



Documents OFAFFU Training

Developed by

La BioFranqueza
Caudiel/Valencia



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1. Introduction

The following document is intended to serve as a reference work and as a supplement to the OFAFFU training programme. In the first section, you will find key information about the OFAFFU project, including the objectives and results defined during the project. The main section presents helpful practices and useful information for agricultural activities. The document also includes an introduction to the 17 Sustainable Development Goals of the United Nations and takes a closer look at the concept of sustainability, particularly in the context of agriculture. In the final section, you will find basic information on entrepreneurship and relevant aspects of marketing.

2. About OFAFFU

The European Commission has set itself the target of at least 25% of agricultural land in Europe being organically farmed by 2030. We are currently only at 8.5 % across Europe (Organic Action Plan, European Commission. 2021).

With **Organic Farming for Future**, we want to contribute to achieving this goal - from practice for practice. OFAFFU combines two key areas that will change Europe on the road to sustainability: Education and agriculture.

Taking particular account of the European Reference Framework for Sustainability - GreenComp - we develop innovative training concepts in vocational education and training for the future. This is where green skills meet entrepreneurial thinking so that the profession of farmer can once again become a sustainable profession with quality of life.

Our project goals

- Identify the obstacles that prevent farmers from converting to organic farming.
- Raising awareness of environmental and climate issues.
- Developing green skills among farmers
- Increasing motivation for sustainable management
- Capacity building and knowledge transfer through the exchange of best practices in organic farming, taking into account innovative and resource-efficient cultivation methods.
- Creation of a green alliance of farmers and relevant interest groups
- Realisation of ecological transformation factors
- A more sustainable food system by increasing the number of organic farmers and improving their agricultural and economic skills.

Our project results

- a 'white paper' based on a comprehensive needs analysis that identifies barriers and obstacles to organic farming
- Development of a curriculum for OFAFFU training
- Development of training materials and a training manual
- Realisation of a training course in Caudiel, Spain
- Implementation of Impact Hubs in Austria and Spain

OFAFFU is a small-scale project co-funded by the European Union under the Erasmus+ programme. The project duration is from 01.01.2023 - 01.07.2024.

3. Concept of sustainability

Sustainability is a term that has become increasingly important in recent years. It is about using our natural resources in such a way that future generations can still benefit from them. For farmers, this means finding methods that are both productive and environmentally friendly.

In 2015, the United Nations launched the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), which define a set of 17 goals aimed at ending poverty, protecting the planet and enabling peace and prosperity for all. The Sustainable Development Goals should be achieved by 2030. Several of these goals are also directly related to agriculture.



For example, Goal 2 "Zero hunger" refers to sustainable food systems and resilient agricultural practices. Goal 6 "Clean water and sanitation", emphasises the need to improve water quality and make water use more efficient. Goal 12, "Responsible consumption and production", calls for reducing waste and promoting sustainable practices throughout the production chain. And Goal 15, "Life on Land", aims to protect ecosystems and promote the sustainable use of land resources.

Currently, only 15 per cent of the 17 sustainability goals have been achieved. We can also make a significant contribution to achieving these goals in agriculture. Whether these are sustainable farming methods that protect the soil and promote biodiversity, the management of water resources or the reduction of waste. The contribution of each individual counts.

Sustainability is not only a responsibility, but also an opportunity. By implementing sustainable practices, we can increase productivity, reduce costs and make a positive contribution to society. The SDGs provide a helpful framework for understanding how we can help create a better world.

4. 'Ecological sustainability'

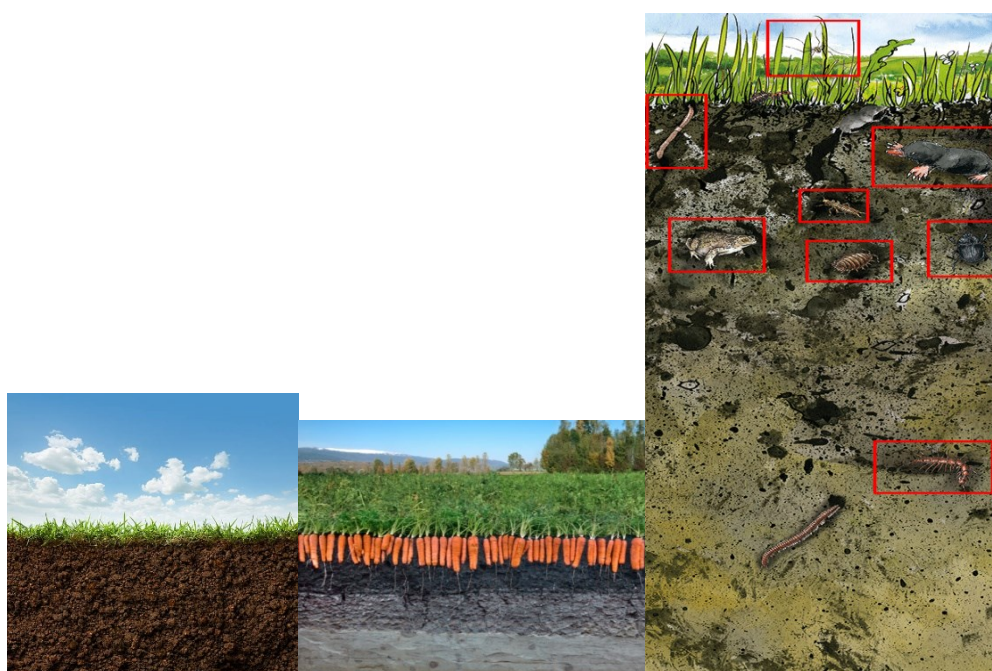
Environmental sustainability refers to the practice of using and protecting natural resources in a way that both meets current needs and ensures the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. It is about finding a balance between human activities and the preservation of natural systems.

In agriculture, environmental sustainability means using methods that keep the soil healthy, promote biodiversity and keep the water clean. This can be achieved through practices such as cover cropping, crop rotation and minimising the use of pesticides.

Environmental sustainability is an important aspect of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Goal 15 in particular, "Life on Land", calls for the protection of forests, combating desertification and halting the loss of biodiversity. The implementation of sustainable agricultural practices contributes to this.

5. Soil health

A healthy soil is teeming with bacteria, fungi, algae, protozoa, nematodes and other tiny creatures. These organisms play an important role in plant health. Soil bacteria produce natural antibiotics that help plants resist disease. To maintain healthy soil, you should always protect it from the elements, such as mulching, because the sun's rays and the wind greatly reduce the microorganisms in the soil.



Why is soil so important to us?

Soil regulates the natural cycles of water, air, organic and mineral substances. It filters and purifies water, stores substances and transforms them and is therefore a crucial link in the constant flow of energy and substances in the entire earth ecosystem.

A healthy soil not only provides a habitat for countless microorganisms but also stores water and CO₂. Industrial agriculture often uses only artificial fertilisers, which destroys the humus in the soil and causes the soil to lose its water storage capacity.



A healthy soil through proper crop rotation and correct management of organic material (manure, green cuttings, etc) is the cornerstone of any farmer's success. Healthy soil means healthy plants and less use of pesticides as a result. Healthy soil means less irrigation, which means less work for the farmer. Healthy soil is the key to success in agriculture.

6. Biodiversity

Maintaining and increasing biodiversity on an agroecological farm is one of the most important aspects to consider. A stable biodiversity in the field contributes to a lower pest infestation of the cultivated plants. There are various structural environmental factors that help to stabilise and increase biodiversity in the field. These environmental factors are sometimes already present, but as a farmer you can also produce or plant them yourself.

These structural environmental factors are:

- **A body of water like a stream or a pond.** *It provides a habitat for amphibians, insects and aquatic plants and also serves as a drinking place for all animal species.*



- **Country lane or path.** *The diversity of plants is always greater at the edge of a path. The constant accumulation of soil or dust results in a higher humus content on the side of the path, which has a positive effect on plant diversity.*



- **High trees.** *Nesting and resting place for birds of prey of a certain size.*



- **Thickets, scrub and disorganised piles of wood.** *Provide shelter and nesting places for hedgehogs, badgers, martens etc., and also for small bird species.*



- **Stone walls.** *Stone walls are a must on every organic field. They are a favourite home of various snake species, and a variety of insects also live in stone walls.*



- **Flower ribbons.** *Ribbons of flowers are on and around every farmer who wants to increase biodiversity, especially of insects. Flower ribbons are like lighthouses for insects. They can locate certain flowers over long distances.*



Each of these environmental factors has a direct influence on the reproduction and stabilisation of certain animal and plant species. They provide the necessary food for insects and the necessary shelter for many small animals to reproduce. The aim of these measures is to achieve a certain balance in the field, a balance between production (the farmer's economic yield) and the recovery and establishment of nature and its fauna and flora.

