



SmartFarmer

"Improving skills for smartfarming as an innovative tool for rural development and economic growth"



Newsletter 7



SmartFarmer Trainers' Workshop

Purpose and Scope

On October 9, 2015 a workshop was held at the Agricultural Research Institute (ARI) aiming to an overall evaluation by potential trainers of the SmartFarmer's project training programme (training material and e-learning platform).

Contents

SmartFarmer Trainers' Workshop	1
Purpose and Scope	1
Newsletter Editor	1
Methodology	2
Results and Conclusions	3

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Methodology

The potential trainers were invited via email with the relevant workshop agenda attached. Then, the interested trainers were registered to the workshop by replying to the email/invitation. As a result, eleven trainers from ARI, two from the Department of Agriculture, two from an agricultural SME, and one from the Cyprus Agro Industry Center attended the workshop. Two researchers from ARI and one from the Cyprus University of Technology, all involved in the SmartFarmer project, were responsible to run the workshop and deliver the training material to the trainers. All participants received a folder, which contained material related to the needs of the seminar, including: a project leaflet, an evaluation questionnaire, a pen and some blank adhesives for taking notes. The total duration of the workshop was 3 hours, including the coffee break.



During the workshop, the general objectives of the SmartFarmer project, the training material and the e-learning platform developed, were presented to the trainers. Furthermore, towards the end of the presentations, a twenty-minute session for discussion took place. Finally, the participants were asked to evaluate the SmartFarmer products (training material, e-learning platform, pilot seminar etc) by completing a semi-structured questionnaire.

Results and Conclusions

For the analysis of the questionnaires, descriptive statistics have been used. The results of the training material and workshop evaluation are shown in the following table.

Question ¹	Mean
What is your overall satisfaction on the SmartFarmer workshop?	4.4
How do you estimate your knowledge on smartfood issues after finishing the SmartFarmer workshop?	3.4
How well did the SmartFarmer workshop meet your personal learning objectives / expectations?	3.6
How well did the SmartFarmer Module 1 materials meet your personal learning objectives / expectations?	4.0
How well did the SmartFarmer Module 2 materials meet your personal learning objectives / expectations?	4.1
How well did the SmartFarmer Module 3 materials meet your personal learning objectives / expectations?	4.2
What are the chances to apply the SmartFarmer tools that were presented today, in your everyday work (current or future)?	4.5
How holistic was the SmartFarmer approach to farming training?	4.3
How useful did you find the SmartFarmer e-learning platform for your business activities?	4.6
How easy-to-use was the SmartFarmer e-learning platform?	4.7
Information distributed prior and during the workshop (relevance, quality, usefulness, etc.)	4.8
Organisation of the workshop (venue, transportation, inventory, coffee break)	4.8
Actual Pilot training (agenda, topics, presentations, timing, work methods)	4.2
Communication between participants (clarity, fluency, ability to speak to the topic, appropriate timing)	4.8
Trainer (s)' / researcher (s)' knowledge on the topic	5.0
Trainer (s)' / researcher (s)' abilities to manage the audience and discussions, and motivate the group	5.0

¹(1=Poor, 2=Fair, 3=Good, 4=Very Good, 5=Excellent)

Based on the information provided by the aforementioned table, the overall satisfaction on the trainers' workshop in Cyprus was high (M=4.4). Moreover, the SmartFarmer Modules met the participants' personal learning objectives at a high degree (M≥4.0). The SmartFarmer e-learning platform was found very useful for the trainers' business activities (M=4.6) and at the same time very easy-to-use (M=4.7). Regarding the workshop organization, (hosting, agenda, topics, communication, etc) was highly rated by the participants (M>4.0). In conclusion, the results – taken as a whole - point out that the SmartFarmer training programme and the overall workshop in general, including researchers' knowledge and skills, highly satisfied the participants' expectations. Hence, one can say that the trainers' workshop is considered as successful.

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