

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.