



# Sustainable Agriculture

(Resource ID: 290)

**Gentjan Mehmeti**

gmehmeti(at)ubt.edu.al

This teaching resource is allocated to following University:

**AUT - Agricultural University of Tirana**

Institution:

**Agricultural University of Tirana**

<http://www.sustainicum.at/en/modules/view/290.Sustainable-Agriculture>



**Individual work**  
**Group work**  
**Plenum**



**11 to 30**  
**students**



**Up to 3 lecture**  
**units**



**English, Shqip**

The objective of this teaching resource is to inform the students about sustainable agriculture, so they can understand it and be able to discuss the complexity of this concept. This teaching resource will be an active learning experience for students. They will be practically involved in farm visits, will discuss with farmers the problems that they are facing and about ways to develop agriculture in a sustainable manner. Students and farmers will think about the opportunities and responsibilities to develop a more sustainable form of agriculture.

The term "sustainable agriculture" aims to take into consideration how agricultural systems must act if they want to be a part of an economy with a sustainable step. Some of the factors that contribute to the sustainability of agriculture are under the control of farmers, as long as the collective decisions of all farmers affect the sustainability of the whole economy

(Norman *et al.* 1997).

To develop a conceptual model of a system of sustainable agricultural production, it is necessary to take into consideration definition of "sustainable agriculture".

The American Society of Agronomy (1989) provides a detailed definition of sustainable agriculture:

"A sustainable agriculture is one that, over the long term, (1) enhances environmental quality and the resource base on which agriculture depends; (2) provides for basic human food and fiber needs; (3) is economically viable; (4) and enhances the quality of life for farmers and society as a whole."

Sustainable agriculture also was addressed by the United States Congress in 1990 Farm Bill:

"Sustainable agriculture means an integrated system of plant and animal production practices having a site-specific application that over the long term will:

- Satisfy human food and fiber needs.
- Enhance environmental quality and the natural resource base upon which the agricultural economy depends.
- Make the most efficient use of non-renewable resources and on-farm resources and integrate, where appropriate, natural biological cycles and controls.
- Sustain the economic viability of farm operations.
- Enhance the quality of life for farmers and society as a whole."

Theoretically, what should be emphasized is that sustainability requires that farmers when they take any decisions to consider the impact on welfare, including environmental, social/institutional and economic aspects for the actual and the future generations, also for all people (Norman *et al.*, 1997).

In this teaching resource, the **fieldwork** teaching method will be used, as a method that involves the collection of information outside the classroom. This method will give the opportunity to the students to see closely the problems that agriculture is facing, and to understand what should be done

to develop it in a sustainable manner. For this reason, it is necessary to define carefully the farms which will be visited by the students. All collected information, will be discussed in small groups through the **World café** method. These are two main teaching methods that will be used in this teaching resource.

---

## Teaching Tools & Methods



Excursion   Mini-project   Written material   Computer program

## Integration of Social Stakeholders

Stakeholders – that are involved in the teaching resource, have to understand the concept of sustainable agriculture, concepts that they can use in the future.

Suggested Suitable Stakeholders:

- Students, who need to understand the concept of sustainable agriculture. They have to be engaged practically to see closely the activities performed on farms.
- Farmers, will be invited to discuss the development of agriculture in a sustainable manner, showing how activities are performed on their farms.

## Strength

- Active learning experience for students.
- Mutual learning for students and farmers.
- For students and farmers to think about the opportunities and responsibilities to develop a more sustainable form of agriculture.
- Students can gain knowledge and /or experiences from farmers involved in the teaching resource.

## Weakness

- Students must have some basic knowledge of farm management in advance.
- Farmers must agree to have a visit their farms and to discuss the

activities that they perform.

## Learning Outcomes

Students and farmers need:

1. To understand the importance of this form of agriculture.
2. To understand the benefits of sustainable agriculture.
3. To promote sustainable agriculture.

## Relevance for Sustainability

The concept of sustainable agriculture highlights the economic, environmental and social benefits of a sustainable agricultural system, and emphasizes the fact that agricultural production depends on natural resources.

By understanding the issues related to sustainable agriculture, stockholders can understand and promote future discussion of how they and the society choose to use scarce natural resources in the production of food now and in the future (Norman et al. 1997).

## Related Teaching Resources

None

## Preparation Efforts

High

## Preparation Efforts Description

–Preparation for the lecturer. –Identification of suitable students that want to know more about sustainable agriculture. –Identification and meetings with suitable farmers. –The preparation of all the necessary materials for lectures and the World café, as well as the organization of farm visits.

## Access

Free

## Assessment

–The assessment will be done through several questions to see whether

students have understood the case challenges, also through presentations and project reports.

## Credit/Certification Description

No Credit/Certification!

## Sources and Links

**Important: You are leaving the ConSus platform. The author is not responsible for any contents outside the ConSus platform:**

### Sources:

1. Norman, D., R. Janke, S. Freyenberger, B. Schurle, and H. Kok, 2000. Defining and implementing sustainable agriculture. Kansas sustainable agriculture series, paper no. 1.

Web: <http://www.soc.iastate.edu/sapp/soc235susag.pdf>

2. American Society of Agronomy, 1989. "Decision reached on sustainable ag." Agronomy News. January, pg. 15, Madison, Wisconsin.

3. United States Congress, 1990. Food, Agriculture, Conservation, and Trade Act of 1990, Public Law 101-624. Title XVI, Subtitle A, Section 1603. Washington, DC: US Government.

### Links:

<http://www.sustainableagriculture.net>

<http://www.saiplatform.org/>

## Funded by

This teaching resource, realised within the project ConSus, has been funded with the support of the TEMPUS of the European Union. The contents reflect the views of the authors, and the European Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein.