instruction (“now we do this”) and a visible result (“this is what you just made”).

Step 3 — The Explanation: While the activity is happening, tell the story behind it. Why this product? Why this method? How long has the family been doing this? What makes it special? This is where certification, tradition, or quality story lives. Visitors remember the story more than the activity.

Step 4 — The Close and Take-Home: End deliberately. A tasting, a small product to take home, a recipe card, or a photo together. A clear “thank you” and an easy way to book again, buy online, or leave a review. The last five minutes determine what guests remember and whether they recommend you.

Example: A cheese-making farm near Florina uses this exact structure for their 75-minute visit. The welcome includes fresh cheese on bread. The activity is pressing and salting a small cheese portion. The explanation covers the breed of sheep, the traditional recipe, and the difference between fresh and aged varieties. The close is a tasting board and a wrapped portion of the cheese the visitor made. Total infrastructure cost: zero. Price: €25/person.

What formats work best for agritourism visitors?

Research across Southern and Southeast Europe consistently shows that agritourism visitors prefer hands-on formats over passive ones. They want to do something with their hands, produce something visible, and leave with a story or a product. The most effective formats for small farms are:

Make and take: visitors produce a small item — a cheese, a soap, a jar of jam, a bundle of dried herbs, a labelled bottle of oil. The product is the souvenir and the proof of the experience.

Guided harvest: visitors pick fruit, vegetables, herbs, or honey alongside the farmer. Limited explanation needed — the activity speaks for itself. Simple, seasonal, and almost always fully booked.

Production demonstration with participation: the farmer demonstrates a process (cheese making, bread baking, olive pressing, wine tasting) and involves visitors at a specific step. One task is enough — complexity is not the goal.

Guided farm walk with tastings: a slow walk through the farm with 3–5 tasting stops. Each stop has a product and a story. Works well for farms with multiple products or a diverse landscape.

Farm table experience: a shared meal with food from the farm. Simple, powerful, and highly rated in reviews. Requires no activity beyond cooking what is already grown.

How long should a visitor experience be?

For most small agritourism operations, 60–90 minutes is the ideal duration. Long enough to feel substantial and satisfying, short enough to fit into a visitor’s travel day and not exhaust a farmer who also has a farm to run. The golden rule: design for 60 minutes, expect 75. Visitors always stay longer when they are enjoying themselves, and the extra time is when the best conversations happen and the most products are bought.

Example: A herb farm in Kentriki Makedonia designed a 60-minute herb workshop. After the first season, the average actual duration was 85 minutes — guests stayed to ask questions, taste extra products, and buy things from the shop. The planned 60 minutes became 90 minutes of productive visitor engagement at no additional cost.

What makes an experience memorable?

Memorable agritourism experiences share three qualities: sensory engagement (guests use more than one sense — smell, taste, touch, sound), personal connection (they meet a real person who cares about what they produce), and a story they can retell. The experience that a visitor describes to friends over dinner is the one that generates future bookings. A clear, true, specific story — “we picked saffron at sunrise and then drank saffron tea” — travels further than any advertisement.

Content Focus

The Experience Gap in Agritourism

The most common situation in small agritourism operations across Southern Europe is not a lack of interesting things to show visitors — it is a lack of structure. Operators who have run informal tours for years often undercharge (or charge nothing) because they do not see what they do as a product. The experience exists. It just has no name, no price, no defined duration, and no consistent structure. Once these four elements are added, the same activity becomes a bookable, promotable, revenue-generating product.

What visitors are looking for in agritourism

European research consistently shows that agritourism visitors are motivated by four things: authenticity (they want to experience how the farm really works, not a staged show), learning

(they want to understand where food comes from and how it is made), connection (they want to meet the people behind the products), and relaxation (they want to slow down and feel the rhythm of rural life). A well-designed agritourism experience delivers all four — without requiring any additional infrastructure.

The Visitor Experience Blueprint — What to Fill In

The blueprint captures all the decisions that turn a farm activity into a bookable experience. Trainers should walk through each field before the exercise:

Experience name: a short, specific title that communicates what visitors will do. Not “farm visit” but “Herb Harvest & Tasting” or “Olive Press Morning” or “Cheese from Scratch.” The name is the first marketing tool.

Duration: total time in minutes. Be specific and realistic.

Maximum group size: small groups produce better experiences and more word-of-mouth. 6–10 is usually optimal. Maximum 15 for most farm experiences.

Price per person: cost-based or value-based. Calculate the minimum needed to cover time and materials, then price for the value delivered, not just the cost.

What visitors do (Step 2): one or two sentences describing the hands-on activity.

What visitors learn (Step 3): the story. What makes this product, method, or place special?

What visitors take home (Step 4): a product, a recipe card, a photo, a memory. Specify it.

Booking method: how does someone book this? WhatsApp, email, Google Form, booking platform?

When it runs: days of the week, months of the year, time of day.

Practical Exercise — My Visitor Experience Blueprint

Skill gap	Lack of structured visitor experiences. Most operators have interesting things happening on their farm but have never packaged them into a defined, bookable product with a name, a price, a duration, and a clear structure.
Practical solution	The Visitor Experience Blueprint — a one-page template that captures all the decisions needed to turn one farm activity into a structured, bookable experience: name, duration, group size, price, four steps, take-home item, and booking method.
Tangible output	A completed Visitor Experience Blueprint for one experience that is ready to name, price, and promote.
Objective	Design one structured, bookable visitor experience using what you already have on your farm
What learners do	Fill in the Visitor Experience Blueprint template. Choose one activity that already happens on the farm. Give it a name, a duration, a price, and a 4-step structure.

	Specify what visitors do, what they learn, and what they take home.
For experienced operators	Use a real activity you already offer informally. The goal is to add structure, a name, and a price.
For students / aspiring operators	Design for a scenario farm. Focus on one seasonal activity and make it as specific as possible.
Time	25 minutes (20 minutes work + 5 minutes sharing)
Debrief	Two or three learners describe their experience in 60 seconds: name, what visitors do, what they take home, and price. The room gives one piece of feedback: “What would make you book this?”

Do's and Don'ts

Do	Don't
Start with what you already have and already do — the best experience on your farm is probably something you consider ordinary but visitors find extraordinary	Don't wait until you have a new facility, a new product, or a bigger farm — the experience is already there
Give your experience a specific, descriptive name — “Olive Oil Tasting & Pressing Morning” is bookable; “farm visit” is not	Don't use generic names that could apply to any farm anywhere — specificity is what attracts the right visitor
Keep the group small (maximum 8–10 people) — small groups produce better experiences, more conversation, more sales, and better reviews	Don't try to scale a farm experience to a large group before you have run it at small scale and know what works
Always include a take-home item — even a small one. It is the physical souvenir of the experience and the thing visitors show their friends	Don't end the experience without a deliberate close — the last five minutes are the most remembered
Price based on the value, not just the cost. A 90-minute experience with a story, a product, and a personal connection is worth €20–40 per person in most European rural markets	Don't underprice because you feel uncomfortable charging for something you already do anyway — your time, knowledge, and hospitality have real value

Examples to Use

Greece: A saffron farm near Kozani introduced a “Saffron Morning” during the October harvest. Visitors pick for 60 minutes, watch the stigma separation, and leave with a labelled 0.5g sample. Maximum 8 guests. €28/person. Sold out every morning in the first season. The experience cost nothing to create — it was built entirely around what was already happening.

Italy: A cheese-making family in Calabria designed a 75-minute “Cheese from Scratch” workshop where guests make and press their own portion of fresh cheese to take home.

€25/person. The take-home cheese is the souvenir. Reviews consistently mention it by name. It now generates more revenue per month than the wholesale cheese sales. Cross-country insight: European agritourism research shows that hands-on experiences with a physical take-home item receive review scores 0.4–0.8 points higher than observation-only activities, and that visitors who make something are significantly more likely to buy additional products before leaving.

Adaptation Guidance

The 4-step structure and the Visitor Experience Blueprint work for any farm product or activity. Trainers should help learners identify the one activity on their farm that visitors consistently ask about or that they themselves consider most distinctive. That is the starting point. In areas with strong seasonal products (saffron, peaches, olives, chestnuts, wine grapes), the seasonal harvest moment is almost always the best foundation for a first structured experience.

Facilitation Guidelines — Unit 1

Before the session

- Print one Visitor Experience Blueprint template per participant
- Prepare a completed example blueprint for a fictional or representative local farm (project it or print it as a model)
- Prepare 2–3 scenario sheets for learners without a real farm to design for
- Prepare 2 short examples to read aloud: one informal activity (“farm walk” with no structure) and one designed experience (same activity with the 4 steps applied)

How to start the unit

Open with the question: “What do your visitors remember when they leave?” Let 3–4 people answer. Usually: the food, the person they spoke to, something they made or picked, the smell or the view. Then say: “Nobody remembers the brochure. Nobody remembers the price list. They remember the moment you let them press the olives, or the taste of the cheese they made. Today we design that moment intentionally.”

During the exercise

- The most common struggle is choosing which activity to design for. Say: “Pick the one thing visitors always ask about or the one you are most proud of. Just one. Everything else comes later.”
- Push for a specific name. If someone writes “farm tour,” ask: “Tour of what specifically? What do they do? What do they leave with? Name it from the visitor’s perspective, not yours.”
- For participants who say “I don’t charge for this,” ask: “How long does it take you? How many people can do it at once? What does the visitor take home? Now: what is your hourly rate?” Help them arrive at a realistic price.
- For students: encourage specificity. A vague scenario produces a vague blueprint. Push them to choose a specific product, a specific region, a specific season.

How to close the unit

Two or three learners describe their experience in 60 seconds: name, what visitors do, what they take home, and price. After each one, the room votes with a show of hands: “Would you book this?” If most hands go up, say: “That is your product. Now you need to name it, price it, and put it where people can find it.”

Materials checklist

- Printed Visitor Experience Blueprint templates (1 per person)
- Completed example blueprint (projected or printed)
- Scenario sheets for learners without a real farm (2–3 copies)
- Pens

Unit 1 — AI Research Support for Trainers

What to research

Visitor experience trends in agritourism in your region or country. Which formats are most popular with which visitor groups. Examples of structured agritourism experiences in your area that have been commercially successful. Average prices for agritourism experiences in your country and neighbouring countries.

Why this matters for delivery

Knowing what visitors in your region are already paying for — and what they are looking for that no one is yet offering — makes the experience design exercise more grounded and more motivating. Local price benchmarks are particularly useful: they show learners what is already working and give them a realistic target for pricing their own experience.

AI prompt for the trainer

Copy into ChatGPT, Gemini, or similar:

“I am training small agritourism operators in [country/region] on designing visitor experiences. Help me prepare by providing: (1) the 5 most popular agritourism experience formats in [country] — what visitors do, typical duration, and price range; (2) 3 examples of structured, bookable agritourism experiences in [country/region] — describe what they offer, how they are structured, and what makes them work; (3) what agritourism visitors from [country] and neighbouring countries most commonly look for and most commonly criticise in reviews; (4) what a realistic price range is for a 60–90 minute hands-on agritourism experience in [country/region] — low, medium, and premium. Keep everything simple and practical, suitable for rural operators.”

Trainer check before use

- Verify that named examples actually exist and match the description
- Check that price ranges are current and realistic for your specific area — prices vary significantly between coastal, urban-fringe, and remote rural areas
- Simplify language — if the AI uses marketing or academic terms, rewrite in plain words
- Make sure the formats suggested are achievable without investment for a small operator

Unit 2 — Tell Your Story and Welcome Your Guests

Slides: 8–11 (see Annex 1 — Presentation Plan)

Key Concepts Explained

What is a farm story?

A farm story is the two or three sentences every operator should be able to say naturally when a visitor asks “tell me about this place.” It is not a marketing speech and not a history lesson. It is a honest, human account of why this farm exists, what it produces, and why the person running it cares about it. A good farm story has a person, a place, and a reason. It takes under one minute to tell and is remembered for years.

Example: “My grandfather planted these olive trees in 1958. I grew up here and left for ten years to work in the city. I came back because I missed the smell of the first pressing in November. Now we make about 400 litres a year from the same trees. Every bottle is from this hillside.” That is a farm story. It has a person (the grandfather, then the speaker), a place (this hillside), and a reason (the return). No marketing. No jargon. Completely memorable.

What is the farm story framework?

The simplest framework for building a farm story has three parts:

The origin: where does this farm come from? Who started it? How long has the family been here? What drew them to this land or product?

The product and the method: what do you produce and how? What is special or different about your approach? Is anything certified, traditional, or rare?

The reason it matters: why does this work matter to you? What do you want visitors to understand, feel, or remember when they leave?

A farm story built on these three parts is honest, specific, and human. It is also extremely easy to tell, because it is true. Operators do not need to memorise it — they just need to practise saying it out loud three or four times until it feels natural.

What are basic hospitality principles for agritourism?

Hospitality in an agritourism context does not mean luxury or formal service. It means making visitors feel expected, welcome, and cared for from the moment they arrive to the moment they leave. The most impactful hospitality actions are also the simplest:

Be outside to greet them when they arrive. A visitor who pulls up to an empty courtyard and has to knock feels like an inconvenience. A farmer who steps out and says their name makes them feel like a guest.

Offer something immediately — a glass of water, a small taste, a seat. This signals welcome and starts the sensory experience before a word has been said about the farm.

Use their name at least once. If they booked by message, you know their name. Say it when they arrive. It is small and enormously effective.

Tell them what will happen and for how long. Visitors who know what to expect are relaxed.

Visitors who do not know what is happening next feel slightly uncomfortable the whole time.

End with a deliberate thank-you and an invitation to return or to recommend. “If you enjoyed this, we’d love a review on Google — it really helps small farms like ours.” Said warmly, this almost always works.

How do you guide a farm tour?

A farm tour is not a lecture. It is a conversation with stops. The most effective farm tours have 3–5 stops, each with one thing to see or touch, one thing to taste or smell, and one sentence to remember. Between stops, the guide walks with the visitors and asks questions rather than talking continuously. The conversations that happen between stops are often the most memorable part of the visit.

Example: A herb farm tour near Edessa has four stops: the drying room (smell, touch, explain the drying process), the garden (identify 5 herbs by smell alone), the distillation corner (watch a small demonstration), and the tasting table (4 herbal teas and 3 products to try). Total time: 55 minutes. The farmer walks and talks but asks as many questions as she answers: “Have you ever used fresh thyme in cooking? Do you know why bay leaves work in a slow-cooked dish?” Visitors leave feeling like they had a conversation, not a tour.

What drives a good review?

Research across European tourism platforms shows that the top three drivers of positive reviews for agritourism experiences are: the friendliness and warmth of the host, the quality and authenticity of the food and products, and the sense of having learned something real and specific. The top three drivers of negative reviews are: confusion about what was included or what to expect, poor or unclear directions, and a feeling that the visit was rushed or not personalised. Every item on this list is within the operator’s control and costs nothing to improve.

Content Focus

The Hospitality Gap in Agritourism

Most small agritourism operators are excellent at producing — their farm, their products, and their knowledge are genuinely impressive. The gap is rarely in quality. It is in communication: the ability to tell the farm’s story clearly and warmly, to make a visitor feel immediately welcome, and to guide a group through an experience in a way that feels natural rather than rehearsed. These are learnable skills. They do not require a hospitality diploma. They require practice and a small amount of structure.

Why the first five and last five minutes matter most

In any visitor experience, the first five minutes and the last five minutes have a disproportionate influence on what guests remember and what they say in reviews. The first five minutes determine whether visitors feel welcome and relaxed or uncertain and slightly awkward. The last five minutes determine whether they leave with a positive feeling that they will share. Everything in between — the activity, the tour, the tasting — is influenced by how good the opening was and remembered through the lens of how good the close was. Designing these two moments deliberately is the single highest-return investment in hospitality.

Practical Exercise — My Farm Story & Tour Guide Card

Skill gap	Weak or unstructured communication with visitors. Most operators know their farm deeply but struggle to explain it simply, warmly, and memorably to someone who has never been there before.
Practical solution	The Farm Story & Tour Guide Card — a one-page template that captures the farm’s story in three parts (origin, product, reason it matters), the structure of a guided tour (3–5 stops with one thing to show and one thing to say at each), and the hospitality checklist for arrival and departure.
Tangible output	A completed Farm Story & Tour Guide Card with a written farm story, a tour route with 3–5 stops, and a hospitality checklist.
Objective	Write your farm story and plan a guided tour that makes visitors feel welcome, informed, and connected
What learners do	Part A: Write their farm story in 3–5 sentences using the framework (origin, product, reason). Part B: Map a tour of their farm with 3–5 stops — at each stop, what the visitor sees/touches/tastes, and what the guide says in one or two sentences. Part C: Check the hospitality list (arrival, welcome, close).
For experienced operators	Use their real farm. They may already tell their story informally — the goal is to make it written and consistent so anyone on the farm can tell it.
For students / aspiring operators	Design for a scenario farm. Focus on making the story honest and specific rather than impressive.
Time	20 minutes (15 minutes work + 5 minutes sharing)
Debrief	Two learners read their farm story aloud. The room gives one word: what they felt when they heard it (curious, warm, hungry, impressed). That word is the emotional result of the story.

Do’s and Don’ts

Do	Don’t
Write your farm story and practise saying it out loud until it feels natural — it is the most used sentence in your business	Don’t improvise your farm story every time — inconsistency confuses visitors and makes you sound uncertain about your own place

Greet visitors outside and by name if you know it — the first 30 seconds of a visit set the emotional tone for everything that follows	Don't make visitors knock on a closed door or search for you when they arrive — being found and welcomed is the first act of hospitality
Ask visitors questions during the tour — about where they are from, what they cook at home, what they know about the product. Conversations are more memorable than presentations	Don't talk continuously without pausing — the best moments in a farm tour happen in the silences and the questions
End every visit with a clear invitation: to buy, to leave a review, to come back, or to bring a friend	Don't let visitors drift away at the end without a deliberate close — the close is the last impression and the best moment to ask for a review
Keep your tour route flexible enough to adapt to the group — a family with young children needs different stops than a group of food professionals	Don't deliver the same tour script to every group regardless of who they are — read the group and adjust

Examples to Use

Greece: An olive oil producer in Chalkidiki practised his farm story for two seasons before it felt natural. He reduced it from a 10-minute history to three sentences: “This grove is 200 years old. We press within 24 hours of picking — that is what gives the oil its bitterness and freshness. My job is to not get in the way of what the trees and the land already do.” Visitors consistently quote those three sentences in reviews.

Bulgaria: A rose farm near Kazanlak designed a tour with four stops: the rose field at sunrise (smell and pick one rose), the distillation room (watch the process and touch the copper still), the tasting bar (rose water, rose jam, rose wine), and the gift table (products made that morning). Each stop lasts 10–12 minutes. Average review score: 4.9/5. The farm story — told at the distillation room — is about the family's 90-year connection to the rose harvest. Visitors remember it word for word.

Cross-country insight: A consistent finding across European agritourism platforms is that visitors who receive a personal, name-based welcome give reviews that are on average 15–20% longer and 12% more positive than those who do not. The cost of that welcome: zero.

Adaptation Guidance

The farm story framework and the tour guide structure work in any cultural and agricultural context. Trainers should encourage learners to use their actual origin story — not a polished marketing version but the real one. In Greece, iAgroCert's context of certification and quality promotion adds a natural layer: for operators with certified products (PDO, PGI, organic), the certification story is part of the farm story. “This olive oil is certified organic. Here is what that means for what you are about to taste.”

Facilitation Guidelines — Unit 2

Before the session

Print one Farm Story & Tour Guide Card template per participant

Prepare a completed example — a farm story and a tour guide card for a fictional or representative farm

Prepare a short list of opening questions trainers can model: “Have you ever used fresh thyme in cooking?” “Do you know how long it takes to press one litre of oil?” “Can you guess which herb this is just by smell?” These show that tour conversation is natural, not scripted. If time allows: ask 2–3 learners in advance to share their farm story at the start of the unit — real stories from the room are more powerful than prepared examples

How to start the unit

Ask a learner to tell you about their farm in one minute. Most people will start with the size of the land, the products they grow, and the years in operation — facts, not feelings or story. Then say: “That is a CV. Now tell me: why do you do this? What would a visitor remember about your farm that they could not find anywhere else?” The contrast between the two answers is the lesson. The second answer is the story.

During the exercise

Part A (farm story): the most common problem is length. Operators want to include everything. Say: “Three sentences. Origin, product, reason. Nothing else. The detail comes during the tour.”

Part B (tour stops): push for specificity. “At this stop, what exactly does the visitor do? Touch what? Taste what? Hear what?” Vague stops produce vague experiences.

Part C (hospitality checklist): this is the fastest part. Walk through it as a group: “Do you greet them outside? Do you offer something immediately? Do you know their name? Do you ask for a review at the end?” Most people will say no to at least two items. That is the gap.

How to close the unit

Two learners read their farm story aloud. Ask the room: “What one word describes how that made you feel?” Write the words on a flipchart. They are almost always: warm, curious, hungry, real, connected. Say: “That is what a farm story does. It makes someone feel something before they have visited. That feeling is what converts interest into a booking.”

Materials checklist

Printed Farm Story & Tour Guide Card templates (1 per person)

Completed example farm story and tour card (projected or printed)

List of 3–5 example tour questions to demonstrate conversational guiding

Pens

Unit 2 — AI Research Support for Trainers

What to research

What agritourism visitors in your region most commonly praise and criticise in reviews. Examples of well-told farm stories from agritourism operators in your country. The most common hospitality mistakes that lead to low review scores for small rural tourism businesses. How other agritourism regions in Europe structure their guided tours.

Why this matters for delivery

Real review data from your region is the most persuasive material in this unit. When trainers can say “the top complaint in agritourism reviews in [country] is unclear arrival instructions”, participants immediately recognise something they have experienced as a visitor themselves. Local data grounds the hospitality principles in a way that generic advice cannot.

AI prompt for the trainer

Copy into ChatGPT, Gemini, or similar:

“I am training small agritourism operators in [country/region] on farm storytelling and hospitality. Help me prepare by: (1) summarising the most common positive and negative themes in online reviews of agritourism experiences in [country] — what visitors love most and complain about most; (2) giving me 3 examples of well-told farm stories from agritourism operators in [country/region] — short, honest, specific, with a person and a place; (3) listing the 5 most important hospitality practices for agritourism operations in a Southern European rural context; (4) describing what a great guided farm tour looks and feels like from a visitor’s perspective — what makes them feel engaged, welcomed, and wanting to return. Keep everything simple, human, and directly applicable.”

Trainer check before use

- Verify that the farm story examples are real and actually exist — do not present invented examples as real ones

- Check that hospitality practices are realistic for a small, family-run operation with one or two people hosting

- Simplify the language — this unit works best with warm, human examples, not management-style language

- Make sure review themes are specific to agritourism, not general hospitality or hotel stays

Unit 3 — Build Local Partnerships and Market Together

Slides: 12–17 (see Annex 1 — Presentation Plan)

Key Concepts Explained

Why do small agritourism operators need local partners?

A visitor who comes to a farm for 90 minutes needs somewhere to sleep, somewhere else to eat, something else to do. No single small operator can provide everything. But a network of local operators can. When a farm works with a nearby guesthouse, a traditional restaurant, a local craft shop, and a walking guide, each operator sends visitors to the others, and every visitor’s stay in the area becomes richer and longer. Longer stays mean more spending per visitor across the whole community. This is why local partnerships are not just good for the area — they are directly good for each individual business.

Example: Three small operators near Naoussa — a winery, a fruit farm, and a local restaurant — started cross-recommending each other by exchanging a small printed card with each other’s

contacts. Within one season, the winery noticed that 30% of its tasting visitors had come from the fruit farm, and the restaurant saw a significant increase in dinner bookings from winery visitors. No joint marketing budget. No website. Just three operators recommending each other with a piece of paper.

Who should be in a local agritourism partnership network?

The most useful partners for a small agritourism operation typically fall into five categories:

Accommodation: guesthouses, agritourism stays, small hotels. Visitors who sleep nearby are available for a morning activity. A farm that has a referral relationship with a local guesthouse has a natural source of daily visitors.

Food and drink: local restaurants, tavernas, traditional food producers, wineries. Shared food stories are easy to communicate and deeply satisfying to visitors.

Craft and culture: local artisans, workshops, traditional craft producers, museums, heritage sites. These extend the visitor’s day and the area’s story beyond agriculture.

Guides and activity providers: hiking guides, cycling tour operators, nature guides, cultural tour leaders. They bring groups that need a farm stop as part of a wider day.

Visitor entry points: tourist offices, local visitor centres, petrol stations with tourist maps, online local guides. These are where visitors first ask: “what should we do here?”

What is a joint offer?

A joint offer is a simple package that combines what two or more local operators provide into one bookable experience. It does not require a formal company, a shared website, or a complicated legal arrangement. The simplest joint offer is: “Book the farm visit and show this card at the restaurant for 10% off.” That is a joint offer. It creates value for the visitor, drives traffic to both businesses, and costs nothing but the willingness to cooperate.

Example: A herb farm and a local taverna in Western Macedonia created a “Herb Morning & Lunch” offer: 60-minute herb workshop on the farm, then a three-course lunch at the taverna using the herbs picked that morning. Price: €35/person (split between the two operators).

Neither operator could have offered this alone. Together, it became the most-reviewed experience in the area on Google. Booking: WhatsApp to either business.

