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Traditional Food Network to improve the transfer of knowledge for innovation



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Guidelines for transferred Innovations

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Dissemination Level		
PU	Public	x
PP	Restricted to other programme participants (including the Commission Services)	
RE	Restricted to a group specified by the consortium (including the Commission Services)	
CO	Confidential, only for members of the consortium (including the Commission Services)	



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1. Statement

Deliverable completed.

2. Use and Verification of Deliverable in TRAF00N

Introduction

During 2015-2016, TRAF00N project has organized more than 55 Training Workshops (TWs) in 14 European countries with the focus on six different food product sectors: 1) grains, 2) fish, 3) vegetables, 4) mushrooms, 5) fruits and 6) olives, and general topics like food quality & food safety, and entrepreneurship. The main objective of the TWs was to allow the transfer of knowledge and innovation to SMEs, based on the analysis of the Inventory of needs (IoNs) previously performed during the Multi-stakeholder Workshops (MWs) at the beginning of the project.

TRAF00N knowledge transfer network interlinks researchers, knowledge transfer organizations and associations of SMEs on a European, national and regional level. The network acts as a mediator for the transfer of current innovative research in production and marketing of traditional food, and fosters entrepreneurship in the sector of traditional food producers.

The importance of knowledge transfer in the European food industry is obvious, especially in the case of Small and Medium Sized Enterprises (SMEs) in the food producing sector. These SMEs are increasingly under pressure due to the opening of new markets, an increasing demand of standardized and price competitive food products by the consumers, the rising importance of large retailers, and the need to conform to governmental regulations. To deal with this complex situation, the transfer of new technology and knowledge is essential, becoming an important subject of scientific research, as well as in economic and public policy.

Many obstacles that hamper the transfer of new scientific insights and innovation to SMEs have been identified, e.g. lack of trust, language and culture barriers, lack of ability to transfer knowledge to a non-specialist. Based on the experience in implementation of **TRAF00N Training Workshops on fish sector**, this document collects best practices, practical information, lessons learned and recommendations for a successfully transfer innovations to SMEs.

Overview of organized workshops

In total, 12 different events (look at Tab. 1) were organized with the aim to offer different training workshops concerning to aquaculture technology, feeding of fish, sustainable fish production, health aspects of fish production, food quality and safety, marketing, entrepreneurship and knowledge transfer in fish sector for practical fish farmers, producers and processors.

Workshop concerning WP3 – Fish production, products and aquaculture	Venue	Date	Responsible partner
Innovation in traditional fish production technology	Ustroń Poland	9-10 th June 2015	PAN-G, UWM
Potential of recirculating aquaculture systems (RAS) for Czech fishery production	Vodňany Czech Republic	1 st -2 nd Sept. 2015	USB
Health management of cultured fish in terms of food quality and safety	Olsztyn Poland	21 st -22 nd Sept. 2015	UWM, PAN-G
Practical excursion to fish farms in Germany	Germany	21 st -24 th Sept. 2015	USB
Ponds of South Bohemia and Waldviertel – production constituent and important component of the life in both regions	Vodňany Czech Republic	14-15 th Oct. 2015	USB
Health aspects of fish production	Vodňany Czech Republic	10 th Dec. 2015	USB
Improving fish feed and feeding techniques, fish processing, labelling and marketing with fish products	Vodňany Czech Republic	1 st -2 nd Feb. 2016	USB
Food quality and safety in aquaculture sector	Ogonki Poland	8 th April 2016	UWM
	Iława Poland	15 th April 2016	
	Mścice/Koszalin Poland	22 nd April 2016	



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Direct sales, marginal, localised and restricted activity as elements of expanding of the income sources of fish farms	Radom Poland	14- 15 th June 2016	PAN-G
Improvement of information and knowledge transfer between science and practice in fishery sector	Ustroń Poland	15-16 th Sept. 2016	PAN-G, UWM

Tab 1. List of all organized training workshops within TRAF00N project, WP3 concerning to fish products, production and aquaculture technology

Workshops contents and structure

Selection of transferrable knowledge

All mentioned workshops were organized by researchers and scientists who are interested in applied research concerning fish products, their quality, fish production and aquaculture technology (partners from USB, PAN-G and UWM). These organizers also used their rich and active cooperation with other aquaculture innovators and mainly with fish farmers and fish farmer associations for organization of practical training workshops. Needed and transferrable knowledge for all workshops were identified, collected and prepared thanks to: 1) update of transferable innovations from finished national and EU projects; 2) analysis of inventory of needs from SME partners and development of suitable knowledge transfer activities, 3) SWOT analysis of Czech and Polish fish and aquaculture sector and 4) detailed discussion with SME partners and Czech or Polish fish farm associations during or outside of Multistakeholder workshop. At the end of this part of the project, transferrable knowledge were sorted according to topics (aquaculture technology, sustainable fish production, feeding of fish, health aspects of fish production, food quality and safety, marketing, entrepreneurship and knowledge transfer in fish sector) and each workshops with special theme or topic was organized.

