

FARMLAND Project:

Training of Trainers Pilot Testing Session - Analysis

In the framework of the Farmland Project CEJA organized a *Training of Trainers* session in Brussels on 6 May. As part of it, farmers were asked to test the learning platform developed for the project. Via the use of questionnaires CEJA then analysed the feedback that was given and produced a report. The document is split into three parts first analyzing the results from the questionnaires developed by the Project's coordinator followed by an analysis of additional evaluation questionnaires developed by CEJA and concluding remarks from the open debate with trainers.

PART A – Analysis of Coordinator's Questionnaire Feedback

In total we received 11 questionnaires of which 2 were only partially filled in.

General Aspects

In the first section which dealt with the general aspects of the Farmland Project pilot testing most of the answers, as seen in Table 1 below, were positive (in the range of 4 and 5). Trainers showed great interest in the project and they appreciated the attitude towards the participants. On the other hand, they expressed some reservation in regards to the clarity of the presentation and level of knowledge gained.

	1	2	3	4	5
Accessibility level	0	2	3	5	1
Clarity of the presentation	0	0	7	4	0
Level of gained knowledge	0	1	4	4	1
Level of interest	0	2	0	8	1
Attitude towards participants	0	2	1	6	2

Furthermore, some would have appreciated better internet connection and better structure of the introduction as they missed the background information.

Content of the Modules

In terms of the content of the modules, trainers testing the learning platform were more critical. They generally believed the modules contained enough information to deepen their knowledge and they used language that was easily understood.

Table 2	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
The Presented materials have provided information in a logical, structured, dynamic and interesting way	0	2	3	4	1
Answers were provided to the participants' questions, in order to clarify and deepen the knowledge	0	2	4	1	2
Participation in this event will be useful in my future professional activities	0	5	0	4	1
The modules contain enough information to deepen my knowledge	1	1	2	3	3
The modules use a language I can easily understand	0	0	2	5	3

From the comments collected from the trainers we observed that they would have liked to see more information on, for example, automatisations of farms, company management, cow management and cow comfort. Furthermore, an emphasis should be placed on 'didactics'. Some also suggested not using 'big words', which younger generations of farmers would not be able to understand or pronounce. Some of the slides were overcrowded with information while there was a need for an introduction to the Farmland project, and the E-learning Platform and its target audience before the first module began. Some comments referred to the failure to clearly define the target group for which the platform is designed as well as to offer a guide on how to talk to children of different ages. It was also commented that more videos should be used.

Describe in 3 words the FARMLAND project's piloting test of the training system

Most of the comments were positive although some were critical.

"Interesting but not innovative"

"Interesting"

"Potential not used to the full extent"

"Well-presented/very organized/ welcoming"

"Very interactive"

"Low level info"

"Interesting, detailed and theoretical"

"Exchange, knowledge, theoretical"

What are the most interesting aspects of this event?

On the question concerning the interesting aspects of the pilot testing, trainers offered a great array of answers. Some liked the fact that the modules allowed them to learn about different forms of agriculture in different countries, and to learn about various aspects of the sector. They also appreciated that they got a chance to exchange experiences on farm visits to educational farms with other people and experts.

What were the least interesting aspects of this event?

On the other hand, the trainers would have appreciated a more user-friendly and navigable layout of the courses, innovative farming techniques presented alongside older traditional techniques, as well as a defined target audience at the beginning before the modules began.

PART B – Analysis of CEJA Evaluation Questionnaire Feedback

Furthermore CEJA had designed its own questionnaire which, in conjunction with the coordinator's questionnaire as discussed above, allows for an enhanced insight into the outcome of the pilot testing session. CEJA distributed 12 questionnaires and received all 12 back completed by the participants.

How did the Training of Trainers go?

Most of the feedback from the trainers was positive (6) or very positive (4). Only two of them were not sure whether the session was good or bad.

During the Training of Trainers did you get additional insight about the courses?

