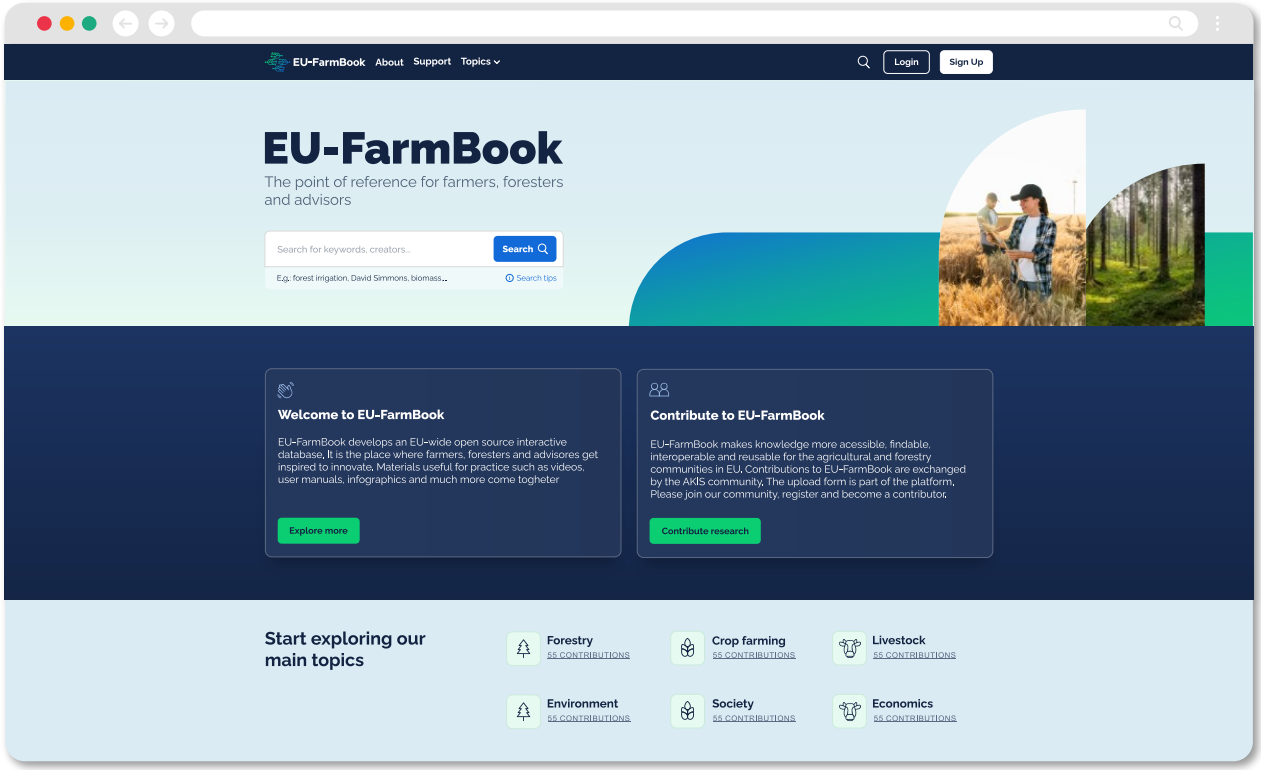
EU-FarmBook

DISCOVER **GOOD PRACTICES** FOR MAXIMISING THE **IMPACT** OF YOUR RESEARCH & INNOVATION PROJECT



Scan the **QR Code for more details** and engage with the Ambassador in your Member State.

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Good practices around user assessment for your R&I project results

In this leaflet you will find the needs of different user groups in the field of agriculture and forestry in relation to research and innovation project outputs. Identifying the project's target group(s) is part of the design. It ensures customised outputs will be appropriate to them and improves the potential for implementation in the field.
The four user groups described below include agricultural and rural advisors, journalists, farmers, foresters, educators and students.

AGRICULTURAL & RURAL ADVISORS, JOURNALISTS AND MEDIA

- These groups act as intermediaries and need a balance between practical and scientific content.
- For accessible output, different levels of digital literacy and language proficiency must be considered.
- Advisors seek current, practical knowledge, while journalists seek specific, timely relevant information.

FARMERS AND FORESTERS

- Prefer practical, relatable, and local language content.
- Seek features for community engagement and knowledge sharing.
- Acquire knowledge best via tactile practice and verbal communication.

STUDENTS

- Students need resources tailored to their education level, from vocational training to advanced research.
- Vocational students value the reputation of the author and the applicability of the material, while academic students appreciate scientific facts and want to expand their theoretical framework.

EDUCATORS

- Vocational educators seek practical, context-relevant materials in local languages to support skill-building.
- Educators in academia want to stay in the loop on latest developments in scientific research and require empirical evidence.
- Educators in general are looking for up-to-date and relevant material to integrate into their curricula.