What is a cooperation agreement and does it need to be formal?

A cooperation agreement between small agritourism partners does not need to be a legal contract. It can be as simple as a one-page written understanding between two operators that answers four questions: What does each party offer? How will visitors be referred between them? How will costs or revenues be split (if at all)? How will disputes or changes be handled? A written understanding — even informal — prevents misunderstandings and makes the partnership more durable than a verbal arrangement.

Example: A network of six agritourism operators in Halkidiki created a one-page “we recommend each other” agreement: each would keep the others’ printed cards at their welcome desk, post about each other on social media at least once per month, and alert each other when they were fully booked so visitors could be redirected. Signed by all six. One page. Total legal cost: zero. The network still operates five years later.

What is cooperative marketing?

Cooperative marketing means promoting more than one business together. It is more effective than individual marketing because it offers visitors a complete picture — “visit our area and do

all of this” — rather than a single activity. It also costs less per operator because the effort and any spending is shared. Cooperative marketing tools for small operators include: a shared social media page or hashtag for the area, a printed local map showing partner businesses, a joint event or open day, or a shared listing on a regional tourism platform.

Content Focus

Mapping Your Local Partner Network

The first step in building a partnership network is simply listing who already exists nearby. Most operators are aware of some local businesses but have never systematically thought about all the possible partners or which ones would most benefit their specific visitors. The Partner Map is a simple one-page exercise that identifies potential partners by category, describes what each could offer visitors, and marks which ones are the highest priority to contact first.

5 Steps to Starting a Local Partnership

Trainers should walk through these five steps:

Step 1 — Map: List 5–10 local businesses that serve or attract the same type of visitor as your farm. Include at least one from each category: accommodation, food, craft/culture, guide, and entry point.

Step 2 — Prioritise: Choose 2–3 partners whose visitors overlap most with yours. These are your first contacts. The rest can come later.

Step 3 — Propose: Contact each priority partner with a specific, simple proposal. “I think our visitors overlap. Would you be interested in recommending each other?” One sentence. Most people say yes to a specific, easy ask.

Step 4 — Agree: Write down what each partner will do, even informally. Exchange printed materials (cards, flyers). Set a date to review in one season.

Step 5 — Activate: Put the partner’s card at your welcome desk. Post about them once this month. Ask them to do the same. The network becomes real the moment it generates its first referral.

Practical Exercise — My Partner Map & Cooperation Plan

Skill gap	Low local visibility and limited cooperation with neighbouring businesses. Most small agritourism operators know their immediate competitors but have never systematically mapped the local businesses that could send them visitors or build a richer offer together.
Practical solution	The Partner Map & Cooperation Plan — a one-page template that identifies potential local partners by category, describes the specific value each partnership could create, and outlines one concrete first step for the two highest-priority partnerships.
Tangible output	A completed Partner Map with at least 5 potential partners identified and one concrete

	cooperation proposal written for the highest-priority partner.
Objective	Map your local partner network and write one specific cooperation proposal
What learners do	Fill in the Partner Map: list at least 5 local businesses by category (accommodation, food, craft/culture, guide, entry point). For each, note one specific way they could send visitors to your farm or create a joint offer. Choose the highest-priority partner and write a one-sentence cooperation proposal they could send this week.
For experienced operators	Use real local businesses. Include any that currently refer visitors informally — the goal is to make those referrals deliberate and mutual.
For students / aspiring operators	Map partners for a scenario farm in a specific area. Focus on what a realistic local ecosystem looks like for that type of farm.
Time	20 minutes (15 minutes mapping + 5 minutes sharing)
Debrief	Each person names their highest-priority partner and their one-sentence proposal. Ask: “Could you send that message this week? What is stopping you?”

Do's and Don'ts

Do	Don't
Start with the simplest possible cooperation: exchanging printed cards and recommending each other verbally. That is already a partnership and it costs nothing	Don't wait until you have a formal agreement or a joint website before starting — the best partnerships begin with a phone call and a handshake
Choose partners whose visitors overlap with yours — the best partner is one whose guests are already the kind of people who would enjoy your farm	Don't partner with every business in the area indiscriminately — too many weak partnerships dilute the value of each one
Propose something specific and mutual: “I will put your card at my welcome table if you put mine at yours” is easier to say yes to than a vague “we should work together”	Don't make a partnership proposal that only benefits you — the other party needs a clear reason to say yes
Write down even informal agreements — one page is enough. It avoids misunderstandings and shows both parties are serious	Don't rely entirely on verbal agreements for partnerships that involve money, referral fees, or shared marketing — write it down
Review your partnerships once per year — some will grow, some will fade, and new ones	Don't assume a partnership is working if you have not checked in with your partner in over three months

will emerge. Treat the network as a living thing that needs tending	
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Examples to Use

Greece: A network of four small producers near Naoussa — a winery, an apple orchard, a honey producer, and a cheese maker — created a printed “Naoussa Farm Trail” card showing all four locations with opening hours. Each operator keeps cards at their welcome area. The trail is mentioned on the regional tourism website. Visitors who discover one producer now visit all four. Total cost: printing. Total time to set up: one meeting and one afternoon of card design.

Bulgaria: An agritourism guesthouse near Bansko partnered with a local hiking guide and a traditional craft workshop. The guide’s groups spend their last evening at the guesthouse for dinner and a fire. The craft workshop hosts a morning activity for guesthouse guests who want a non-hiking day. The guesthouse posts about both partners twice per month. All three businesses saw measurable increases in bookings from the other two’s referrals within one season.

Cross-country insight: Research across rural tourism regions in Southern Europe shows that visitors who engage with three or more local businesses during a single trip spend an average of 40% more per day than those who visit only one. Every referral you make to a partner potentially doubles the visitor’s day and increases their satisfaction with the area as a whole.

Adaptation Guidance

The partner mapping exercise works in any rural context. In areas with strong cooperative traditions (agricultural cooperatives, village associations, tourism clusters), the partnership idea will feel familiar and the exercise moves quickly. In more isolated or competitive contexts, trainers should emphasise that cooperation is not about sharing customers — it is about creating a bigger total experience that makes everyone’s offer more attractive. The examples from Naoussa and Halkidiki are useful here because they demonstrate that Greek agritourism operators have already shown this works.

Facilitation Guidelines — Unit 3

Before the session

- Print one Partner Map & Cooperation Plan template per participant
- Prepare a completed example partner map for a fictional or representative local farm
- If possible, bring a real example of cooperative marketing material from your region: a printed farm trail card, a joint flyer, or a screenshot of a local area page that features multiple businesses
- Prepare a short list of local tourism businesses or networks in the area where you are delivering — this helps learners recognise real potential partners in the room or nearby

How to start the unit

Ask: “How many of you have sent a visitor to another local business in the last year?” Most hands will go up. “And how many of you have received a visitor who was sent to you by a

nearby business?” Usually fewer hands. Say: “The gap between those two answers is your partnership opportunity. Today we make it deliberate, mutual, and simple.”

During the exercise

Encourage learners to think beyond obvious competitors. The best partners are often not other farms — they are guesthouses, restaurants, craft workshops, and guides who serve the same visitors at different moments of the day.

Push for a specific cooperation proposal in the plan. If someone writes “work together with nearby restaurant,” ask: “What specifically would you propose? What does the restaurant get out of it? Write one sentence you could actually send them this week.”

If there are learners in the room from the same area, encourage them to partner with each other. The training room is itself a potential partnership network. A brief 5-minute “local partner speed-meet” at the end of the exercise can produce real partnerships.

How to close the unit

Ask each person to name their priority partner and read their one-sentence proposal. Then ask: “Who in this room could you contact as a potential partner today?” If there are learners from the same region, point this out explicitly. Close with: “You now have a map of your local network. Most agritourism operators in Europe never do this exercise. The ones who do consistently have more visitors, more satisfied guests, and more stable income. The network is free. All it costs is one message to a neighbour.”

Materials checklist

- Printed Partner Map & Cooperation Plan templates (1 per person)
- Completed example partner map (projected or printed)
- Example cooperative marketing material from your region (printed or projected)
- List of local tourism businesses for reference (optional)
- Pens

Unit 3 — AI Research Support for Trainers

What to research

Existing local agritourism networks or trails in your region. Examples of successful cooperative marketing between small rural tourism businesses in your country. What local businesses are most commonly included in agritourism cooperation networks in your area. Any regional or national support programmes for rural tourism cooperation and networking.

Why this matters for delivery

The partnership exercise is most motivating when trainers can show that it is already working nearby. A real example of a local farm trail, a joint event, or a shared social media campaign gives learners something to point to and aspire to. It also validates the idea that cooperation is normal and expected in agritourism, not an unusual or risky step.

AI prompt for the trainer

Copy into ChatGPT, Gemini, or similar:

“I am training small agritourism operators in [country/region] on building local partnerships and cooperative marketing. Help me prepare by: (1) describing 2–3 examples of local agritourism partnership networks or cooperative marketing initiatives in [country/region] — what they involve, how they are structured, and what results they have produced; (2) listing the 5 most common types of local partners that agritourism farms in [country] work with, and what each type of partner typically offers; (3) describing what a realistic first cooperation step looks like for a small operator who has never formally partnered with another business; (4) identifying any national or EU-funded programmes that support rural tourism networking or cooperative marketing in [country]. Keep everything practical and specific.”

Trainer check before use

- Verify that named partnership examples are real and still active
- Check that funding programme information is current and applicable to your region
- Make sure the proposed first cooperation steps are genuinely achievable without any financial investment or legal process
- Adapt examples to the specific agricultural and cultural context of your group — wine region examples do not always transfer directly to herb, fruit, or honey contexts

Case Studies

Each module includes exactly two case studies. Each follows the same structure for easy comparison and cross-country transfer. In Module 5, the case studies illustrate how structured visitor experiences and local partnerships produce measurable results for small farms.

Case Study 1 — Greece: The Farm That Turned One Herb into a Season

A herb farm and small shop in Kentriki Makedonia, Northern Greece

Context	A family herb farm near Edessa producing dried herbs, herbal teas, and small cosmetic products (soaps, creams) from lavender, thyme, oregano, and sage. The farm had a small on-site shop but few visitors came deliberately — most were passers-by who noticed the sign from the road. The owner, a woman in her 40s with a background in food science, had deep knowledge of her products but had never offered a structured visitor experience.
Challenge	The farm was consistently undervalued. Visitors who did stop bought small quantities and left quickly because there was nothing to engage them. The owner gave informal explanations of her products but had no structured experience, no clear price, and no way for visitors to pre-book. She was also not

	connected to any nearby accommodation or restaurant, so visitors from outside the area had no reason to plan a visit specifically to the farm.
Solution	She designed a 75-minute “Herb Workshop & Tasting” experience using the 4-step structure: (1) welcome in the garden with a fresh herb tea on arrival; (2) guided tour of the herb beds with hands-on identification by smell and touch; (3) 30-minute workshop making a personalised herb blend or herb-infused oil; (4) tasting of 5 products from the shop and a take-home pouch of the blend they made. Price: €20/person, maximum 8 guests. She also contacted the guesthouse 3km away and the local taverna: the guesthouse now lists the workshop on its welcome card for guests; the taverna uses her herbs in two dishes and mentions the farm on its menu.
Outcome	First season: 34 workshop bookings (all pre-booked via WhatsApp), €680 in workshop revenue, plus average product sales of €18 per visitor at the end of the session. The guesthouse referrals generated 12 of the 34 bookings. Average review score on Google: 4.9/5. Three reviews specifically mentioned the herb blend they made. The owner worked the same total hours as before the experience — she simply directed more of them toward groups rather than individual walk-ins.

3 Lessons Learned

Structure converts curiosity into revenue. Visitors were always interested in the herbs — they just had no reason to stay, no product to make, and no price to say yes to. Adding the 4-step structure and a price created a product from knowledge that already existed. The take-home item drives both satisfaction and sales. The personalised herb blend was mentioned in 60% of reviews. It was also the single biggest driver of additional product sales — visitors who made a blend almost always bought a related product to go with it. Two partnership calls changed the booking pattern. The guesthouse referral generated one-third of all bookings without any marketing spend. The taverna partnership made the farm part of a wider visitor story for the area.

What to Copy Tomorrow

Identify one activity on your farm that visitors consistently find interesting or ask questions about. Give it a name, a duration, a price, and a take-home item. Contact the nearest

guesthouse or accommodation and propose a referral arrangement. Write your farm story in three sentences.

Discussion Prompt

“What is the one thing you do on your farm every week that a visitor from the city would find extraordinary — and that you consider completely ordinary? How could that become a 60-minute experience?”