7. Agriculture and entrepreneurial success

Development of a strong corporate or brand identity

Every farmer is also an entrepreneur. With increasing globalisation and digitalisation, it is all the more important to position your own business and products or services accordingly in order to be not only ecologically but also economically successful.

So what is the secret of successful companies? Simon Sinek's 'Golden Circle' reveals it: successful companies think and communicate from the inside out. They start with the "why", followed by the "how" and finally the "what". This is in contrast to many companies that think from the outside in, i.e. react to developments instead of acting and endeavour to adapt to the market instead of shaping it.

The model consists of three concentric circles

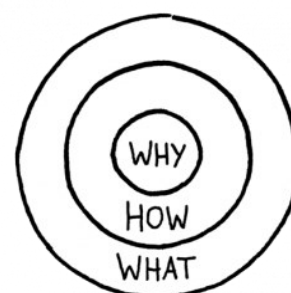
1. Why

This is the core of the model and represents the purpose, cause or belief of an organisation. It is about why the company exists and why it does what it does.

Impulse questions for your own reflection:

What is my personal 'why' for wanting to work in the agricultural sector? What do I believe in? What do I stand for? What is the purpose or mission of my business?

What do we believe in as a company and how is this reflected in our work?



2. How

This circle represents the specific actions or processes that a business undertakes to realise its 'why' statement. It is about how the organisation does what it does.

Impulse questions for your own reflection:

How do we put our purpose into practice in the best possible way? What specific processes or methods do we use to achieve our goals? How do our methods differ from those of our competitors?

3. What

This is the outer circle and represents the products, services or results that a company produces. It is about what the company does.

Impulse questions for your own reflection:

What are the specific products or services we offer? What are the concrete results of our work? What makes our products or services unique or valuable to our customers?

By answering these questions as entrepreneurs, we can develop a clearer understanding of a corporate identity and communicate more effectively what we do and why we do it.

Public Relations & Marketing

The term 'marketing' also includes the word 'brand'. Before we go public with our products and services, it is essential to think about the brand that should be associated with your own activity or business. There are 8 central principles that must be taken into account when creating a brand:

Principle I - Brand means knowing what you can do.

The most important question at the beginning: What can you do better than others? The basis of every brand is its top performance. Without excellence, there is no brand. Who you are is all too often ignored. Customers can only recognise the benefits that they have stored about the brand. This creates credibility and authenticity. It's about having clarity about which services make you unique, how they differ from your competitors, what you are associated with and, in the case of a start-up, what you have already done right.

Principle II - People are guided more by form than by content

This principle is based on the question "How can we be recognised?" It is about values that have led to a lasting performance over time. The values that make up the brand essence describe the essence, character and content of the brand, which ensures recognition value. It is important not to reduce the style of a brand to its visual appearance alone. In addition to a colour, a form such as a logo, a key image, a personality, a symbolism and a font, it is also important to include non-visual elements such as rituals or processes in the branding process.

Principle III - Customer orientation and feedback

You can only be successful in the long term if you know why you are successful, and your customers know the reasons best. Over time, very loyal customers often develop and it can be very revealing to ask them why they buy their services from this particular company and not somewhere else.

Principle IV - Trends for the further development of your own brand

Trends are fundamental challenges for brands. It is therefore important to know whether a trend suits the brand and to check whether developments in the environment and in society match the values of a brand. This comparison leads to a result in order to develop the breeding ground for the continued existence of a brand. It is therefore recommended to walk through the world with open eyes and to recognise what is happening around you.

Principle IV - Brand positioning

Brand positioning is the most misunderstood element of brand management. Because positioning means knowing what you can't do! Steve Jobs, the CEO of Apple, once said: "My most important decisions were not about the things I will do, but the things I won't do." It is therefore important to clearly recognise the limits of your own brand and where you want to develop.

Principle VI - Brand architecture can only be developed from the future

In a world of globalisation, acquisitions and start-ups, the most exciting topic of all is brand architecture. This refers to a system that organises how a company relates its brands to one another. It is a kind of "family tree" for a company's brands and shows how sub-brands, product lines and individual products are connected to each other and relate to the main

brand.

There are different types of brand architecture, including

1. Monolithic brand architecture: these are companies that use a single brand across all their products or services. An example of this is Google, which runs its various services (such as Google Maps, Google Drive, Google Docs) under the main Google brand.