During the WP 3 of TRAF00N project, in total 40 EU and 29 national finished projects were analyzed and several applicable results were identified for Czech and Polish fish sector mainly thanks to professional overview of partners from USB, PAN-G and UWM. Fruitful discussion between partners from USB, PAN-G and UWM and fish farmers or their associations was performed with the aim to identify current and the most important problems of Czech and Polish fish sector. Very good and new partnership between RTD and SME partners were



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created or fixed in both countries. These relationships will be very useful for future technology development and innovation of fish sector in both countries.

Preparation of training material

Thanks to the identification of transferrable knowledge and inventory of needs as a feedback from fish farmers, the topic of each workshop was proposed. The list of speakers was created after the discussion with each speaker who was selected as specialist for each topic of the workshop. During discussion with each selected speaker who agreed with his participation on the workshop detailed program with specific theme of each presentation was prepared. After that, the team of speakers of each workshop prepared all training theoretical (presentations) and practical material (fish, meat, samples, equipment and other demonstration material). Finally, all participants of training workshops received training materials prepared either in electronically form as well as traditional (printed) version (including agenda, summaries of lectures, copies of presented slides, names of speakers and contact information). Thanks to invited speakers, organizers of workshops were also prepared popular-science articles to expand the knowledge on the topics presented on workshops. Event, one special issue of scientific journal Aquaculture International has been edited as special material from one training workshop. All teams of prepared workshops used their wild possibilities to get the most modern theoretical knowledge and information and support of workshop participants with practical shows and demonstrations. It was very nice to observe all teams of working speakers, their cooperation and discussion during the preparation of each workshop. Again, new partnerships were created or old relations were fixed for future cooperation. Sometimes, cooperation of experts was limited with their time or distance between different teams.

Preparation of promotional material

After the preparation of the workshop program and agenda, always 3-6 months before the term of each workshop, special leaflets and emails were spread among fishermen community and fishery SMEs, organizations and associations etc. in both countries. Special advertisements concerning TWs were published in professional journals of fish farmer associations of both countries and special presentations were presented during different workshops, conferences and other events which were intended for practical fishermen, fish producers and processors. Sometime, special phone call had to use for special invitation of a management of the important aquaculture company, groups and association. Always one - two weeks before each organized workshop, a special phone talks were done or e-mail were sent to all declared participants with the aim to reminder and confirm their participation. All participants during



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workshops received promotional gadgets with the logo of the TRAF00N project (t-shirts, pencils and notebooks, keys lanyard, pen-drives etc.).

Generally, organizers of all workshops had very closed cooperation with different production farms, fish farm associations, universities and other companies which was very friendly, useful and fruitful but sometimes very time consuming and hard for organization. However, all times organizers kindly explained all agenda in detail. This part of the organization of workshops was very important for potential participants.

Structure of the workshop

According to our experience, the workshop for practical farmers should not be longer than 1.5 days. Longer event is boring for participants and very often farmers do not accept registration on this event. However, workshop divided into two days with possibility to spend an evening with special action (dinner or degustation of fish products connected with discussion or visit of some farm or experimental facilities) is very fruitful and increases professional atmosphere and effectiveness of workshop. In this case, organizers of the workshop can get better relationship with their participations compared when this workshop has not been organized with special evening action. For good acceptance and effectiveness of the workshop, the combination of theoretical and practical sessions is very useful and important. Generally, each presentation should to have time limitation (maximum around 15 minutes) with direct discussion after each presentation around 10 minutes. Sometime, discussion is the most important part of the workshop. The keeping of a time of the workshop agenda is very important during the whole workshop. Of course, workshop should be divided into several special sessions according to specific topics or the theme with planned coffee breaks (around 15 minutes). Special discussion after each session or after each workshop day can be very fruitful as also conclusion of workshop after theoretical and practical parts of the workshop. Generally at the end of workshop, organizer of workshop should to thank to all speakers and participants with short note (promotion) of next workshop event.

Additional activities: excursions, visit, etc.

All additional activities during or after the workshop are positively took in. We recommend to use following additional activities for the organization of workshops: preparation and edition of workshop proceeding, organization of an excursion during or after workshop, organization of special visit of laboratory, special equipment etc., offer to supply of workshop participants with free or paid professional or scientific literature such as books, handbooks, journals etc. All these mentioned additional activities were used and offered during some



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training workshop within WP 3 of TRAF00N project with very positive reaction of participants.