Case Study 2 — Bulgaria: The Four-Farm Trail That Nobody Built Alone

A cooperative marketing network of four small producers near Melnik, Southwest Bulgaria

Context	Four small agritourism operators within 12km of each other near Melnik: a small winery with a tasting room, a dried fruit and nut producer, a traditional pottery and craft workshop, and a family guesthouse with a farm kitchen. Each operated independently. Visitors who found one of them rarely discovered the others. None had the scale to attract visitors from Sofia or international markets on their own.
Challenge	Individually, each operator was too small to justify the marketing effort or cost of reaching distant visitors. The winery had the most recognition but could not offer accommodation. The guesthouse had accommodation but no distinctive activity. The craft workshop and the fruit producer attracted day visitors but not overnight stays. Each operator was losing bookings to larger, more complete operations in other regions.
Solution	The four operators met three times over one winter. They created a simple “Melnik Producer Trail”: a printed double-sided card showing all four locations with a short description, opening hours, and a QR code to a shared Google Maps list. Each operator keeps 50 cards at their welcome area. They created a shared Instagram account (@MelnikTrail) posting once per week, rotated between operators. They designed one joint package: “Melnik Weekend” — Friday wine tasting + Saturday morning farm kitchen breakfast + craft workshop afternoon + Sunday dried fruit and nut tasting with a packed gift box to take home. Total cost for

	the weekend (booked through the guesthouse): €145/person including accommodation. Each operator receives a fixed share agreed between them.
Outcome	Year 1: 28 Melnik Weekend packages sold (majority booked by visitors from Sofia and international tourists already in the Melnik area). The trail card was distributed through 3 local hotels and the Sandanski tourist office. Instagram: 640 followers in 8 months. Individual operator bookings all increased: the winery saw a 22% increase in tasting visits, the craft workshop started selling out weekend slots, and the guesthouse had its first fully booked summer season. Total marketing budget for the network: €120 (card printing). Everything else was time and mutual goodwill.

3 Lessons Learned

A trail card is the minimum viable cooperative marketing tool. One printed card, shared between four operators, distributed through existing touchpoints, produced more visitor traffic than any individual social media investment had previously achieved.

A joint package creates a reason to travel specifically to the area. Visitors who would not have come for one winery or one guesthouse booked the weekend because the combination offered a complete experience. Cooperation created a destination where there was none before.

Winter planning meetings are an investment with a seasonal return. The three winter meetings cost each operator half a day each. The result was a partnership structure that generated measurable income across the whole season. The off-season is the right time to build the network.

What to Copy Tomorrow

Identify three local businesses near your farm that serve similar visitors at different moments of the day or stay. Propose one simple thing: exchanging printed cards and recommending each other. That is the beginning of a trail. The package comes later — start with the card.

Discussion Prompt

“If a visitor spent an entire day in your area, where would they go? Is your farm on that route? If not, what would it take to get there — and who would you need to call first?”

Practical Exercises — Summary

All exercises include a variant for learners without an existing business.

#	Title	Linked to	Time	Output
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1	My Visitor Experience Blueprint	Unit 1	25 min	A completed blueprint for one structured, bookable experience: name, duration, price, 4 steps, take-home item, booking method
2	My Farm Story & Tour Guide Card	Unit 2	20 min	A written 3-sentence farm story, a 3–5 stop tour plan, and a hospitality checklist
3	My Partner Map & Cooperation Plan	Unit 3	20 min	A map of at least 5 local partners by category and one specific cooperation proposal

3 Take-Home Outputs

#	Template	What It Captures
1	Visitor Experience Blueprint	Experience name, duration, group size, price, 4-step structure (welcome, activity, explanation, close), take-home item, booking method, and seasonal schedule
2	Farm Story & Tour Guide Card	A 3-sentence farm story (origin, product, reason), a tour route with 3–5 stops (what to show, what to say), and a hospitality checklist (arrival, during, close)
3	Partner Map & Cooperation Plan	At least 5 local partners by category (accommodation, food, craft, guide, entry point), one specific value each partnership creates, one written cooperation proposal for the priority partner

The Business Canvas — Module 5 Update

After completing this module, learners should update their Agritourism Business Canvas from Module 1. Module 5 directly strengthens two canvas fields:

Field 2: Customer Segments — now learners have defined who their ideal visitor is for each experience: solo travellers, families, food enthusiasts, international visitors, educational groups. Each experience blueprint implies a specific visitor profile.

Field 7: Key Partnerships — now learners have mapped their local partner network and written a cooperation proposal. The Partner Map is the practical version of this canvas field.

Take out your canvas. Spend 5 minutes updating these two fields with what you learned today. Use a different colour pen if you are tracking canvas updates across all 6 modules.

Trainer note: Remind learners that Module 6 is the final module. The canvas they complete after Module 6 should have something written in every field. Any fields still empty after Module 5 should be a priority in the last session.

Self-Assessment

Five reflection questions. Personal and practical, not scored.

Looking at your Visitor Experience Blueprint: could you run this experience this month with no new investment? What is the single thing that would need to happen first?

What is the farm story you told people before today? How is the version you wrote in the exercise different — more specific, more honest, or more human?

Think about the last time a visitor left your farm. Did you greet them outside? Did you offer them something immediately? Did you ask for a review? Which of these three could you do differently next time?

Who is the one local business owner you should call this week about a partnership? What exactly would you propose?

If a visitor came to your farm tomorrow and then spent the rest of the day in your area, where would they go? Is there a trail, a trail card, or a shared story that makes your farm part of that day?

Trainer Notes

On the penultimate module

Module 5 is the second-to-last module of the programme. Learners are experienced with the format by now and often more open to sharing. The energy tends to be collaborative. Use this — the partner mapping exercise in particular benefits from group discussion, and the farm story exercise works well as a peer activity where learners give each other feedback.

On experience design

The most common trainer challenge in Unit 1 is operators who have been doing informal tours for years and resist the idea of “designing” them. The framing that works best is: “You are not changing what you do. You are giving it a name and a price.” The 4-step structure should feel like a description of what they already do, not a prescription for something new. If they resist,

ask them to walk through what actually happens when a visitor comes. In most cases, they are already following the 4 steps intuitively. The exercise makes it explicit.

On farm storytelling

Some operators will feel that their story is not interesting enough. “We’ve just always grown olives. There’s nothing special about it.” This is almost always wrong — the ordinary farm life that feels unremarkable to the operator is exactly what a city visitor finds extraordinary. The trainer’s job here is to ask questions that reveal what is genuinely interesting: “How long have the trees been there? Who planted them? What happens the day before harvest? What do the olives smell like before they are pressed?” The story is always there. The trainer helps the operator find it.

On partnerships

In some groups, participants will be competitors with each other as well as potential partners. Acknowledge this directly: “You do not need to send visitors to someone who does exactly the same thing. But you can all benefit from sending visitors to someone who does something complementary.” The Naoussa case study is useful here — four operators who are not in competition with each other, each providing a different part of the visitor’s day.

On the canvas update

Remind learners at the close of Module 5 that Module 6 is the last session and the final canvas update. Ask: “Which fields on your canvas are still empty or vague? That is your homework for Module 6.” Creating this sense of approaching completion motivates engagement in the final session.

On templates as deliverables

If a learner leaves with all three outputs filled in — Visitor Experience Blueprint, Farm Story & Tour Guide Card, and Partner Map — the module worked. These three documents together give an operator everything they need to run their first structured visitor experience, tell their farm’s story consistently, and start building a local network. Protect the exercise time.

Homework for Attendees

These tasks are designed to be completed after the training session. Trainers should present these at the end of the module and encourage learners to complete at least one before the next session or within 2 weeks.

Task 1 — Run a Trial Experience (linked to Unit 1)

Use your completed Visitor Experience Blueprint to run one trial of your experience before the next session:

- Invite 3–6 people who know you — family, neighbours, past guests, or cooperative members — for a free or low-cost trial run

- Follow the 4-step structure as written in your blueprint

- At the end, ask for honest feedback: What did they enjoy most? What was confusing? What would they pay for this?

Note any changes you want to make to the blueprint based on the trial. The goal is not a perfect experience on the first run. It is to discover what works and what to adjust. The second run is always significantly better than the first.

Task 2 — Practise Your Farm Story (linked to Unit 2)

Your farm story should be able to be told in under one minute and feel completely natural. To get there:

- Read your written farm story three times to yourself
- Say it out loud in front of a mirror or to a family member
- The next time a visitor or a new contact asks about your farm, use your story
- Note whether anything felt awkward or was hard to say — if it was, rewrite that part in simpler words

A farm story is not memorised. It is practised until it feels like your own natural way of talking about your farm. That usually takes 5–7 tellings.

Task 3 — Contact One Partner (linked to Unit 3)

Choose the highest-priority partner from your Partner Map. Contact them this week:

- Send a message or make a phone call. Use the one-sentence proposal you wrote in the exercise.
- If they say yes: exchange printed materials and set a date to check in after 30 days
- If they say no or do not respond: move to your second-priority partner
- Note the response and bring it to Module 6

The first contact is the hardest. Most people say yes to a specific, simple, mutual proposal. If yours is rejected, consider whether the proposal was clear and whether the timing was right — not whether cooperation itself is possible.

Task 4 — Write Your Hospitality Checklist Into Your Routine (linked to Unit 2)

Take the hospitality checklist from your Farm Story & Tour Guide Card and turn it into a physical reminder:

- Write the three most important items on a small card and put it where you will see it before a visitor arrives (near the door, on the kitchen table, on your phone screen)
- The next time a visitor comes, consciously go through the checklist: greet outside, offer something immediately, use their name, close deliberately
- After the visit, note: which items did you do? Which did you forget? Which felt most natural?

Hospitality habits are built through repetition, not intention. A physical checklist in the right place is more effective than a remembered plan.

Task 5 (optional) — Design a Joint Offer (linked to Unit 3)

If you have identified a willing partner, try designing a simple joint offer together:

- Meet or call for 30 minutes. Each of you describes what you offer and who your typical visitor is.
- Identify one thing you could combine: a visit to your farm followed by lunch at their restaurant, or their guests coming to your morning workshop.

Write down: what each party offers, what the visitor does, what the visitor pays, and how costs are split.

Test it with one booking before committing to a full season.

A joint offer does not need to be promoted widely to work. One booking that flows between two operators is proof of concept. Build from there.

Annexes

Annex 1 — Presentation Plan (Slides)

The slide presentation accompanying this module is provided as a separate file. It is designed for use in face-to-face, online, or hybrid delivery and follows the unit structure of this manual.

The presentation includes:

- Introduction slides (module title, overview of 3 units, opener: “What do your visitors actually remember when they leave?”)

- Content slides for each of the 3 units

- Exercise instruction slides with visual previews of each template

- Case study slides (Greece and Bulgaria)

- Canvas update instructions and self-assessment slides

See separate file: Module 5 — Presentation Plan and Slide Content

Annex 2 — Resources and References

How to use this resources section

As with all modules in this programme, the AI research prompts at the end of each unit are the primary trainer preparation tool. Use them before each delivery to gather local visitor data, partnership examples, and current pricing benchmarks. The references below provide verified sources for trainers who want to go deeper or cite specific data in class.

Unit 1 Resources (Visitor Experience Design)

Creating Successful Agritourism Experiences: A Practical Guide — EBRD + FAO / Agtivate — agivate.org

Comprehensive practical guidance on designing and packaging agritourism experiences. Directly applicable to the experience blueprint exercise.

UN Tourism — Gastronomic Tourism — unwto.org

Data on food tourism motivations, visitor expectations, and experience formats. Use for the “what visitors are looking for” content focus.

Visit Greece — Agritourism inspiration — visitgreece.gr/inspirations/agritourism

Greek agritourism examples and national positioning. Use to show how Greek agritourism experiences are presented to visitors and what formats are already popular.

Unit 2 Resources (Storytelling and Hospitality)

European Tourism Quality Standards — European Commission, DG GROW — ec.europa.eu

Quality indicators for rural tourism, including hospitality standards. Use to frame the hospitality checklist in a broader European quality context.

TripAdvisor / Google Reviews — public review data for agritourism in your region

The best source of real visitor feedback on what drives positive and negative reviews.

Search for agritourism in your area and read 20–30 reviews before the session. Use anonymised quotes in class.

iAgroCert Reference — For trainers delivering in Greece: iAgroCert’s work in certifying and promoting agri-food products provides a natural link between the farm story and the product quality story. Operators with certified products (PDO, PGI, organic) should be encouraged to include certification in their farm story and tour narrative as a driver of trust and premium pricing.

Unit 3 Resources (Partnerships and Cooperative Marketing)

EU CAP Network — Rural Tourism Cooperation — eu-cap-network.ec.europa.eu

Good practice examples of cooperative marketing and local tourism networks in rural Europe. Use to show that the Melnik and Naoussa examples are part of a wider European trend.

LEADER/CLLD for Tourism Cooperation — EU CAP Network — eu-cap-network.ec.europa.eu

Examples of LEADER-funded rural tourism networks and trail projects. Use when learners ask about funding for cooperative marketing.