2. Endorsed brand architecture: In this case, each product or service has its own brand, but is supported or "endorsed" by the main brand.

3. Pluralistic brand architecture: These are companies that have separate brands for each of their products or services that operate independently of each other. An example of this is Procter & Gamble, which has many different brands such as Pampers.

Choosing the right brand architecture depends on many factors, including the size of the organisation, the number and variety of its products or services and the target markets. A well-designed brand architecture can help to strengthen brand identity, increase brand awareness, and unify brand image.

Principle VII - Brand management means experience management

The result of every well-managed brand is the experience that a customer has with the product or service before, during and after the purchase. Every perception and every experience contribute to strengthening or weakening your own brand, as it has a significant influence on the purchasing behaviour of our customers. Customers refer to three important frames of reference: the standard of their own business, the industry standard and the best-of standard. They compare these and those who understand how to create positive experiences for customers win at all levels.

Principle VIII - Regularity and rules

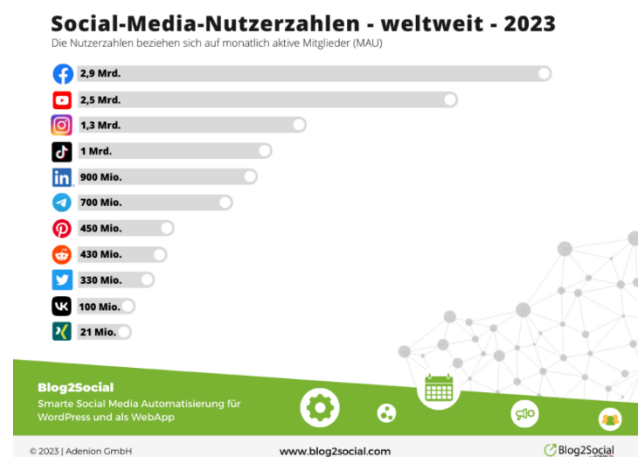
The whole of nature is based on the principle of a few fixed rules and chance. It is the basic principle of chaos theory. Contrary to popular belief, rules do not prevent creativity, but promote it. Because creativity can only fulfil its task within fixed boundaries. A good brand is therefore based on a few rules that have been laid down accordingly and is based on a certain continuity to ensure recognition value.

In terms of marketing itself, digitalisation has also opened many doors for us to make our products and services known. It is important to develop a targeted and effective marketing strategy that utilises multiple channels for public relations work. To do this, it is important to slip into the role of our desired customers and target group and ask ourselves the question:

Who do we want to address with our products & services?
How can we reach them? Which media do they use?

In addition to direct marketing, farmers' markets, farm shops or other direct business channels for public relations work, there are also a variety of digital advertising and marketing platforms. A professional website increases the credibility of the farm and shows that we are moving with the times. It also makes it easier for interested parties and potential customers to contact us. Today, a website is part of every company presence and emphasises the digital presence of the business. Furthermore, social media offers a simple, inexpensive and low-threshold way to present your products and services. Social media is more popular than ever before: more than half of the world's population uses social media, which corresponds to over 4.76 billion users.

Before we decide in favour of social media for professional purposes, it is important to know whether and which of our target groups can be reached on which social media channels. It is also important to clarify in advance how many resources and capacities can be devoted to social media marketing, because the be-all and end-all is a regular presence. This takes time and appropriate preparation. Once the right channel or channels have been selected, we have summarised a few important basic rules for social media:



10 Golden rules for social media

1. Contributions may be short and simple.
2. Emojis in the headings help to structure and illustrate the text
3. The algorithm favours original content over sharing external links. It is better to download the post and upload it as your own post, e.g. instead of sharing something from YouTube or others.
4. Stay active, but only post when there is really something to say.
5. Plan contributions in advance and publish according to audience activity (usually in the evening at 5 or 6 pm on weekdays).
6. Faces and personalities in videos and photos are very well received.
7. One post = one message. Don't try to include several complex pieces of information. The important thing is to make the message as clear as possible.
8. Silence is boring - this also applies to ½ second of silence in a video or an image that is only interesting in its left half. Always choose narrow rather than wide frames and portrait format for videos and photos. Templates are available on Canva, for example (<https://www.canva.com/>)
9. Use multiple #hashtags for each post.
10. Follow relevant hashtags, like and comment on posts from accounts you don't know yet. They want to get to know you!

8. Sources

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