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BLUEGREEN Interactive Guide on Sustainable Farming Enters Testing Phase

The BLUE&GREEN Project is pleased to announce the completion of its Training Guide on Sustainable Farming, a comprehensive educational resource designed to support VET students, young people, aspiring farmers, educators, and agricultural professionals in developing green skills for the future.



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Sustainable Farming

Developed through the cooperation of project partners from Austria, Greece, and Iceland, the Guide combines theoretical knowledge, practical activities, and real-world examples to promote innovative and sustainable agricultural practices. The resource focuses on aquaponics, vertical farming, environmental responsibility, and entrepreneurial opportunities within the green economy.

The Guide begins with an introduction to sustainable agriculture, presenting the major challenges facing modern food systems, including climate change, resource scarcity, and the growing demand for food production. It explores how sustainable farming practices can contribute to environmental protection, economic resilience, and long-term food security while encouraging learners to think critically about the future of agriculture.

A key focus of the Guide is the introduction of aquaponics and vertical farming as innovative and resource-efficient production systems. Learners are introduced to the principles behind these technologies, gaining an understanding of how aquaponics combines fish production with soilless plant cultivation and how vertical farming maximizes production through the use of stacked growing systems. By integrating these approaches, participants discover methods that use less water, optimize space, and recycle nutrients more effectively than many conventional farming systems.



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Students from testing in Austria



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Building on these foundations, the Guide provides detailed information on aquaponic system management, including fish health, water quality monitoring, nutrient cycles, and plant growth requirements. Participants learn how to maintain balanced systems that support both aquatic life and crop production while ensuring efficient resource use. Practical guidance helps learners understand the technical aspects of operating aquaponic environments and solving common challenges.

The Guide also explores vertical farming techniques in greater depth, covering crop selection, growing media, environmental control, and artificial lighting systems. Learners are introduced to modern controlled-environment agriculture and discover how vertical farming can be adapted to different locations and climatic conditions. Special attention is given to methods that increase productivity while minimizing environmental impact.

Resource management and sustainability form another important section of the training material. Participants are encouraged to evaluate water consumption, energy efficiency, and environmental impacts while learning practical conservation techniques. The Guide emphasizes responsible resource management as a key element of sustainable farming and provides examples of how efficient systems can reduce waste and improve productivity. To support practical learning, the Guide includes comprehensive instructions on the setup and maintenance of aquaponic and vertical farming systems. Learners gain valuable knowledge on nutrient recycling, waste management, crop cultivation, harvesting, and system maintenance. These practical elements help bridge the gap between theory and real-life implementation, enabling participants to apply their learning directly within their own communities and organizations.



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Students from testing in Austria

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Cultural Exploration and Team Building

Recognizing the importance of economic sustainability, the Guide also addresses entrepreneurship and business development in sustainable agriculture. Participants explore topics such as marketing strategies, financial planning, budgeting, and the development of local partnerships. By connecting sustainable farming with entrepreneurial opportunities, the Guide encourages learners to view green agriculture as both an environmental solution and a potential career pathway.

Another important component focuses on cooperation and intercultural exchange. Through examples and collaborative activities, learners are encouraged to share experiences, compare agricultural practices across different regions, and develop effective communication skills. This approach strengthens cross-cultural understanding while promoting the exchange of innovative solutions to common agricultural challenges.

The final sections of the Guide concentrate on continuous improvement, project management, and field-based learning. Participants learn how to monitor and evaluate farming practices, identify opportunities for improvement, and apply project management principles to sustainable agriculture initiatives. Field visits and practical demonstrations play a central role, allowing learners to observe aquaponics and vertical farming systems in operation, connect theory with practice, and develop problem-solving skills through direct experience.

The Training Guide has already undergone its first international testing phase during the BLUE&GREEN training mobility in Hofsós, Iceland, where participants from Austria, Greece, and Iceland engaged with the guide's content through workshops, practical activities, field visits, and group discussions. The feedback gathered during this international seminar provided valuable insights into the relevance, structure, and usability of the training materials.



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Students from training in Iceland

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Looking Ahead

At the same time, local testing activities are continuing in all partner countries, involving VET students, educators, young farmers, and other stakeholders. These pilot sessions aim to further evaluate the Guide's effectiveness and ensure that it responds to the needs of different learning environments and target groups.

The English draft version of the Guide is already available on the BLUE&GREEN project website, allowing interested educators, learners, and stakeholders to explore its content and provide feedback. Based on the results of both the international and local testing phases, the Guide will be further refined before the publication of its final versions. Translations into all partner languages are currently underway, with the complete multilingual edition expected to be released in September 2026, making this valuable educational resource accessible to a wider European audience.