European Network for Rural Development (ENRD) — enrd.ec.europa.eu

Broader rural development context. Use for the policy framing of cooperation as a supported and funded priority in EU rural development.

Country Anchors — Greece

Kentriki Makedonia Regional Tourism — visitcentralmacedonia.gr

Local agritourism and rural destination examples for Northern Greece. Use to identify existing farm trails, local tourism initiatives, and potential partnership networks in the area.

Greek National Tourism Organisation (GNTO) — gnto.gr

National agritourism positioning and promotion. Use for data on domestic and international visitor trends and the national context for agritourism experience demand.

Agrotica and agricultural trade fairs — helexpo.gr

Annual trade fair context. Operators attending trade fairs are natural candidates for cooperative marketing and network building. Use to encourage learners to see industry events as partnership opportunities.

Annex 3 — Canvas Journey Reminder

This is Module 5 of 6. The Agritourism Business Canvas from Module 1 should be updated after each module. After Module 5, learners update:

Canvas Field	What to Update After Module 5
Field 2: Customer Segments	Add the specific visitor profiles for whom your new experience is designed: families, couples, food tourists, international visitors, educational groups. Each experience blueprint implies a specific segment.

Field 7: Key Partnerships	Add the local partners from your Partner Map: accommodation, food, craft, guides, entry points. Note which partnership is highest priority and what the proposed first step is.
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Ask learners: “Take out your canvas. Spend 5 minutes updating these two fields. Use a different colour pen. Module 6 is the last session — any field that is still empty after today is your homework for next time.”

Module 1: first draft → Module 2: channels and relationships → Module 3: value proposition and revenue → Module 4: resources and activities → Module 5: customer segments and partnerships → Module 6: future offer and final version

Annex 4 — Quick Reference: The Visitor Experience Blueprint Fields

Field	What to write	Example
Experience name	Short, specific, descriptive title from the visitor’s perspective	“Herb Harvest & Tasting Workshop”
Duration	Total time including welcome and close	75 minutes
Group size	Minimum and maximum number of participants	2–10 people
Price per person	Cost-based or value-based price in €	€22/person
Step 1 — Welcome	How you greet them and what you offer on arrival	Meet outside; fresh herb tea while walking to the garden
Step 2 — Activity	What visitors do with their hands	Pick 5 herbs, identify by smell, make a personalised blend
Step 3 — Explanation	The story: why this product, this method, this place	History of the herb farm; organic methods; what each herb is used for
Step 4 — Close	How you end the experience and what they take home	Tasting of 5 products; take-home herb blend pouch; Google review invitation
Booking method	How visitors find and book this experience	WhatsApp; mention on Google listing and Facebook page
Season / schedule	When this experience runs	April–October; Saturdays 10:00–11:30; groups by appointment weekdays

Note: Fill in every field before running the experience for the first time. An incomplete blueprint is an incomplete product.

AgriVETourism Project

Enhancing Sustainable Agritourism through Vocational Education and Training

MODULE 6

The “Future” in Agritourism

Innovation, Climate Adaptation, and What Comes Next

Trainer’s Manual

For face-to-face, online, or hybrid delivery

Module Overview

This module helps agritourism operators and aspiring professionals look ahead — at the climate risks their farm faces, at affordable green improvements they can adopt now, and at the visitors who will be coming in the next five years. It is the final module of the programme.

The module also explores emerging visitor segments, including younger digitally native travellers such as Gen Z, whose expectations around authenticity, digital communication, and experience design are reshaping what agritourism needs to offer.

This module includes:

- **3 units**, each addressing one skill gap with one practical solution and one tangible output
- **3 core exercises** producing outputs that learners complete and keep, plus 1 optional extension exercise
- **4 trend-based case studies** — exploring future tourism trends relevant to any European rural context
- **3 take-home outputs** (Climate Risk and Response Plan, Green Improvement Plan, Offer Description + Ready Replies)
- **Self-assessment questions** for personal reflection
- **Facilitation guidelines and trainer resources** for each unit

Each unit follows the same formula:

ONE skill gap → ONE practical solution → ONE tangible output

Unit	Skill Gap	Solution	Output
Unit 1: Prepare for Climate Changes	Operators react but do not plan ahead	Climate Risk and Response Plan	1-page plan with top 3 risks and actions
Unit 2: Green Improvements That Save Money	Operators think green means expensive	Green Improvement Plan	3 improvements prioritised, 1 with action plan
Unit 3: Tomorrow's Visitors and Simple AI Tools	No knowledge of future visitors; fear of AI	Draft Offer + Ready Reply Collection	1 offer + 10 AI-generated replies

Target group: Existing agritourism operators, farmers diversifying into tourism, cooperative members; VET students and young professionals in agriculture and tourism

Estimated learning time: 2.5 hours

Delivery format: Suitable for face-to-face, online, or hybrid delivery. Requires printed or digital templates for exercises.

Horizontal EU priority: EU Green Deal, climate adaptation, sustainable rural development, digital transition

Why this module matters — the facts (trainer opener, 2–3 minutes)

- Climate pressure is now a demand driver: heatwaves, drought, and extreme weather are changing when and where visitors travel across Europe.
- Visitor behaviour is shifting: more interest in off-season travel, cooler destinations, wellness, authenticity, and value.
- AI is reshaping tourism: how travellers plan, book, and communicate is changing fast. Small operators risk falling behind without simple, free tools.
- EU policy direction is clear: tourism is expected to deliver the green and digital transition. Funding increasingly favours operators who demonstrate environmental responsibility.
- The opportunity is real: rural agritourism is exactly what a growing segment of European visitors is looking for — if operators know how to reach them.

Learning Objectives

By the end of this module, learners will be able to:

1. Identify the top 3 climate risks for their farm and write one adaptation action for each
2. Choose at least one low-cost green improvement with clear savings and start it within 12 months
3. Describe 5 visitor profiles for the next five years and explain which ones fit their location
4. Identify how emerging segments such as Gen Z differ from traditional agritourism visitors and adapt an offer accordingly
5. Use a simple AI tool on their phone to create an offer description and 10 ready guest replies

Suggested Delivery Flow (approx. 2.5 hours)

This is a realistic timing guide for face-to-face delivery. Trainers should adjust based on group size, energy, and whether the optional exercise is included.

Block	Duration	Notes
Opener: Why this matters — the facts	10 min	Evidence snapshot, set the forward-looking tone
Unit 1: Prepare for Climate Changes + Exercise 1	30 min	Content 15 min + exercise 15 min
Unit 2: Green Improvements + Exercise 2	30 min	Content 15 min + exercise 15 min
Short break	10 min	
Unit 3: Future Visitors + AI Tools + Exercise 3	35 min	Profiles 10 min + AI demo/tasks 10 min + exercise 15 min
Optional: Gen Z Micro-Experience exercise	20 min	Use instead of case study discussion if group is engaged
OR: Trend case study discussion	15 min	Choose 2 of 4 case studies to discuss
Self-assessment + closing	10 min	Reflection, homework, feedback forms
Total	~2.5 hours	Including break

If time is short: shorten the case study discussion or drop the optional exercise.

A Note on Trainer Research Support

This module is based on EU-level evidence, project research, and established agritourism practice. At the end of each unit, trainers will find a guided AI research support section. These are not a replacement for the module content — they are a practical tool to help trainers adapt the material to their own country, region, season, and participant group.

Each section includes a ready-to-use prompt that trainers can copy into a free AI tool (ChatGPT, Gemini, or similar) to gather local examples, recent data, and up-to-date references. This is particularly useful for updating climate conditions, visitor trends, funding programmes, and practical local illustrations before each delivery.

How to use the AI research prompts

- Copy the prompt into a free AI tool and replace the placeholders with your local details
- Always prefer recent and credible sources — official statistics, government publications, EU databases
- Simplify the AI output before using it in class — remove jargon, shorten, and check that it fits your audience
- Verify facts, dates, prices, and programme names before presenting them as current information
- These prompts are a starting point for preparation, not a substitute for trainer expertise

Unit 1 — Prepare for Climate Changes

Slides: 4–7 (see Annex 1 — Presentation Plan)

Skill gap	Operators experience drought, heatwaves, late frost, and shifting seasons but do not turn these into business decisions — timing, capacity, safety, guest communication. They react to problems instead of preparing for them.
Practical solution	A one-page Climate Risk and Response Plan — identifying the top 3 risks for a specific location, what triggers them, what they affect, one practical action for each, and a clear message for guests.
Tangible output	Completed Climate Risk and Response Plan.

Key Concepts Explained

What is a climate risk for an agritourism business?

A climate risk is any weather or environmental change that can hurt your farm, your visitors, or your income. It can be sudden (a hailstorm, a wildfire alert, a flood) or gradual (less rain every year, hotter summers, shorter winters). Both types need planning.

Example: A vineyard in Southern Europe faces drought every summer. The grapes survive, but visitors stop coming in August because it is too hot to walk through the vineyard. The climate risk is not just about the crops — it is about the visitor experience too.

What is climate adaptation?

Adaptation means making practical changes so your business can handle climate risks without losing visitors or income. It is not about stopping climate change — it is about being ready for what is already happening.

Example: Moving vineyard tours to early morning (before 10:00) instead of afternoon. Adding shade over the tasting area. Offering indoor alternatives on extreme heat days. These are adaptations — small, affordable, effective.

What is a weather plan B?

A backup plan for when weather disrupts your normal offer. Visitors who arrive and find everything cancelled are visitors who do not come back. A plan B keeps them happy even when conditions are difficult.

Example: A farm in central Europe has a plan B for rain: instead of the outdoor farm tour, guests do an indoor olive oil tasting and a cooking session in the kitchen. Same duration, same price, different format. Guests leave satisfied.

Why does guest communication matter during weather events?

Visitors need to know what to expect before they arrive. A simple message sent the day before — “Tomorrow will be very warm. We start the tour at 8:30 instead of 10:00. Bring water and a hat.” — turns a potential complaint into a sign of professionalism.

Content Focus

Common climate risks in Southern and Southeast Europe

Drought and water shortage, heatwaves (affecting both crops and visitor comfort), late frost (damaging early crops and blossoms), wildfire risk (especially in dry Mediterranean areas), flooding from intense rainfall, shifting seasons (shorter winters, longer dry periods, unpredictable spring weather). These affect the farm side (what grows, when, how much water is available) and the tourism side (when visitors come, what they can do, how comfortable they are).

The 10-decision resilience check

Trainers should walk through these 10 practical decisions that any small operator can make:

1. Opening hours — should I shift activities to cooler parts of the day?
2. Shade and water points — do visitors have somewhere cool to sit and drink?
3. Cancellation rules — what happens when extreme weather hits? Do I have a clear policy?
4. Event timing — should my peak events move to spring/autumn instead of summer?
5. Fire safety — do I know the local fire risk rules? Do my visitors know what to do?
6. Indoor backup — can I offer something inside when the weather is impossible outside?
7. Insurance review — does my insurance cover weather damage and visitor safety?
8. Partner network — do I have contacts I can call when something goes wrong?
9. Weather plan B — do I have an alternative programme ready for bad weather days?
10. Guest message template — do I have a ready message to send when conditions change?

How to adapt this to your area

Trainers should anchor this content to their local context. Every region has its own climate risks and seasonal patterns. Use local examples: which months are too hot for outdoor activities? Is water shortage a real problem? Are seasons shifting? Ask learners to name the risks they have experienced in the last 3–5 years — this grounds the content in their reality. The repositioning message is universal: cooler months often mean better visitor experiences.

Practical Exercise — My Climate Risk and Response Plan

Objective	Identify the top 3 climate risks for your specific location and prepare a response
What learners do	For each of the 3 risks: what triggers it, what it affects (farm + visitors), one practical adaptation action, one message you would send to guests before or during the event.
For experienced operators	Base this on real events you have experienced in the last 3–5 years.
For students	Use a scenario: a small farm with rooms and outdoor tastings in a hot, dry summer region with mild spring and autumn.
Time	15 minutes (10 work + 5 sharing)
Debrief	Each person names their number one risk and their plan B. Ask: who had a risk they had never thought about before?

Do's and Don'ts

Do	Don't
Plan for the weather you will get, not the weather you want — look at the last 5 years, not the last 50	Do not ignore the trend — the last 5 summers in Southern Europe were not normal, and the next ones will not be either
Move outdoor activities to cooler parts of the day when needed — early morning and late afternoon work well	Do not assume visitors will tolerate extreme heat just because you are used to it
Always have an indoor alternative ready — even a simple tasting in the kitchen is better than cancelling	Do not cancel events without offering an alternative — that is how you lose guests permanently
Send a message to guests the day before if conditions are changing — this builds trust	Do not wait for an emergency to think about what to do — the plan takes 15 minutes to write now
Talk to your neighbours and local services about a shared response plan for extreme events	Do not assume your insurance covers everything — check it once a year

Adaptation Guidance

Trainers should adapt the risk list to their local climate. Mediterranean and Southern European regions face stronger summer heat and wildfire risk — push spring/autumn alternatives. Northern and continental regions may face more frost and flooding risks. Every region has a shoulder-season advantage — the key is identifying it and building offers around it.