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Good practices for community-building around your R&I project

This leaflet provides some key recommendations on how to receive feedback from practitioners with particular expertise in your project's topic. Community-building around your multi-actor research and innovation project ensures successful dissemination and impact of the project results. However, this can be challenging to achieve. For this reason, the EU-FarmBook platform offers feedback and community-building features as part of the so-called 'project pages' that project teams can set up for free on the EU-FarmBook platform.

1 BUILDING AND SUSTAINING COMMUNITIES

- Practitioner (farmers and foresters) and advisor communities are critical for translating, validating, and implementing project outputs, fostering innovation and relevance.
- Effective community exchanges require trustworthy testimonials, clear goals, and a mix of face-to-face and online engagement.
- Strategic stakeholder mapping and inclusive engagement ensure diversity and motivation within the community.

2 COMMUNITY AND KNOWLEDGE EXCHANGE DYNAMICS

- Communities thrive when members perceive value, actionable content, and mutual benefits from their participation.
- Managing expectations and avoiding exploitation of community members' efforts is key to maintaining trust and engagement.
- Relatable and practical content encourages active participation, particularly among farmers and small-scale stakeholders.

3 PROJECT LIFECYCLE AND ANALYTICS

- At project start, focus on mapping and engaging stakeholders and defining clear objectives.
- During projects, regular updates and feedback ensure alignment with user needs.
- Post-project efforts should focus on accessibility and integration into daily practices to maximize impact. This may entail an appointed partner and budget for community management after project end.
- Analytics and user feedback are vital to refining content, features, and dissemination strategies.
- EU-FarmBook's project page feature can support with community-building.

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Good practices for learning unit development in your R&I project

This leaflet provides you with some good practices established by seasoned educators from the agriculture and forestry sector. A learning unit is an overarching term for different formats used in education and training. This page will also share tips on increasing learner engagement, embedding your learning unit in a broader learning environment and the importance of using the senses in agriculture and forestry learning.

LEARNER ENGAGEMENT

- Establish a co-creative partnership with a small group of representative members of your target audience(s).
- Ask-early-approach: organise testing cycles with users early on in development of your learning unit.
- Learners needs can also be established by asking experts or hosting focus groups.
- Address expectations of learners at first face-to-face session of your learning unit.
- Allow some flexibility in the outline of your learning unit to adapt to the learners' needs.

TIMING

- Start small: for ex. you can hold a half-day session before you plan for a three-day course.
- Combine synchronized and asynchronized learning instances. The former are useful for connecting learners with each other, whereas the latter provide flexibility.

DIDACTIC METHODS

Consider applying different didactic methods for learner engagement. Some recommended examples are:

- **Constructive alignment:** carefully connects learning objectives, learning activities and assessment.
- **Explorative learning:** provides different entry ways to the topic, for example with a mind map. This way learners can follow the trajectory best suited to them.

ORIENTATION OF YOUR LEARNING UNIT

Learning units can be embedded in a sequence of units, a programme or can stand alone. Whichever the case,

- It is advisable to convey the bigger picture related to your learning unit's topic. Point the learner to places and sources for further learning.
- Providing certification is a way to connect the project's learning units with a broader learning ecosystem. An example is the Certificate for European Rural Consultants.

SENSORIAL LEARNING

Sensorial learning is particular important in the agriculture and forestry sectors. This implies learning happens out in the field or forest while actively using the senses (sight, hearing, touch, smelling, tasting). To cater to this you can consider:

- Hybrid education, combining learning in the outdoors with (virtual) classroom activities.
- In virtual learning units, offering a virtual tour of a practice environment (such as a greenhouse).

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Good practices for developing MOOCs as part of your R&I project

This leaflet guides you through some of the fundamentals of Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs), focusing on their development as part of research and innovation projects. It provides expert insights and good practices from MOOC developers. Topics covered on this leaflet are time management, coordinating your development team, content management, essential development steps, host platform selection and some extra tips.

1 WHAT MAKES MOOCS UNIQUE?

MOOCs apply storytelling for learner engagement. This is what differentiates a MOOC from a other formats like a webinar. MOOCs always have alternations of text, video and exercises to enhance the learner experience. MOOCs are a way to disseminate the results generated by EU funded research and innovation projects.

2 PLANNING: TIMING IS OF THE ESSENCE

- Create a dedicated Project Task for the development of the MOOC, and ensure appropriate timing to link the consecutive development steps.
- Do not start the development later than half way through, if your project has a 3-year run time.
- Ensure ample time available for the MOOC development as it can take between 3 and 12 months.

