



AGREEMENT OF THE EUROPEAN SOCIAL PARTNERS PROVIDING RURAL SERVICES

Pertaining to the development of a common approach in the member states of the European Union to the provision of further training for qualified skilled employees providing rural services (The following persons are eligible for further training: Skilled workers employed in agriculture, agricultural machinery mechanics or persons with accredited professional qualifications at national level) ¹

- of 26 April 2007 -

The social partners of the rural services sector, **CEETAR** on behalf of employers and **EFFAT** on behalf of employees,

- are the only representatives of this sector in Europe and represent approximately 75,000 businesses providing rural services (agricultural and rural contractors), which employ approximately 380,000 workers,
- represent businesses and workers, who contribute to the positive development of rural communities in Europe and provide a wide range of services every day, thus contributing to sustainable farming, a healthy environment and a community-orientated society,
- support the aims of the European institutions to improve Europe's competitive position and to provide safety and training for workers as an essential means of protecting employment and revenue,
- recognise the necessity of obtaining accreditation for long-term employees of businesses active within this sector,
- highlight the current situation, in which highly qualified employees and workers of similar status to employees are leaving traditional agriculture and seeking new employment in professions where their knowledge and skills are valued,
- are proud of the spirit of innovation within their sector, which is developing both new employment opportunities and new fields of activity,
- aim to contribute to the reduction of unequal conditions for competition for businesses active within this sector,
- agree therefore to propose a common structure in order to bring together the various further training systems that exist in the member states of the European Union – whether these are organised at FE colleges, in-service or elsewhere - that wish to contribute to the accreditation and improvement of workers' knowledge and skills in the businesses active in this sector and fulfill the necessary requirements, in order to guarantee such accreditation and improvement of workers' knowledge and skills,
- wish to thank the European Commission, Directorate General for Employment, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities for the support that has made this agreement possible.

¹ The masculine form used in this agreement is intended at all times to include both genders (Agricultural machinery mechanic = male or female).



MODULE 1 – AGRICULTURAL KNOWLEDGE AND KNOWLEDGE OF AGRICULTURAL MACHINERY

Module 1 covers two areas, which are divided into Module 1-1 and Module 1-2, according to the basic qualifications for employees wishing to complete further training. Module 1-1 is intended for employees who have already completed agricultural training. Module 1-2 is designed for employees who have been trained as agricultural machinery mechanics. Module 1 aims to enable employees to overcome any areas of weakness that may become apparent in his personal approach to work.

1.1 Module 1-1 – Module 1 for agriculture and agricultural workers

- 1.1.1 Working with agricultural machinery
 - 1.1.1.1 Adapting to different cultures, climates and working conditions,
 - 1.1.1.2 Monitoring road safety and operational conditions,
 - 1.1.1.3 Adjusting controls,
 - 1.1.1.4 Security of ergonomic requests,
 - 1.1.1.5 Security for machines, equipment and vehicles,
 - 1.1.1.6 Comprehensive knowledge of road traffic regulations,
- 1.1.2 Maintenance of agricultural machinery
 - 1.1.2.1 Ensuring machine safety,
 - 1.1.2.2 Conducting regular maintenance tasks,
 - 1.1.2.3 Recognising and rectifying wear,
- 1.1.3 Repairing agricultural machinery
 - 1.1.3.1 Recognising and rectifying faults using tool kits and materials, where necessary, in addition to initiating and conducting repairs in workshops

1.2 Module 1-2 – Module 1 for agricultural machinery mechanics

- 1.2.1 Soil cultivation
 - 1.2.1.1 Classification of soil and assessment of soil condition,
 - 1.2.1.2 Conducting soil and cultivation type-specific cultivation,
 - 1.2.1.3 Avoiding and rectifying soil damage, where required,
- 1.2.2 Cultivation
 - 1.2.2.1 Production of seeds and seedlings
 - 1.2.2.2 Maintenance of stock
 - 1.2.2.3 Conducting plant protection
- 1.2.3 Crops
 - 1.2.3.1 Harvesting,
 - 1.2.3.2 Assessing yields,
 - 1.2.3.3 Identifying harvest periods,



- 1.2.3.4 Harvesting and
- 1.2.3.5 Transporting and storing harvest yields,
- 1.2.4 Rural conservation
- 1.2.4.1 Evaluation and implementation of rural conservation measures

MODULE 2 – PRINCIPLES OF ADMINISTRATION AND BUSINESS

Module 2 is intended to enable employees to gain an understanding of business organisation, to identify their own role and to contribute to business management processes. Participants will gain knowledge of:

- 2.1 The workplace
 - 2.1.1 Preparing and organising the workplace,
 - 2.1.2 Planning and implementing working processes,
 - 2.1.3 Monitoring and logging results (Completing work performance records)
 - 2.1.4 Maintaining business equipment
- 2.2 Employees' rights and obligations
 - 2.2.1 Getting to know key aspects of the employment contract,
 - 2.2.2 Understanding important sections of the applicable wage agreements,
 - 2.2.3 Defining business development and tasks,
 - 2.2.4 Gaining an insight into basic business administration tasks, such as purchasing, work in progress, sales and administration
- 2.3 Business links
 - 2.3.1 Recording inflow and consumption of resources,
 - 2.3.2 Obtaining, comparing and evaluating market and price information,
 - 2.3.3 Producing calculations,
 - 2.3.4 Comparing offers, preparing orders, checking invoices and gaining knowledge of the basic principles used to define rates paid to employees.

MODULE 3 – SERVICE ORIENTATION

Module 3 aims to enable employees to obtain the information that they need to carry out their work, to apply this information and to communicate with customers. Participants will gain knowledge of:

- 3.1 Obtaining, evaluating and classifying information,
 - 3.1.1 Using commercial communication and information systems,
 - 3.1.2 Applying data protection and data security regulations,
- 3.2 Applying communication techniques,



- 3.2.1 Resolving conflicts as part of a team,
- 3.3 Contributing to the acceptance and completion of orders,
 - 3.3.1 Allowing for special characteristics and responding to the needs of clients' businesses when providing services,
 - 3.3.2 Advising customers, accepting and communicating customer requests and information throughout the business,
 - 3.3.3 Accepting, processing and taking account of customer complaints, when completing work tasks,
 - 3.3.4 Conducting conversations with customers according to the situation,
 - 3.3.5 Assisting with purchases and
 - 3.3.6 Presenting a range of commercial services.

MODULE 4 – QUALITY ASSURANCE AND ENVIRONMENT

The aim of Module 4 is to enable employees to meet the highest quality standards and to fulfil increasingly stringent requirements in the fields of environmental conservation and Health and Safety. Participants will gain knowledge of:

- 4.1 Outlining targets, tasks and the development of commercial quality assurance,
- 4.2 Applying, documenting and evaluating business and product-specific quality standards,
- 4.3 Demonstrating, documenting and contributing to the removal of causes of errors and quality defects.
- 4.4 Contributing to the prevention of business-related strains on the environment within the professional sphere of influence, and in particular:
 - 4.4.1 Outlining any possible strains on the environment caused by the business, providing training and its contribution to environmental conservation by means of examples,
 - 4.4.2 Applying the relevant environmental regulations for the business providing training,
 - 4.4.3 Making use of opportunities to use energy and resources economically and in an environment-friendly way,
 - 4.4.4 Avoiding wastage; Transferring substances and materials to an environment-friendly waste disposal centre.
- 4.5 Contributing to the improvement of safety and health protection at work, especially:
 - 4.5.1 Identifying threats to health and safety in the workplace and adopting measures to prevent such threats,
 - 4.5.2 Applying job-specific industrial protection and accident prevention regulations,



- 4.5.3 Describing types of behaviour during accidents and introducing preliminary measures,
- 4.5.4 Applying fire prevention regulations; describing types of behaviour during fire incidents and adopting procedure to be followed in the event of a fire.

REALISATION OF THE AGREEMENT

The training course has to be covered and taught as full-time, part-time, evening or in other time forms. The course will take at least 1,800 hours, of which at least 600 hours have to be devoted to theoretical training. Trainees can complete individual training modules, for which certification is also awarded. "Skilled rural service worker" certification can only be awarded following successful completion of all the training modules.

The further training course should culminate in an examination, which serves to assess the knowledge and skills of course participants. Employees that gain a pass grade in the examination should be issued with a certificate or other document that serves to prove that the person has completed the examination successfully. The employee should be awarded the title "skilled rural service worker". The examination should be conducted according to standard practices in the relevant country, which includes the composition of an examination committee, time allocated for the examination, any fees and other related issues.

Either the social partners or the relevant authorities shall make decisions concerning the certification and recognition of training centres in cooperation with the social partners and in accordance with legal standards in the relevant countries.

An evaluation of the implementation of this agreement will be conducted by the social partners at European level within three years of its entry into force. However, any changes to the agreement can be made in advance upon application by members of the social partner organisations CEETTAR and EFFAT and through joint decisions of CEETTAR and EFFAT.

The German text is the original text of this agreement.

The agreement enters into force on 1 May 2007.

Brussels, 26 April 2007

For CEETTAR

For EFFAT

Gérard **NAPIAS**, President

Peter **HOLM**, Agricultural President