Facilitation Guidelines — Unit 1

Before the session

- Print one Climate Risk and Response Plan template per participant
- Prepare a simple list of common climate risks for your region on a flipchart or projected
- If possible, bring a local weather example: “Last July we had 42°C for a week — what would you have done?”

How to start the unit

Open with the evidence: “In the last five years, how many of you had a season affected by extreme weather? Hands up.” Most hands will go up. Then: “How many of you have a written plan for what to do when that happens?” Almost no hands. “That is what we fix in the next 30 minutes.”

During the exercise

- The most common struggle is picking only 3 risks — people want to list everything. Say: “Which 3 would hurt your business most? Start there.”
- The guest message is often forgotten. Push: “What would you text a visitor the night before a heatwave? Write it now.”

How to close the unit

Quick round: each person names their top risk and their plan B. If someone has a good guest message, ask them to read it aloud — others will learn from the wording.

Materials checklist

- Printed Climate Risk and Response Plan templates (1 per person)
- List of common climate risks (flipchart or projected)
- Pens

Unit 1 — AI Research Support for Trainers

What to research

The most relevant recent climate risks for your region or country: heat, drought, flooding, wildfire risk, late frost, season shifts. How these have affected farming and tourism in the last 3–5 years. Practical examples of adaptation from small rural businesses.

Why this matters for delivery

Climate risks vary greatly across Europe. A trainer in southern Spain faces different realities from one in northern Germany. Localised data and recent examples make the risk mapping exercise credible and immediately useful for participants.

AI prompt for the trainer

Copy into ChatGPT, Gemini, or similar:

"I am preparing a training session on climate risks for small agritourism operators in [country/region]. List the 5 most relevant climate risks for this area based on the last 3–5 years. For each risk, give: (1) what triggers it, (2) how it affects farming, (3) how it affects visitor experience, (4) one practical adaptation example from a small rural business. Use credible European sources where possible. Keep the language simple and practical, suitable for operators with no scientific background."

Ask the AI to return

- A table or list of 5 risks with triggers, farming impact, tourism impact, and one adaptation action each
- Any recent seasonal shifts relevant to the area (e.g., earlier spring, longer dry periods, shorter winters)
- One or two local discussion starters: “What happened last summer in [region]?”

Trainer check before use

- Cross-check climate claims against national meteorological data or European Environment Agency reports
- Remove any examples that feel too extreme or unlikely for your specific area
- Simplify the language — if the AI produces scientific terms, rewrite them in plain words
- Make sure the adaptation examples are realistic for a small operator, not for a large farm or hotel

Unit 2 — Green Improvements That Save Money

Slides: 8–11 (see Annex 1 — Presentation Plan)

Skill gap	Operators think “green” means expensive. They do not know which improvements pay for themselves quickly. In the project’s own research across three partner countries, renewable energy adoption was found to be minimal — a pattern consistent with wider European rural tourism data.
Practical solution	A Green Improvement Plan — a one-page template where learners review 10 practical options, prioritise 3, and commit to starting one this month.
Tangible output	Completed Green Improvement Plan + “do first this month” action.

Key Concepts Explained

What is a green improvement?

Any change to your farm or business that reduces your environmental impact — less water wasted, less energy used, less food thrown away, less waste produced. The key word is “improvement” — it does not need to be a revolution. Small steps count.

Example: Replacing five old light bulbs with LED bulbs costs €15 and saves €50–80 per year in electricity. That is a green improvement with a return in under three months.

What does “pay for itself” mean?

It means the money you save (or the extra income you earn) covers the cost of the improvement within a reasonable time — usually 6 months to 3 years. If an improvement costs €200 and saves you €100 per year, it pays for itself in two years. After that, the saving is pure gain.

What is the EU direction on this?

The EU expects tourism businesses to become more environmentally responsible. This is not optional — it is increasingly a condition for funding, for platform visibility (some booking platforms now show sustainability labels), and for attracting the growing number of visitors who care about environmental impact. The good news: most of what is needed is low-cost and practical.

Content Focus

10 practical green improvements for agritourism

Trainers should walk through this list with approximate cost, expected saving, and difficulty level:

Improvement	Approximate Cost	Expected Saving	Difficulty
LED lighting + timers	€15–50	€50–80/year	Very easy
Water-saving taps and shower heads	€20–60	€40–70/year	Easy
Mulching (garden and crop areas)	€0–30 (use own materials)	Reduces watering by 30–50%	Easy
Composting (food and garden waste)	€0–50 (simple bin)	Reduces waste disposal costs	Easy
Drip irrigation	€100–400 (small system)	Saves 30–60% water vs sprinkler	Medium
Shade nets / pergola over outdoor areas	€100–500	Extends usable season by weeks	Medium
Solar water heater	€500–1,500	Saves €200–400/year on hot water	Medium
Rainwater collection	€100–300 (basic tank)	Free water for garden and cleaning	Medium
Food waste control (plan meals, store better)	€0	Reduces food costs by 10–20%	Easy
Refill stations for guests (water, soap)	€20–50	Reduces plastic waste, guests appreciate it	Very easy

The EU direction: environmental responsibility is becoming a condition for competitiveness and funding — not a nice extra. Operators who can say “we reduce water use, we compost, we use solar” have an advantage in applications, on booking platforms, and with a growing segment of visitors who choose based on sustainability.

Practical Exercise — My Green Improvement Plan

Objective	Review practical options and commit to starting one improvement this month
What learners do	Review the printed list of 10 improvements. Mark: already using / realistic in the next 12 months / not relevant for me. Choose 3 to prioritise. For the top choice: write estimated cost, expected saving, first step, and a date.
For experienced operators	Base this on your real farm and current situation.
For students	Choose the 3 most relevant for a small farm scenario and explain why.
Time	15 minutes (10 work + 5 sharing)

Debrief

Each person names their number one improvement and when they will start. Ask: who chose something that costs nothing?

Do's and Don'ts

Do	Don't
Start with what costs nothing or almost nothing — composting, food waste control, mulching	Do not wait for a large budget — the most effective improvements often cost under €100
Think about improvements that help both the environment and your guests — shade, water, comfort	Do not install technology you cannot maintain — if it breaks and stays broken, it was a waste
Check whether your chosen improvement is eligible for LEADER or rural development funding (see Module 1)	Do not do it only for the label — do it because it saves money and makes your business more resilient
Keep it simple — one improvement done well is better than five started and abandoned	Do not try to change everything at once — pick one, do it, then pick the next
Tell your guests what you are doing — “we use rainwater for our garden” is a selling point, not just a cost saving	Do not assume guests do not notice — they do, and increasingly they choose businesses that care

Adaptation Guidance

Regions with high water stress should prioritise water efficiency and heat comfort first (drip irrigation, shade, water-saving taps). Regions with milder summers have more flexibility on timing — autumn and spring are good windows for improvements between seasons. Trainers should adapt the priority list to local conditions.

Facilitation Guidelines — Unit 2

Before the session

- Print one Green Improvement Plan template per participant
- Print or project the 10-improvement table with costs and savings
- If possible, bring a physical example: an LED bulb, a water-saving tap head, a photo of a shade net

How to start the unit

Hold up the LED bulb (or show a photo): “This costs €3 and saves €15 per year. That is a 500% return. No bank account gives you that. Now imagine 10 of these small changes across your farm.”

During the exercise

- Push participants to choose at least one option that costs nothing (composting, food waste control, mulching with own materials).
- For the top choice, insist on a date: “When exactly will you start this? Write it down.”

How to close the unit

Quick round: each person names their improvement and date. Ask: “Who chose something that costs under €50?” Celebrate these — the point is that green does not mean expensive.

Materials checklist

- Printed Green Improvement Plan templates (1 per person)
- 10-improvement table (printed or projected)
- Physical example or photos of improvements
- Pens

Unit 2 — AI Research Support for Trainers

What to research

Realistic low-cost green improvements for small agritourism operations in your region. Local priorities: water efficiency, energy saving, food waste, shade, irrigation, guest comfort. Approximate costs, savings, and any available local or EU funding support.

Why this matters for delivery

The 10-improvement table in the manual uses European averages. Local costs, materials, and priorities may differ. A trainer who arrives with localised cost estimates and one or two real examples from the area is far more convincing than one quoting generic numbers.

AI prompt for the trainer

Copy into ChatGPT, Gemini, or similar:

“I am training small agritourism operators in [country/region] on low-cost green improvements. List 8–10 practical improvements they could make with a small budget (under €500 each). For each, give: (1) what it is, (2) approximate cost range in [country], (3) expected annual saving or benefit, (4) difficulty level (easy / medium), (5) whether it is likely eligible for rural development or LEADER funding in [country]. Focus on water, energy, waste, shade, and guest comfort. Avoid abstract sustainability language — keep it practical and specific to a small farm or guesthouse.”

Ask the AI to return

- A localised version of the improvement table with costs in local currency or EUR
- One or two examples of farms or guesthouses in the region that have made similar improvements
- Names of relevant local or national funding programmes (LEADER, RDP, energy efficiency schemes)

Trainer check before use

- Verify cost estimates — AI often uses averages that may not reflect local prices
- Check funding programme names and whether calls are currently open
- Remove anything that requires professional installation or permits unless you can explain the process
- Prioritise improvements that an operator could genuinely start this month with no external help

Unit 3 — Tomorrow’s Visitors and Simple AI Tools

Slides: 12–17 (see Annex 1 — Presentation Plan)

Skill gap	Operators do not know who the visitor of 2027–2030 will be. They offer the same thing every year. They think AI is complicated, expensive, or not meant for small businesses.
Practical solution	Five visitor profiles with concrete product ideas for each. Plus five simple AI tasks you can do on your phone in 30 minutes.
Tangible output	A Draft Offer for one visitor profile + a Ready Reply Collection (10 AI-generated replies for common guest questions).

Key Concepts Explained

Why are visitor profiles changing?

Three big shifts are happening at the same time: climate is changing travel patterns (people avoid extreme heat), post-pandemic habits are sticking (wellness, nature, slow travel), and technology is changing how people search and book (AI-powered recommendations, social media influence). Small rural operators who understand these shifts can position themselves ahead of the crowd.

What is a visitor profile?

A description of a type of visitor — who they are, what they want, how they behave, and what would make them choose your place. Not a real person, but a realistic picture based on trends and data. It helps you design offers that match what people are actually looking for.

What can AI actually do for a small agritourism operator?

AI tools like ChatGPT, Gemini, or similar (free versions, on your phone) can help you write offer descriptions in clear English, translate text into other languages, generate replies for common guest questions, create seasonal event ideas, and improve your online listing — all in minutes. You do not need to be technical. You just need to type a question and review the answer.

One important rule: if you use AI to write something that guests will see, be honest about it when asked. Keep a human eye on what goes out. Check the facts. That is all that is expected.

5 Visitor Profiles for the Next Five Years

Profile 1: The summer-escape visitor

Who they are: Travels in spring or autumn to avoid peak summer heat and crowds. Wants nature, fresh air, comfort, and local food. Often a couple or small group, 35–65 years old, from urban areas.

What they look for: Cool mornings, shaded outdoor areas, authentic meals, quiet walks, no rush.

What you could offer them:

- “October herb walk and tasting” — a guided walk through the farm with herb picking, ending in a tasting
- “Early morning farm breakfast” — before the heat, with own products, under the trees
- “Local wellness bundle” — combine a farm visit with a nearby attraction (thermal bath, nature trail, heritage site)

Profile 2: The value-led alternative seeker

Who they are: Cost-conscious travellers of any age who actively choose quieter, less expensive destinations instead of crowded hotspots. They research carefully, compare options, and look for good value — not the cheapest option, but the best experience for the money. Often couples or small groups, 30–55.

What they look for: Affordable authenticity. A sense of discovery — finding a place that feels real, not commercialised. Good food and comfort at a fair price. A destination that feels like a smart choice, not a compromise.

What you could offer them:

- “Quiet countryside escape” packages — position your area as a calm, affordable alternative to crowded coastal resorts
- One-night micro-breaks with one experience included (tasting, walk, cooking) at a clear price
- “Best-kept secret” positioning — honest marketing that your area is not a tourist hotspot, and that is exactly the point

Profile 3: The wellness and calm seeker

Who they are: Stressed from work and city life. Wants calm, good sleep, clean food, simple movement, nature contact. Growing fast since 2020. Often 30–60, willing to pay more for quality and peace.

What they look for: Digital detox, silence, early evenings, herbal and nature experiences, no screens.

