MODULE

INNOVATIVE SUSTAINABILITY COMPETENCE

Unit 1 I Activity 1 **Self-Assessment – Gather data about your farm**

60min

• Pen and blank paper

DESCRIPTION

Here is an activity that you can do to Gather data to self-assess the sustainability of your farm.

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THE ACTIVITY

1. **Make a list of the key areas of focus:** Some examples of areas that you might consider when assessing the sustainability of your farm include soil health, water management, energy use, waste management, and social and economic impacts. Make a list of the areas that are most relevant to your farm, based on your specific farming practices and goals.
2. **Identify data sources:** For each area of focus, identify the data sources that will be needed to gather information about your farm. These data sources can include records, such as invoices and receipts, as well as observations and measurements.
3. **Gather data:** Use the data sources identified in step 2 to gather data about your farm. This can include information about your farming practices, such as the types of crops you grow, the inputs you use, and your irrigation and water management practices. It can also include data about the environmental and social impacts of your farm, such as soil erosion, water pollution, and working conditions.
4. **Organise and analyse data:** Once you have gathered the data, organize it in a way that makes it easy to analyse. This could involve creating tables or graphs or using spreadsheet software. Use the data to get a better understanding of the sustainability of your farm and identify areas for improvement.
5. **Record and document data**: It is important to keep accurate records of the data that you gather. This will help you to track your progress over time and identify trends or patterns. It can also be useful to share your data with others, such as other farmers or advisors, to get feedback and ideas for improvement.

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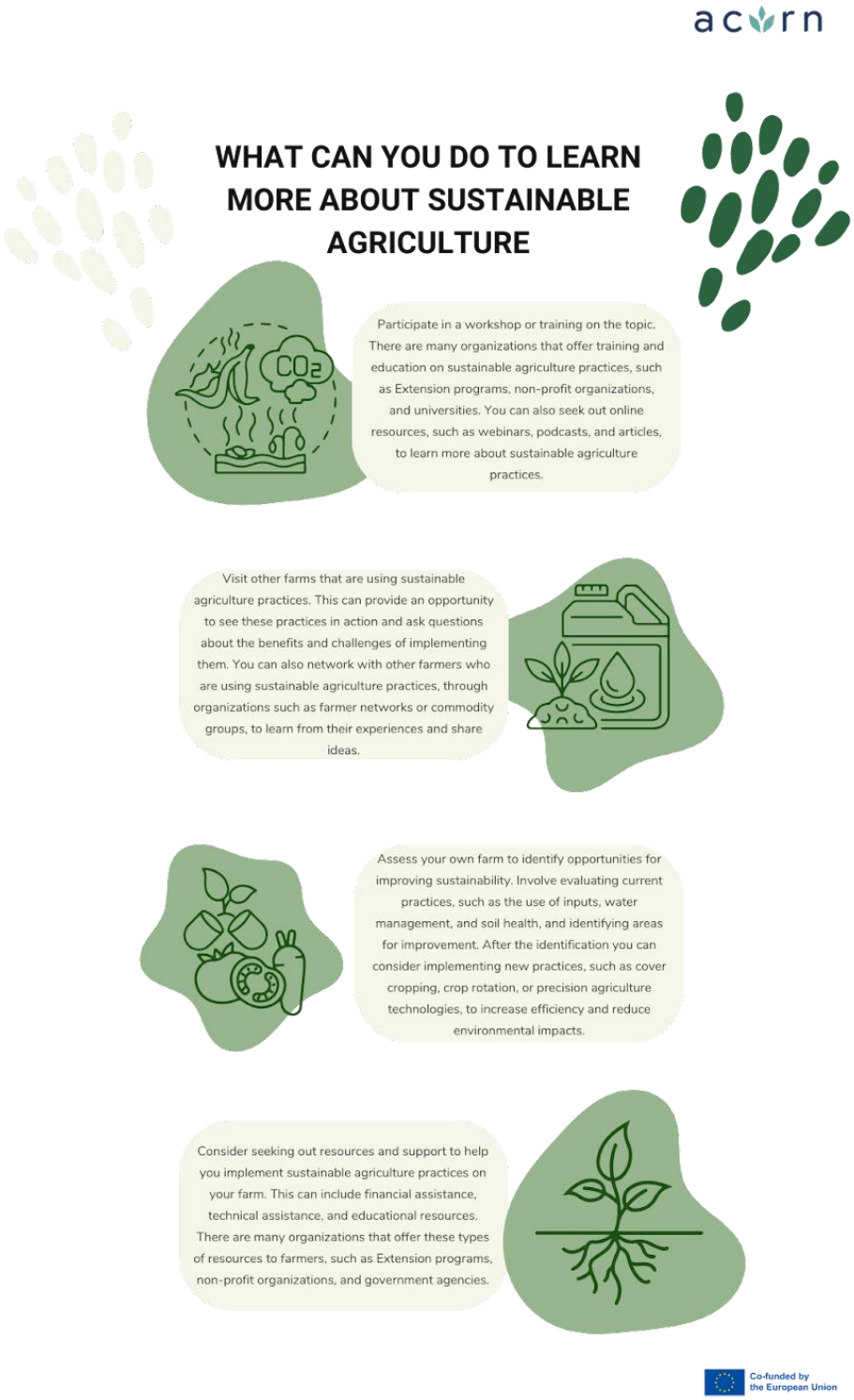
THE THEORY

Sustainable agriculture is an approach to food production that aims to meet the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. It seeks to produce healthy, high-quality food in an environmentally, socially, and economically sustainable manner.



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There are several key principles of sustainable agriculture. One is the use of diverse, locally adapted plant and animal species and breeds. This helps to build resilience into farming systems, as a diverse range of species is less vulnerable to pests, diseases, and environmental stresses. Another principle is the use of renewable and non-toxic inputs, such as compost, mulch, and natural pest controls, rather than synthetic fertilizers, pesticides, and herbicides. This helps to reduce the environmental impacts of agriculture and protect the health of farmers and consumers.

Sustainable agriculture is becoming increasingly important as the world's population grows, and the impacts of climate change become more pronounced. It offers a way to produce healthy, high-quality food in a manner that is environmentally, socially, and economically sustainable. By adopting sustainable agriculture practices, farmers and others in the food production chain can help to ensure a more secure and sustainable future for all.

In addition to technological and business-related aspects of innovative sustainability competence, agripreneurs also need to be aware of and consider the social and environmental impacts of their operations. This can involve adopting sustainable practices, such as conserving natural resources, protecting biodiversity, and minimising pollution and waste. It can also involve engaging with and supporting local communities and promoting fair and ethical working conditions.

Developing innovative sustainability competence is not only beneficial for the success of agripreneurs, but it is also increasingly important for the long-term health and resilience of the agriculture industry as a whole. Climate change and other environmental challenges are putting pressure on the sector, and agripreneurs who are able to adapt and innovate will be better positioned to weather these changes and continue to produce the food and other products that society needs.

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