3 COORDINATION

- Get together early with the responsible partners to plan the work.
- Align with the partners the amount of time and resources they respectively need to put in.
- Motivate partners by stressing they can use the MOOC for their own dissemination work and other promotional purposes.
- Make sure to plan in enough brainstorming and progress meetings, as well as clear assignments after each meeting.
- Make best use of your multi-actor project consortium by involving representatives of the users of your MOOC in concept development and the testing phase.

4 BASIC STEPS

1. Define learning objectives and target audience. You can use the SMART method for your learning objectives.
2. Decide on the number of chapters, making sure to narrow it down. Then add lessons to each chapter.
3. Always include an introduction and conclusion chapter.
4. Make sure to plan in testing and feedback early on. Then if needed adapt.

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5 CONTENT MANAGEMENT

- Content experts, for example academics specialized in the topic, do the larger video presentations in MOOCs.
- Each chapter (also called module) has a corresponding content expert.
- Text and exercises may be provided by other collaborators.
- Schedule in sufficient meetings with content experts and give them clear assignments each time.

6 PLATFORM SELECTION

- Select the host platform based on the needs and budget associated with your MOOC.
  - An example of a project need is tracking geographic location of course attendants.
- Consider also where target learners are most likely to find and be able access your MOOC.
- External platforms are recommended to ensure accessibility and longevity of the MOOC, even after your project ends.

7 BONUS TIPS

- Activate learners by teasing them with an initial question. For example asking them about their previous knowledge about the topic. This can be done via a multiple-choice exercise.
- You can start each lesson with a list of the corresponding learning objectives.
- Include sufficient budget for professional video creation at the project proposal stage.
- Consider to add a virtual tour through a practice environment, such as a greenhouse. This increases comprehension and engagement.
- Indicate to learners an estimate of time it will take to finish the whole course as well as individual chapters.
- To increase engagement you can develop a multilingual MOOC, enable a forum for exchange between learners and experts and assess how your MOOC can be linked to specific certification.
- Ensure MOOC dissemination is thought of well in advance.

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Annotating project outputs and the EU-FarmBook metadata extraction tool

The output of research and innovation projects is aided by the use of metadata. These are annotations to a project's practice-oriented output such as brochures and fact sheets. This leaflet describes how and why metadata is used, as it applies to the EU-FarmBook platform, and includes aspects of the automated annotation tool available on the EU-FarmBook platform.

PROJECT OUTPUTS ON THE EU-FARMBOOK PLATFORM

- EU-FarmBook collects R&I project output that is practice-oriented.
- Once such an output is uploaded it's called a *contribution*.
- Contributions can be documents, presentation, videos, podcasts, etc.

WHAT ARE METADATA?

- Metadata is a set of information identified for an adequate description of a project output.
- Examples of metadata are author or creator of a contribution, date of creation, title, summary and keywords but also geographical coverage and file format.

WHY ARE METADATA RELEVANT?

- It increases the findability and usability of your contribution for it´s user.
  - Think of a library catalogue, enabling one to search by title, author,topic, etc.
- Ultimately good metadata mean a more effective dissemination of your work!

METADATA IN DIFFERENT KNOWLEDGE RESERVOIRS

- Zenodo is a prominent open-access repository recommended by the European Commission for EU-funded projects, offering advanced metadata annotation.
- Organic Eprints specializes in organic farming research, providing a platform with basic metadata requirements for related publications.

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EU-FARMBOOK'S METADATA

- All contributions available on the EU-FarmBook platform have a required set of metadata: author/ creator, date of completion, title, summary, keywords, topic and subtopics, file type and category, license, purpose and location.
- On EU-FarmBook the batch-uploading function allows you to add additional metadata.
- EU-FarmBook search tools cater to contribution findability by using metadata as filters but also for free text search.
- Assigning a Creative Commons license to each contribution guides the user in terms of usability. These licenses specify how a work can be used, shared, or adapted, often requiring attribution and sometimes limiting commercial use or modifications

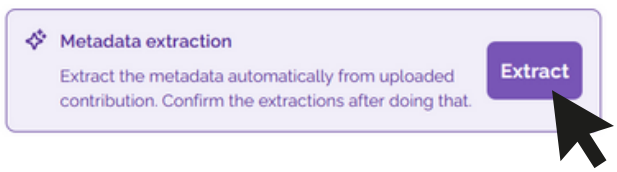
EU-FARMBOOK'S METADATA EXTRACTION TOOL

- To support your annotation work the EU-FarmBook team has developed an AI-supported tool.
- This metadata extraction tool is automatically integrated into the EU-FarmBook contribution upload form.

The metadata extraction tool in the contribution upload form
Based on a scan of the uploaded file the tool will suggest a title, topic(s), keywords and a summary for your contribution.

Please note: Metadata extraction is optional, you can always fill in and modify the metadata yourself; Metadata extraction will as of April 2025 only generate results in English.

1. Upload file, click extract



2. Check and approve the metadata