What you could offer them:

- “Digital-detox evening” — dinner without phones, conversation, stargazing, early bedtime
- “Quiet hobby session” — pottery, weaving, bread-making, cheese-making in a calm setting
- “Farm dinner with early bedtime” — dinner at 18:00 with own products, quiet evening, sleep by 21:00
- Herbal workshop — picking, drying, making tea or soap from farm herbs

Profile 4: The remote worker

Who they are: Works from a laptop, extends trips by adding working days. Needs reliable internet, a quiet workspace, and simple routines. Travels on weekdays — fills your empty midweek. Often 25–45, solo or with a partner.

What they look for: Good internet, a desk or table with a chair, coffee, quiet mornings, nature in the afternoon.

What you could offer them:

- “Two-day work-and-nature package” — workspace, meals, afternoon farm walk, evening calm
- Weekday rates — lower than weekend, but they fill rooms that would otherwise be empty
- A “quiet hours” policy — mornings for work, afternoons for nature, evenings for food

Profile 5: The social-first rural explorer (Gen Z)

Who they are: Younger travellers (roughly 18–28), digitally native, discovering destinations through short videos and peer recommendations. Growing travel segment across Europe.

What they look for: Short, participatory, food-first experiences. Visually genuine settings (not staged). Transparent pricing, fast communication, easy mobile booking. Good stories and a sense of meaning.

What you could offer them:

- Farm breakfast or brunch — short, local, naturally shareable
- Harvest or seasonal micro-experience (1–2 hours, hands-on)
- Local craft or food workshop with a take-home result
- One-night micro-escape — affordable, easy to book, story-rich

A more detailed analysis of Gen Z as an agritourism customer segment follows below — including what weakens their interest and how AI tools help you reach them.

Gen Z as an Emerging Agritourism Customer Segment

This subsection is for trainers. It provides the interpretive context behind Profile 5. Use it to prepare your delivery and to answer questions from participants — especially older operators who may ask “why should I care about younger visitors?”

Gen Z is not a niche. In many European rural destinations, younger visitors are already arriving — often as part of family trips, friend groups, or solo explorations. Understanding what they respond to helps operators improve their offer for everyone, not just for this one segment.

Why this matters for trainers

- Gen Z values what agritourism already offers — authenticity, local food, nature, participation — but they expect it to be clearly communicated and easy to book
- They are price-aware but will pay for experiences they consider meaningful — do not assume they are only looking for cheap options
- They discover destinations through peer content and short video, not brochures — operators who are invisible on social platforms are invisible to this segment

What weakens the appeal for Gen Z

- Vague or unclear offers — “visit our farm” without saying what happens, how long, or what it costs
- Passive experiences — a walk-through tour with no participation or interaction
- Outdated presentation — poor photos, no social media presence, a website that does not work on a phone
- Slow responses — if you reply after 2 days, they have already booked somewhere else
- Too much text, too little clarity — they scan, they do not read long descriptions
- Unclear prices or inclusions — they want to know exactly what they get before they commit

How AI and digital tools help you reach Gen Z

The AI tools from this unit are particularly useful for Gen Z-facing communication. Faster replies (ready reply collection), clearer English (AI-polished descriptions), better short offer texts (one paragraph, not one page), social-ready captions (for Instagram, TikTok), and easier multilingual communication — all of these directly improve how you reach younger visitors. The tools are the same ones covered in the 5 AI tasks below.

Important for trainers: avoid stereotypes about Gen Z (“they only want Instagram”). Focus on behaviour, not age labels. Many of the things that appeal to Gen Z — clear communication, short offers, fast booking, authentic experiences — also improve the offer for every other visitor segment.

5 Simple AI Tasks You Can Do on Your Phone

These tasks use free AI tools (ChatGPT, Gemini, or similar). The trainer should demonstrate the first one live, then let learners try the rest.

1. **Write a short offer description** for one visitor profile. Open the AI tool, type: “Write a short description for a farm visit offer for [visitor type] in [your area]. Keep it under 100 words, friendly tone.” Review and edit the result.
2. **Create 10 ready replies** for common WhatsApp questions: booking, directions, food allergies, weather change, cancellation, thank-you message, review request, seasonal update, group enquiry, returning visitor offer.
3. **Translate your offer** into English and one other language relevant to your visitors. Ask the AI to use simple, clear wording that a non-native speaker can understand.
4. **Generate 3 seasonal event ideas** (spring, autumn, winter) with a short timetable and what is included. Ask: “Suggest 3 small seasonal events for a farm that grows [your crop] in [your region].”
5. **Produce a Google listing improvement list** — ask the AI: “What should a small agritourism farm include in its Google Business Profile? Give me a checklist.” Then check which items you already have and which are missing.

One line on AI and transparency: if you use AI to write replies or descriptions for guests, be honest about it when asked. Keep a human eye on everything that goes out. Check facts and prices before publishing. That is all that is expected of small operators.

Practical Exercise — Write an Offer and 10 Guest Replies

Objective	Create a concrete offer for one future visitor profile and generate ready replies using AI
What learners do	Part A (10 min): Choose one visitor profile (summer-escape, budget-smart, wellness, remote worker, or social-first younger traveller). Design one offer for them. Pick one channel to sell it through. Write a plan B for bad weather. Part B (10 min): Open an AI tool on your phone and generate 10 ready replies for common guest questions about that offer. Trainer demonstrates first.
For experienced operators	Choose the visitor profile that best fits your real location and resources.
For students	Choose any profile and design an offer for the scenario farm.
Time	20 minutes total (Part A 10 min + Part B 10 min)
Debrief	Each person reads their best AI-generated reply. Ask: was the AI output usable as-is, or did you need to edit? What surprised you?

Do's and Don'ts

Do	Don't
Start with the visitor profile that fits your location and what you already have — do not invent a new business	Do not try to attract all five visitor profiles at once — pick one or two that match your reality
Use AI as a helper, not a replacement — always read, edit, and check before using the output	Do not publish AI-generated text without reading it carefully — it can include mistakes, wrong prices, or odd wording
Keep your offer simple — one experience, one price, one clear description	Do not overcomplicate — a wellness offer does not need a spa, a workation does not need an office
Try the AI task even if you think it is not for you — the first time is always the hardest	Do not ignore the off-season — that is where the future growth is for most rural agritourism
Think about which visitors fill your EMPTY days (weekdays, off-season) — that is where the real growth is	Do not be afraid of AI — it is a free tool on your phone, not a complicated system

Adaptation Guidance

The five visitor profiles work in any European rural context. Trainers should swap in local product examples: whatever grows in the region (wine, olives, herbs, dairy, fruit) becomes the basis for the offer. The AI tasks are identical everywhere — only the language and seasonal calendar change.

Optional Exercise — Build a Gen Z Micro-Experience

Use this exercise when time allows (20 minutes) or as a substitute for part of Exercise 3. It works well with mixed groups of operators, students, and young professionals. It is creative and energising, but structured enough to produce a usable result.

Objective	Design a completely new short agritourism product aimed at younger, digitally fluent visitors — using only what you already have on your farm or in your area.
Time	20 minutes (12 minutes group work + 8 minutes presentations and feedback)
Group format	Groups of 2–4 people. Mix operators with students where possible — the different perspectives produce better ideas. Works in face-to-face, online (breakout rooms), or hybrid delivery.
Materials	One printed Concept Card per group (or blank A4 paper with the 7 fields written on the board). Pens. Optionally: a phone with an AI tool to help with the description.
Output	A completed Micro-Experience Concept Card — one card per group.

Why this exercise is useful

It forces participants to think in short, clear, bookable products rather than vague ideas. The constraint — design for a younger visitor in 12 minutes — prevents overthinking and encourages creativity. The result is often something that appeals not only to Gen Z but to many other visitor types as well.

Instructions for learners

Work in your group. You have 12 minutes to design one short agritourism experience aimed at younger visitors (roughly 18–30). Use what you already have — your farm, your products, your setting, your knowledge. Do not invent a new business. Fill in the Concept Card:

Micro-Experience Concept Card

Field	What to Write
1. Name	A short, clear, attractive name for the experience. Not a slogan — a name a visitor would see online and instantly understand. Example: “Farm Breakfast Under the Walnut Tree” or “Sunset Harvest Hour.”
2. Duration	How long does it last? Aim for 1–3 hours. Shorter is better for this audience. A 90-minute experience is easier to sell than a full-day programme.
3. What happens	Describe exactly what the visitor does, step by step. Not “a tour of the farm” but “Pick herbs from the garden, make your own herb salt, taste 3 local cheeses, take home a jar.” Be specific.

4. What makes it shareable	What moment would a visitor photograph or film without being asked? A beautiful table, a hands-on activity, a surprising product, a view, a taste? Design that moment into the experience.
5. What makes it authentic	What is real and local about this? What cannot be copied by a hotel or a restaurant in the city? Your land, your tradition, your recipe, your story, your animals, your setting.
6. Price indication	What would you charge? Give a range. Think about what the experience is worth — not just what it costs you. A 90-minute hands-on experience with a take-home product at a farm is worth more than a restaurant meal.
7. One promotion channel	Where would you announce this? Instagram? A local Facebook group? WhatsApp? Google listing? Choose one and say what you would post (one sentence or one photo idea).

Debrief questions

After presentations (1–2 minutes per group), ask the room:

- Which experience would you book yourself?
- Which one is easiest to set up — could you start it next month?
- Which one has the strongest “shareable moment”?
- Would this experience work only for young visitors, or for other groups too?

The last question is key: most Gen Z-friendly designs also improve the offer for other visitors. Short, clear, authentic, easy to book — everyone benefits from that.

Trainer facilitation tips

- **Prevent overcomplicated ideas:** If a group tries to design a full weekend programme, stop them: “One experience. 90 minutes maximum. What happens in those 90 minutes?”
- **Keep it realistic:** The experience must use what they already have. If someone says “we need to build a yoga platform,” redirect: “What can you do next Saturday with zero investment?”
- **Focus on one target and one experience:** Not “young people who like food and nature and adventure and culture.” One type of visitor, one clear activity, one price.
- **Use the AI connection:** If time allows, ask one group to type their experience name and description into an AI tool and generate a social media caption. Show the result — it makes the exercise feel real.
- **Do not stereotype Gen Z:** If participants say “young people only want selfies,” challenge: “They also want meaning, taste, and calm. What do you have that offers that?”

Adaptation note for different rural contexts

This exercise works in any European rural setting. The concept card structure stays the same — only the content changes depending on local crops, crafts, traditions, landscapes, and food culture. A vineyard in one region becomes an olive grove in another, a herb garden in a third, a

cheese dairy in a fourth. The trainer should encourage participants to use whatever is genuinely local and seasonal. The key instruction remains: “Use what you already have. Do not invent what you do not.”

Facilitation Guidelines — Unit 3

Before the session

- Print one Draft Offer template per participant
- Prepare a summary of the 5 visitor profiles on a flipchart or projected
- Test the AI demonstration on your own phone before the session — make sure you know how to open ChatGPT/Gemini and type a prompt
- Have a backup plan in case internet is not available: print 3–4 example AI outputs (offer descriptions, ready replies) that learners can adapt manually

How to start the unit

Ask: “Who were your visitors last summer? Now: who do you think will come in 5 years? Same people? Or different?” Let 2–3 people answer. Then: “The visitors are changing. Today we learn who they are and what they want — and we use AI to reach them.”

For the AI part, demonstrate live: open the tool on your phone, type a prompt, show the result on the projector or read it aloud. Say: “This took 30 seconds. Now you try.”

During the exercise

- Part A: help learners pick a profile. Most will default to the one closest to their current guests. Push gently: “Who fills your empty weekdays? Who comes in October? That is your growth opportunity.”
- Part B: walk around. Some learners will struggle with typing the prompt. Help them phrase it. Others will be surprised by the quality of the output — let them share.

How to close the unit

Ask each person to read their best AI-generated reply aloud. Then ask: “Would you use this as-is? What would you change?” This teaches critical evaluation of AI output, which is more important than the tool itself.

Materials checklist

- Printed Draft Offer templates (1 per person)
- 5 visitor profiles summary (flipchart or projected)
- Phones with internet access (for AI tasks)
- Backup: 3–4 printed example AI outputs in case internet fails
- If using the optional Gen Z exercise: printed Micro-Experience Concept Cards (1 per group) or the 7 fields written on the board
- Pens

Unit 3 — AI Research Support for Trainers

What to research

Current and near-future rural tourism trends in Europe. Emerging visitor segments and how they behave. Gen Z expectations from rural and agritourism experiences. Simple, realistic AI uses for small operators. Local products, seasons, and traditions that can illustrate the visitor profiles.

Why this matters for delivery

This is the most forward-looking unit and the one most likely to need updating. Visitor trends shift fast. What was emerging in 2025 may be mainstream by 2027. A trainer who arrives with fresh trend data and local examples for each visitor profile delivers a far more engaging session.