Designing and planning Workshops

Date (special considerations for SMEs)

Especially, fishermen and other their production partners in Czech Republic and Poland are very sensitive and demanding for selection of special day and term of training workshops. According to our experience, the best day for the organization of the workshop is Tuesday, Wednesday or Thursday. The best period is the beginning of September or the end of July (the end or before of summer vacation period, respectively and period before harvesting of ponds). Subsequently, good periods are: the end of November or the beginning of December (end of pond harvesting and period before selling of Christmas fish) and the end of January or the whole February (period after winter vacation and before spring pond harvesting and fish reproduction). In the contrast, spring and summer terms are not suitable for the organization of workshops addressed for SMEs from aquaculture sector in both countries.

Venue (accessibility, location, etc.)

Three different strategies of localization of the prepared workshops were proposed. First, closed to organizers seat (Olsztyn, Gołysz-Ustroń, Vodnany or Ceske Budejovice), second in the center of country/region (Radom, South Bohemia region) and third with cooperation with selected SMEs in host place (Ogonki, Iława, Koszalin). According to our experience, the selection of venue will effect a participation on the workshop. Generally, venue must be closed to or in well known place for the workshop participants (e.g. the best venue for fishermen in the Czech Republic is Vodnany or Ceske Budejovice or generally South Bohemia region, which is base = main region for Czech fish production). Sometime, highly attractive venue is selected for special venue as Prague or Warsaw or special castle etc., but all time this workshop is connected with higher cost and very often lower participation. Unfortunately, organization of the workshop in host place of selected SMEs partner binds to the limited number of participants. In the other hand, the latter allows for a more fruitful and prolonged discussion between speakers and participants.

Invitations (who?, when?, how?)

We recommend organizing invitation as soon as possible before the organization of the workshop. If invitation is applied earlier that 3 months before the workshop special reminder must be used one - two weeks before



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the event. Invitation must be well organized mostly with one responsible person who must have very good view on the invitation or registration process. Multiple invitation can discourage workshop participants. Generally, three ways of the invitation is possible to organize: 1) by email which is easier, cheapest but impersonal and very often lost way, 2) by post letter which is more professional, personal, temporal but expensive and 3) by phone which is most personal, polite, very effective however very time consuming, expensive and limited.

Participation of SMEs Associations as mediator

Local professional SMEs association as Czech and Polish fish farmers association very effectively helped to organizers of all workshops with the promotion, acceptance and organization of these events. Therefore we recommend to all different organizers of training workshops to cooperate with professional associations for the organization of interesting, fruitful and effective workshops. During this cooperation, all teams of workshop organizers created very good partnership with both countries fish farmer associations and this relation will be used for future innovation of aquaculture and fish sector in the Czech Republic and Poland.

Registration

All organized training workshops through TRAFOON project and WP 3 used simple registration form which was part of email or letter (printed) invitation. Each participant or group of participants had to register and sent this registration form to one responsible organizer of each training workshop. Registration of participants was very needed and important for a planning of the workshop capacity including booking lecture rooms, printed proceeding, refreshments, lunches, dinners and training capacities in laboratories and culture facilities etc. For the organization of workshops connected with practical farmer is very important is apply simple and brief registration form which is not complicated. Email or phone communications are recommended for communications with farmers during the organization of training workshops.

Agenda (presentations, coffee breaks and lunches, networking time)

The program of each training was prepared several months before the term of training workshop. Each workshop was divided to several expert sessions with discussion after each presentation and session with time for coffee, lunch and dinner breaks. Special evening action as the excursion into scientific laboratories, aquaculture facilities, degustation of fish products, fish filleting etc. were organized with the combination of some social program between the



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first and the second workshop day. Social program including degustation of local fish products, beer, wine or other food products is very welcome and useful for networking activities which can have very positive effect on practical collaboration between organizers and workshop participants or between participants in the future. We have very positive experience and examples of this predication.

Lessons learned

What to avoid for a successfully transferred innovations to SMEs?

A lot of following different reasons can preclude successful transferred innovation to SMEs: poor cooperation between RTD and SME partners, limited knowledge (mainly practical) of RTD partners, lack of interest of SME partners to learnt new techniques and innovate their production, poorly organized training workshop, failure of timing during workshop.

General recommendations

Start to organize the training workshop earlier compared latter. Organization committee must have previous experience with the organization of similar event. This team must work hardly and effectively without any personal problems in the team. Active, kindly and rich cooperation with farmers and their associations can significantly support training workshop and increase its effectiveness. Prepared printed material can positive support knowledge feedback of workshop participants. Different supporting activity such as: excursion, visiting, social program, expert discussion etc. can effectively support a networking and efficiency of workshops.

Specific considerations

We recommend to edit and issue special workshop proceedings or special issue of some journal which contains detailed description and text of each workshop presentation or prepare basic or special printed material for workshop participants concerning to practical training activity. We have not any other specific considerations.

Identified difference between countries

During the organization of multistakeholder and training workshops, we identified very similar current problems and innovation needs of Czech and Polish fish and aquaculture sector. At the same time, we found very similar position of practical fish farmers, their associations, processors and their



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interest to increase a collaboration with other SMEs and RTDs partners from both countries.