

# SmartFarmer

## Newsletter



### Professional Standards Report

This report provides a summary of the situation on **Professional Standards** for organic farming and/or “smart” agro-foods in the project countries – Cyprus, Latvia, Greece, Portugal and Spain.

The aim of the report was to complement the findings of the *Needs Analysis* (see Smartfarmer Newsletter 2) and to help partners to decide what training/learning materials should be transferred and adapted into the Smartfarmer project.

Main conclusions of the Professional Standards Report were the following:

- Occupational Standards specifically related to “smart” agro-foods do not exist in the project countries, mostly because the concept of *superfoods* is not officially recognised and it is not much familiar to the producers, processors and traders of the agro-food sector.
- The standards related to “smart” agro-foods are included in the Professional Standards and qualifications referring to the organic farming and/or to the wider agricultural sector.
- To work as an organic farmer and/or as a farmer in general, it is not compulsory to be entitled with a qualification according to the Professional Standards.
- A good option for covering the “smart” agro-foods in the scope of the official existing national training systems should be to consider new topics of organic farming, addressing particularly selected “smart” agro-foods, such as berries.

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### Newsletter Editor

RCDI, Development and Innovation Network

### Newsletter Contributors

Alexandra Mendonça  
Andreas Stylianou  
Vita Adomaviciute

## SmartFarmer Training Materials

Following the conclusion of the analysis of the training needs and the assessment of the situation referring to the professional standards and qualifications, in each participating region/country, the preparation of the Smartfarmer Training Materials is now in progress.

The training materials will be organised in **three Modules**, including theoretical contents, case studies and exercises, to facilitate the learning process. A preliminary overview of the contents under preparation is shown hereafter.

### Module 1: Marketing of “smart” organic agrifoods

Unit 1: The Concept and Principles of Marketing

Unit 2: Entering the Market

- Defining the Marketing Mix
- Identifying the mission of the agribusiness
- Creating vision
- Building a business plan

Unit 3: The Marketing Mix

- Product (e.g. product Life Cycle, added value, product features, standardization, labelling, packaging)
- Price (calculating the market price, structure of price, factors influencing price, strategy and process of product pricing)
- Promotion / Promotional tools (traditional/conventional and modern tools)
- Place / Distribution (e.g. distribution channels, direct sales, distribution channel strategy, exporting procedures)
- Lauterborn's four Cs for niche markets (Consumer, Cost, Communication, Convenience)

Unit 4: Cooperation (in relation to the 4Ps and the 4Cs)

- Forms of cooperation (including producers' organizations / agricultural cooperatives)
- Pros and cons of cooperation (e.g. bargaining power as a pro)

### Module 2: Organic Farming, Quality Schemes and Eco-agriculture

Unit 5: EU agricultural product quality policy

- Organic Agriculture Principles, Legislation and Certification
- Quality Standards
- PDO, PGI and TSG products

Unit 6: Towards Eco-agriculture

- Defining Eco-agriculture
- Eco-friendly cultivation practices

### Module 3 : Marketing Strategies for “smart” organic agrifoods

Unit 7: Marketing Strategies (e.g Cost Leadership, Differentiation, Focus, Diversification and other Marketing Strategies).

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## 3<sup>rd</sup> Project Meeting in Greece

The 3<sup>rd</sup> project meeting took place in Athens and Karditsa, Greece, on 30<sup>th</sup> September and 1<sup>st</sup> October, 2014.

### 1<sup>st</sup> Day, 30<sup>th</sup> September

The meeting was held in the Harokopio University of Athens and addressed relevant topics related to the project implementation:

- WP3: Adaptation of the training programme. Discussion and decisions on contents and methodology.
- WP4: Design and development of the e-learning platform. Discussion and guidelines on possible approaches.
- WP5: Testing and evaluation. First discussions on methodologies to adopt.
- WP6: Dissemination and Exploitation. Progress and next tasks.
- WP1: Project management and quality control. Progress and next tasks.
- Next steps: detailed planning for the forthcoming six months (October 2014 – April 2015).



### 2nd day, 1st October, 2014

The 2nd day of the meeting was dedicated to field study/dissemination visits, in the region of Thessaly/Karditsa. The partners visited several farmers and food producers:

- Mr. Tsinopoulos farm (aronia and goji berries).
- Mr. Papagiannakis farm (goji berries);
- Mr. Mokkalas farm (blueberries);
- Factory (processing facilities) of *superfoods* "Efkarpon".



During the visits, the partners could observe and discuss how *superfoods* (berries) are grown, harvested and marketed. They also tasted fresh and dry berries, as well as processed berry products, such as jams, liqueurs and cakes.

The cultivation of berries in the region of Thessaly is a solution for replacing traditional farming (e.g. cotton farms), which does not return sufficient income to the local farmers any longer.

The farmers were informed about SmartFarmer project; they belong to the target groups of the project and are potential participants in the pilot training.



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## SmartFarmer Project Contact information

**Agricultural Research Institute**

*Project Coordinator:*

**George Adamides**

E-mail: [gadamides@ari.gov.cy](mailto:gadamides@ari.gov.cy)

*Project Manager:*

**Andreas Stylianou**

E-mail: [a.stylianou@ari.gov.cy](mailto:a.stylianou@ari.gov.cy)

**Cyprus University of Technology:**

**Petros Kosmas**

E-mail: [petros.kosmas@cut.ac.cy](mailto:petros.kosmas@cut.ac.cy)

**Union "Farmers Parliament":**

**Inga Berzina**

E-mail: [Inga@zemniekusaeima.lv](mailto:Inga@zemniekusaeima.lv)

**Harokopio University of Athens:**

**Despina Sdrali**

E-mail: [dsdrali@hua.gr](mailto:dsdrali@hua.gr)

**M.A.G.I.-Greek Superfoods**

**Cooperation:**

**Ioannis Galatoulas**

E-mail: [jgalatoulas@yahoo.gr](mailto:jgalatoulas@yahoo.gr)

**Development and Innovation  
Network:**

**Alexandra Mendonça**

E-mail:

[alexandra.mendonca@rcdi.pt](mailto:alexandra.mendonca@rcdi.pt)

**Fundacion Maimona:**

**Leonor Martín**

E-mail: [lmartin@lossantos.org](mailto:lmartin@lossantos.org)

<http://www.smartfarmerproject.eu>