



## FOCUS GROUP WORKSHOP DATA

<b>Country</b>	Latvia
<b>Date</b>	08.04.2014.
<b>FG Start</b>	12:00
<b>FG End</b>	16:00
<b>Inviting Organisation</b>	Farmers Parliament
<b>Moderator</b>	Maira Dzelzkaleja

## FOCUS GROUP LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

Nr	Name	Organisation	Position	Email
1	Arnis Burmistris	Farm Vicini 1	Owner	Vilcini1@gmail.com
2	Aigars Zadins	Garsene Ltd	Board Member	Zadinsh-r@inbox.lv
3	Maira Dzelzkaleja	Farmers Parliament	Vice Chairman	Maira@zemniekusaeima.lv
4	Ieva Alpa-Eizenberga	Farm Ruki	Owner	Alpa.ieva@gmail.com
5	Sandris Eizenbergs	Farm Robeznieki	Owner	Zs.robeznieki@gmail.com
6	Agnese Alpa	Farm Beiranti	Employee	agnesealpa@gmail.com
7	Inga Berzina	Farmers Parliament	Project Manager	Inga@zemniekusaeima.lv
8	Juris Cirulis	Farm Mezaciruli	Owner	Cirulisjuris@gmail.com
9	Dzintars Erdmanis	Farm Ezergali	Owner	Ezergali.6@inbox.lv
10	Martins Trons	Farmers Parliament	Agriculture Policy Advisor	Martins.Trons@zemniekusaeima.lv
11	Zanda Kruklite	Farmers Parliament	Expert	zanda@zemniekusaeima.lv
12.	Kaspars Sunins	Farm Celmini	Owner	Kaspars@charolais.lv
13.	Rita Ignate	Farmers Parliament	Head of Office	Rita@zemniekusaeima.lv



14.	Mara Sproge	Farm Jozi	Agronomist	marsproge@gmail.com
15.	Raimonda Ribikauska	Latvian Rural Advisory centre	Adviser	Raimonda.Ribikauska@llkc.lv
16.	Livija Zarina	State Priekuli Tehnical School	Marketing teacher	<a href="mailto:izar@inbox.lv">izar@inbox.lv</a>
17.	Dace Vilmane	Zemgale Planning Region, Regional Public authority	Developemt and Planning Department	dace.vilmane@zpr.gov.lv



## FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION

### Educational content area: BUSINESS PLAN

#### Input/suggestions regarding CONTENT

The Business Plan is important topic, especially for new product development and diversification of the farm.

More detailed training required on calculation the loss and profit of the farm, cash flow. Other important parts of the Business plan:

- Risk management;
- Transportation, delivery technologies how to shorten food chain from producer till customer.

The important specific topic were mention - how to establish and run ecologic product shop.

#### OTHERS

Business plan could accompany with more detailed Marketing Plan.

### Educational content area: PRICE STRATEGIES

#### Input/suggestions regarding CONTENT

The focus group participants market as very important topic:

- How to define the price which satisfy the producer and customer
- How to calculate the price (actual cost, all expenses during production process)
- Discount strategies
  
- How to calculate the price of the product and get profit also be compatible in the market

#### OTHERS



### Educational content area: **PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT**

Input/suggestions regarding **CONTENT**

Ideas for new product development, testing  
Calculation ingredients from raw product till final product.  
Local product combination with the local tourism, how to present the farm.  
Innovative product development including also design, forms etc.

### OTHERS

As the market is overloaded of different products, interesting would be understand global tendencies

### Educational content area: **PROMOTION**

Input/suggestions regarding **CONTENT**

How to promote different niche products from the cooperative (specific cheese, cottage cheese and other processed products from milk?)

- Product presentations
- Advertisements
- Potential customers



Activities for promotion of local products

How to design the product shop, where to put the products, colours in order to give message customers for buying the product (influence on all senses)

Development (content) of the business cards, booklets, brochures

How to develop brand, story of the product.

Development of the web page of the farm/company based on internet possibilities (free internet possibilities)

Social networks

#### OTHERS

Specialist with marketing knowledge especially for the niche product promotion.

Skills and competences for the sales persons

#### Educational content area: DISTRIBUTION CHANNELS

Input/suggestions regarding CONTENT

How to develop/run Internet shop (also all marketing strategy for the Internet shop)

Farm shops

#### OTHERS



Experience from farmers markets in different countries with very visible material.

### **Educational content area: MARKETING COOPERATION**

Input/suggestions regarding CONTENT

Knowledge about the management of cooperative including price policies, marketing

How to ensure the same amount of the selling products

Collaboration, making of contacts, networking

### **OTHERS**

Due to mentality and the previous soviet system of the collective farming, it is very hard to convince producers for cooperation. Especially if we speak about small producers. However to provide products in stable quantities especially for the supermarket chains and export, the cooperation is significant.

### **Educational content area: BRANDING**

Input/suggestions regarding CONTENT



The participants of the focus group mentioned training importance on branding issues:

Product certification, brands

How to develop brand, design of brands.

#### OTHERS

The Training material could provide some very good and bad examples.

#### Educational content area: LEGISLATION

Input/suggestions regarding CONTENT

The content of the Agreements (for sales of the products, for rent of the land etc.)

#### OTHERS

There are so many legislative norms in Latvia, therefore would be good to have as Manual updated each year.

#### Educational content area: INTERNATIONALISATION

Input/suggestions regarding CONTENT



Internationalisation is important topic mentioned majority of the focus group participants. As market in Latvia is very small, there is wide interest for markets in other countries.

How to start export?

How to make contacts abroad?

#### OTHERS

Project partners could help as some case studies with practical products internationalization

#### Educational content area: TRACEABILITY OF PRODUCTS

Input/suggestions regarding CONTENT

Very important topic: Education of customers about the product qualities

#### OTHERS

The healthy food and healthy eating habits stay more popular in Latvia.



**GENERAL DISCUSSION: In your opinion, which learning formats are more useful to farmers?**

The most preferred way learning formats defined by the focus group are **Blended learning (including face to face sessions and online learning), participation to conferences and fairs**, further follow **field days, farm and study visits, games and comics** (as active participation). As possible learning format also was mentioned web-based training.

**General noteworthy comments and observations**

During our focus group discussion a number of important issues were raised:

1. Target group of our trainings should be differenced: e.g. home producers, producers interested for export. And some learning content is possible to differentiate according to the target groups.
2. However will not possible to create so specific Training Manual due to each countries individual national products and farmers/producers' needs, therefore it is important to focus on less topics in Farm Inc project, but deep in (make very detailed content with different learning methods) for different levels of trainees.
3. Producers would be interested to make exchange of experiences in the project countries, especially the farmers, who are interested in the product exporting.
4. As training content would be necessary - Specific activities & training for young farmers with special tools to promote the country life style and business in rural areas.
5. Big farmers are interested for hire high qualitative sales persons for agriculture products with updated knowledge according to newest marketing tendencies.
6. As the focus group had very different interests in related to the training needs. There were taken into account already existing training programmes and training activities for definition the learning needs.
7. There were mentioned marketing strategy/marketing plan as important tool in order to put all actions on paper and could act according to the scenarios and prevent different risks.
8. The market research is interesting topic, however there are different concepts either with user centred approach or just introduce the product in the market. There are no absolute recipes therefore needed to provide training materials with very good and instructive examples.