AI prompt for the trainer

Copy into ChatGPT, Gemini, or similar:

"I am training small agritourism operators in [country/region] about future tourism trends and visitor profiles. Help me prepare by providing: (1) the 3–5 most significant rural tourism trends in Europe right now, with evidence or examples, (2) a short profile of Gen Z as agritourism visitors — what they want, how they discover destinations, what puts them off, (3) 3 examples of agritourism experiences in [country/region] that would appeal to younger visitors — based on local crops, traditions, or landscapes, (4) 5 simple AI tasks a small farm operator could do on their phone in 30 minutes to improve their marketing and communication. Keep everything practical and specific to small rural businesses, not hotels or resorts."

Ask the AI to return

- A trend summary suitable for a 3-minute trainer opener
- Local examples that illustrate each of the 5 visitor profiles (summer-escape, value-led, wellness, remote worker, social-first/Gen Z)
- 3–5 seasonal product ideas based on what grows or happens in the region (harvest events, local food, nature calendar)
- Sample AI prompts that participants could try during the exercise, using their local context

Trainer check before use

- Check trend claims against recent publications from European Travel Commission, Booking.com, or UNWTO
- Make sure Gen Z descriptions avoid stereotypes — focus on behaviour and expectations, not generational clichés
- Verify that the local examples are realistic and current — not outdated or aspirational
- Test the suggested AI prompts yourself before the session to make sure they produce usable results

Trend-Based Case Studies

These case studies are different from earlier modules. Instead of describing an existing business, they explore a future tourism trend and show what it means for any agritourism operator in Europe.

Trend 1 — When Summer Becomes the Off-Season

The shoulder-season shift

The trend

Heatwaves across Southern Europe are pushing visitors to travel earlier (April–May) and later (September–November). Destinations that used to be quiet in October are seeing new demand. Coastal hotspots are losing August visitors to cooler inland alternatives. The old calendar — “july-August is peak” — is breaking.

The scenario

A small farm with vineyard, 3 rooms, and outdoor tastings. Summer used to be their best season. But the last 3 summers, August visitors complained about heat, outdoor activities were uncomfortable after 11:00, and some bookings were cancelled. The operator decides to reposition.

What they changed

- Shifted the main season to April–June and September–November
- Created an “autumn harvest weekend” package (grape picking + cooking + tasting)
- Moved all outdoor activities to early morning (before 10:00) in summer
- Marketed the farm as “escape the heat” for urban visitors looking for a cool alternative

The result

October became the second-busiest month after May. Average visitor satisfaction increased because temperatures were comfortable. The summer months did not disappear — they just became “early morning only” with lower capacity and higher prices.

What you can copy

- Look at your booking data: are shoulder months growing? Build on that.
- Create one specific offer for spring and one for autumn — not just “we are open year-round” but something bookable.
- Change your online description to mention the season: “Perfect in October” is a more powerful message than “Open all year.”

Discussion prompt

“Which month could become your new peak — if you built the right offer for it?”

Trend 2 — The Farm That Speaks 5 Languages (With One Phone)

AI-powered communication for small operators

The trend

Visitors from different countries expect to communicate in their own language. Small operators cannot afford translators or multilingual staff. Free AI tools now allow anyone to write professional-quality text in multiple languages in minutes. Operators who use these tools respond faster, reach wider, and convert more enquiries into bookings.

The scenario

A farm with rooms and a small shop, run by one family. They speak their own language and basic English. They receive enquiries in German, French, and Dutch but cannot reply properly. Their online listing is only in one language. They lose bookings because responses take too long or sound unprofessional.

What they changed

- Used a free AI tool to translate their offer description into English, German, French, and one neighbouring language
- Created a ready reply collection: 10 pre-written WhatsApp answers for common questions in 3 languages
- Generated seasonal social media posts in English using AI, then reviewed and posted them
- Improved their Google listing using an AI-generated checklist of what to include

The result

Response time dropped from 2 days to 2 hours. Enquiries from foreign visitors doubled within one season. Direct bookings increased because the farm could now communicate confidently in 4 languages. The total cost: zero — all tools used were free.

What you can copy

- Open ChatGPT or Gemini on your phone today. Type your farm description and ask it to translate into English.
- Create 10 ready replies for the most common guest questions. Save them in your phone notes.
- Update your Google Business Profile this week — use the AI checklist to see what is missing.

Discussion prompt

“What is the one guest question you get most often? Could AI help you answer it faster and better?”

Trend 3 — No Pool, No Wi-Fi, Fully Booked

Wellness and slow tourism replacing traditional holidays

The trend

A growing number of European visitors are choosing holidays specifically for calm, silence, nature contact, and disconnection from screens. They do not want luxury or entertainment — they want peace. Farms that offer “nothing” (no TV, no pool, no noise) are finding that “nothing” is exactly what these visitors are willing to pay premium prices for.

The scenario

A simple agritourism operation: a restored farmhouse, a garden, a small kitchen, a forest nearby. No pool, no entertainment facilities, no children’s area. The operator thought they could not compete with bigger places that have pools and activities. Then they tried a different approach.

What they changed

- Created a “silence evening” offer: dinner at 18:00, no phones, conversation only, stargazing, bedtime by 21:00
- Added a “forest walk and breathing” morning session — a gentle 45-minute walk with stops for silence and observation
- Offered a herbal workshop: picking herbs from the garden, making tea and simple soap, taking a small package home
- Marketed the farm as “a place where nothing happens — and that is the point”

The result

The wellness and calm positioning attracted higher-paying guests who stayed longer and complained less. Weekday occupancy improved because wellness travellers do not only travel on weekends. Reviews mentioned “peace,” “sleep quality,” and “exactly what we needed.” Investment cost: almost zero — they used what they already had.

What you can copy

- You do not need a spa. You need silence, nature, good food, and a clear message.
- Try one “calm” offer this season: early dinner, no phones, quiet evening. See how guests respond.
- Write your description honestly: “We have no pool. We have no TV. We have a forest, a garden, and homemade food.” That honesty attracts exactly the right visitor.

Discussion prompt

“What do you already have that a stressed city visitor would pay for — if they knew about it?”

Trend 4 — Farm Brunch, One Photo, Fully Booked

How shareable, local, short-format experiences attract younger travellers

The trend

Younger travellers across Europe are increasingly choosing rural destinations — not for long stays, but for short, vivid, food-first experiences they can share with their peers. They discover these places through short videos and friend recommendations, not through brochures or tourism websites. A single well-timed photo of a farmhouse breakfast or a hands-on workshop can bring more bookings than a year of advertising.

The scenario

A small farm with a kitchen garden, some fruit trees, and a beautiful old table under a walnut tree. No rooms, no website, no booking platform. The operator’s daughter posted a photo of a Sunday morning breakfast — fresh bread, eggs, honey, fruit, herbs from the garden, morning light. The post reached 4,000 people. Within a week, 15 people asked: “Can we come?”

What they changed

- Created a “farm brunch” offer: Saturday morning, 10:00–12:00, maximum 12 guests, €18 per person
- Kept it simple: seasonal food from the garden, bread baked that morning, local cheese, honey, herb tea
- No website — booking by direct message only (WhatsApp and Instagram)
- Encouraged guests to photograph and share — the setting was naturally attractive, nothing was staged
- Used an AI tool to write the offer description in English and two other languages

The result

Fully booked within 3 weeks, every Saturday from May to October. Most guests were 20–35 years old, came in small groups, and discovered the farm through social media. Many returned or brought friends. The offer cost almost nothing to set up — the food came from the farm, the table was already there, the beauty was real.

What you can copy

- You do not need rooms or a website. You need one clear, short, bookable offer.
- Take one good photo of your best moment (morning light, fresh food, real setting) and share it.
- Keep the offer short, clear, and easy to book: what, when, how much, how to reserve.
- Let guests share their experience — do not ask them to, just make the setting worth sharing.

Discussion prompt

“What is the most visually attractive moment on your farm — the one a guest would photograph without being asked?”

Practical Exercises — Summary

#	Title	Linked to	Time	Output
1	My Climate Risk and Response Plan	Unit 1	15 min	Top 3 risks with actions and guest messages
2	My Green Improvement Plan	Unit 2	15 min	3 improvements prioritised, 1 with action plan
3	Write an Offer and 10 Guest Replies	Unit 3	20 min	1 offer + 10 AI-generated guest replies

3 Take-Home Outputs

#	Output	What It Captures
1	Climate Risk and Response Plan	Top 3 risks, triggers, adaptation actions, guest messages
2	Green Improvement Plan	10 options reviewed, 3 prioritised, 1 with action plan and start date
3	Draft Offer + Ready Reply Collection	1 visitor profile, 1 offer, 1 channel, weather plan B, 10 AI-generated replies

Self-Assessment

Five reflection questions. Personal and practical, not scored.

1. What are your top 3 climate risks — and do you have a response for each?
2. Which green improvement could you realistically start in the next 12 months? What does it cost?
3. Which of the 5 visitor profiles fits your location best? What would you offer them?
4. Did you try an AI tool today? What did it produce? Would you use it again?
5. What would make your current offer more attractive to a younger visitor who discovers destinations through social media? Which part of your offer would they find most interesting — and which least?

Trainer Notes

On the final module

This is Module 6 — the last session. Learners may be tired or feel they have already learned enough. The energy comes from looking forward, not backward. Keep the tone forward-looking and practical: “What will you do differently next season?”

On the AI exercise

This will be the most unpredictable part of the session. Some learners will be excited, others resistant. Demonstrate first on your own phone. Keep it simple: one task, one tool, one result. If internet fails, use the printed backup examples.

On the mixed audience

Students often engage more with Unit 3 (future trends, AI) than experienced operators. Use this energy. Pair students with operators during exercises — the fresh perspective helps.

On Gen Z content

Avoid stereotypes: “Gen Z only wants Instagram” is not helpful. Focus on behaviour, not age labels. The key insight is that what works for younger visitors — clear communication, short offers, fast responses, authentic settings, easy booking — also improves the offer for every other visitor segment. Encourage older operators to see Gen Z-friendly changes as general quality improvements, not a special concession to a different generation. If a learner says “I do not get young people,” redirect: “What would happen if your offer description was shorter, your photos were better, and your reply time was 2 hours instead of 2 days? Every visitor benefits from that.”

On timing

Unit 3 tends to run long because of the AI exercise. If behind schedule, shorten the case study discussion.

Optional homework

Complete one of the 5 AI tasks at home this week. Send the result to the trainer or a fellow participant for feedback.

Homework for Attendees

These tasks help learners apply what they learned to their real situation. Complete at least one within two weeks.

Task 1 — Complete Your Climate Response Plan at Home

Revisit the Climate Risk and Response Plan you started in class. Add more detail: specific dates when risks are highest, names of people to contact in an emergency, exact wording for guest messages. Share it with a family member or neighbour.

Task 2 — Start Your Number One Green Improvement

You chose one improvement and set a date. Now do it. If it was mulching, buy the material this weekend. If it was LED bulbs, replace them this week. Take a photo of before and after.

Task 3 — Try All 5 AI Tasks

In class you tried one or two. Now try all five at home: offer description, ready replies, translation, seasonal events, Google listing checklist. Save the results in your phone notes. Send the best one to a fellow participant.

Annexes

Annex 1 — Presentation Plan (Slides)

The slide presentation accompanying this module is provided as a separate file. It follows the unit structure of this manual and is designed for face-to-face, online, or hybrid delivery.

See separate file: Module 6 — Presentation Plan and Slide Content

Annex 2 — AI Localisation and Update Prompts for Trainers

This annex complements the module’s evidence base by providing structured AI research prompts that help trainers adapt the content to their own country, region, season, and participant group. The prompts are designed to be copied into a free AI tool (ChatGPT, Gemini, or similar) with minimal editing.

What this annex provides

- One guided AI research prompt per unit, tailored to the unit’s specific content
- Placeholders for local details ([country], [region], [crop], [season]) that trainers replace before use
- Clear instructions on what to ask the AI to return and how to validate the output
- Safeguards reminding trainers to verify facts, simplify language, and check that results fit local reality

How to use

Before each delivery, spend 15–20 minutes running the relevant prompts for your context. Review the output, select the most useful examples and data, simplify where needed, and bring the localised material to the session. This ensures that the module content — while based on European-level evidence — always feels grounded in the participants’ own reality.

Prompt locations in this manual

Unit	Prompt Focus	Page Reference
Unit 1	Local climate risks, seasonal shifts, adaptation examples	See Unit 1 — AI Research Support
Unit 2	Low-cost green improvements, local costs and funding	See Unit 2 — AI Research Support
Unit 3	Visitor trends, Gen Z, local product/season examples, AI task demos	See Unit 3 — AI Research Support

These prompts are a preparation tool for trainers. They do not replace the module content, the trainer’s own expertise, or verified primary sources. All AI output should be reviewed, simplified, and validated before use in a training session.



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