All twelve trainers answered *yes* to this question confirming that the pilot testing session was insightful and informative. The trainers appreciated the good organization and the evocative discussion that was held during the testing phase. Some said there was a clear interest in their opinion but others expected a bit more. For example, one farmer argued that most of the questions in the modules' tests could be answered easily, but at the same time they stated that the test at the end was too difficult. However, this largely depends on the knowledge of individual farmers.

Which improvements do you recommend for the courses?

The twelve respondents highlighted a number of issues for improvement – notably to have a better introduction to the project and the aim of the training platform at the beginning of the training platform; the need for making it more compatible for those who have to read it (i.e. Belgian farmers are not the same as the ones from Portugal); to make it clearer from the beginning which age groups are being targeted by the project; to update some information on farming that may seem outdated in certain parts of Europe; and that the learning platform should be made available on CDs as farmers may not always have good internet connection.

How satisfied were you with the structure of the courses?

For the most part, the majority of testers were satisfied (4) or very satisfied (4) with the structure of the course. Two of them were unsure and a further two were not satisfied.

Trainers would have appreciated more of an introduction to the Farmland project and to make the goals of the project clear from the start. Some found the content too theoretical but as a good basis for teachers.

How satisfied were you with the clarity of the content of the courses?

Similarly to their answers on the structure, testers were mostly satisfied (4) or very satisfied (4) with three of them being unsure and one being unsatisfied.

Was this training useful to you and would you recommend it to others?

Only seven of the twelve respondents answered the question. Of those who did five agreed that the training was useful and that he/she would recommend it to others. One said it was not useful but would recommend it, and one would not recommend it at all.

From the comments collected trainers were unsure how the information in the courses could be useful to those who are already farmers and have a sufficient knowledge of what they do. One trainer praised Module 1 as very interesting and essential. Additionally it was commented that more emphasis could be given on teaching farmers 'how' to communicate and engage with the audience (e.g. children) rather than 'what' to say.

PART C – Conclusion

Conclusions from Questionnaires

Overall the Training of Trainers session was successful. Those participating in it appreciated how well organized it was. Furthermore, trainers enjoyed the opportunity for networking with other farmers and experts and they were satisfied with the structure of the courses. However, on a number of occasions they pointed out that the information in terms of the content of the courses was not always relevant to them and that the focus should be on showing farmers how to communicate and engage with children. Trainers missed a better introduction to the Farmland project, the platform and the target audience at the beginning of the training platform.

Results from Discussion and Feedback from Trainers and Trainees

In regards to the content of the project overall, trainers appreciated that the courses enabled farmers to be knowledgeable about the farming industry and the food chain, and consequently they would be able show professionalism in their business. However, farmers additionally indicated that while the transfer of knowledge of farming to younger generations was very important, enabling children to 'experience' work and life on farms that produce food for the wider population was equally important. Some trainers were also concerned that the information provided was not applicable to some farmers in certain countries because it was

outdated, though they identified that this information was still significant to many farmers that are not knowledgeable on particular sectors of the industry. Further to this, it was agreed that more modern ways of farming and producing food should be included alongside traditional and older farming techniques, for example milking machines and milking robots.

In terms of the technical aspects of the modules, there was some confusion amongst trainers about the level of difficulty of the tests at the end and what target audience they were appropriate for. It was clarified that the tests were difficult and presented in a user-friendly layout as they were specifically for farmers to test their knowledge so that they would be able to communicate a wide range of information to children. Nevertheless, trainers noted that it would be more helpful to farmers if they were able to navigate between each module and slides through the use of search functions. This would enable them to search for one particular module or slide. One trainer also commented that the layout of module 2 was better than module 4 for example, as module 4 was too dark and harder to read. Finally a majority of trainers identified that more pictures, especially modern pictures, were needed, and that these could also be used by farmers on their farms to children if they were printed or in powerpoint form.