

# Breed)

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## NEWSLETTER #1

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### Partners

DINAMICA, Italy  
SZKOLA GLOWNA GOSPODARSTWA WIEJSKIEGO, Poland  
UNIVERSITY OF THESSALY, Greece  
ISTITUTO DI ISTRUZIONE SUPERIORE "ANTONIO ZANELLI", Italy  
GRAN SASSO - LAGA NATIONAL PARK, Italy  
ESCOLA PROFISSIONAL DO ALTO LIMA, C.I.P.R.L., Portugal  
ASSOCIATION MINTIES BITĖS, Lithuania

### THE SCOPES OF THE BREED PROJECT

Sustainable agriculture is a key to long-term and inclusive growth, given its strong multiplier impact on other sectors; sustainability goes beyond being a purely environmental issue and includes economic viability and social acceptability.

The BREED project "Promoting empowerment of VET system through sustainable entrepreneurial initiatives in quality pig breeding" intends to give students the opportunity to deal with a sustainable activity in this sector.

The initiative aims to fostering the resilience of small farms by training new pig farmers through an integrated action addressing the three main pillars of sustainability: animal welfare, profitability and environmental impact - equally in an inter- and transdisciplinary approach.

The BREED project is based on an effective motivational and awareness-raising strategy as an opportunity for students to empower themselves by acquiring new skills, to improve their attitude towards learning and their employability. BREED aims to provide a comprehensive package of high quality training, in order to give learners who wish to start, continue or improve an entrepreneurial venture in pig farming, the opportunity to acquire or expand their skills.

The project aims to achieve this through the creation of a comprehensive training toolkit that includes results and approaches, based on motivational strategies and innovative solutions that address the challenges of sustainability in pig farming: economic, social and environmental. BREED is built on the know-how of different partners from Italy, Poland, Greece, Lithuania and Portugal, each representing excellence in their field.

The project is implemented through the production of three intellectual outputs:

- Guide to quality pig breeding for VET trainers;
- OER BREED VET toolkit for sustainable entrepreneurial initiatives in quality pig breeding;
- BREED motivation guide to quality pig breeding.

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## THE FIRST STEPS OF THE PROJECT

The project took its first steps with the kick-off meeting held in Bologna and Reggio Emilia on 30th and 31st October 2019, attended by representatives of all partners.

On this occasion, the participants entered fully into the start-up phase of the project, deepening the activities to be implemented in the short, medium and long term and sharing the programme to achieve the different results set.

### First steps of BREED



- caring for the environment;
- biosecurity;
- feeding efficiency;
- collecting productivity data to aid decision-making.

The experts additionally indicated 160 best practices that may be used in free-range farming. Since the declaration of the worldwide pandemic status, the BREED Consortium started a reflection on the impact that the safety measures was producing on the VET training methodologies and the possible changes of the training needs that were identified in the survey previously undertaken.

With the aim of finding potential areas of improvement of the BREED course, a further short online questionnaire was distributed from June to July 2020, based on open-ended questions to VET teachers and trainers, focused on the identification of the most important difficulties encountered while teaching/training online during the outbreak.

The results did not reveal any major issues, but reported the following difficulties associated to the social interaction and communication, not only between teacher and students, but also among teachers and trainers, as well difficulties related to the digital competences of teachers and students and to the management of poor connectivity and/or instructions to the students.

Suggestions and results from both surveys were included in the "Quality Pig Breeding Guide for VET trainers" and taken into account in the process of developing the BREED course content.



## THE BREED SURVEYS

The BREED project is based on the examination of the needs and expectations of the addressed final users. For this purpose, a special questionnaire was developed to identify the main issues which would have to be presented, best practices for free-range pig farming, media suggested to illustrate the topics of the course, methodical areas for the learning outcomes as well as organizational areas.

Using this questionnaire, an initial consultation was carried out in the period from December 2019 to January 2020 and the national expert groups in the project partner countries participated have been involved.

This consultation identified seven areas of primary importance in free-range pig farming:

- reducing mortality;
- early warning of diseases;
- optimal vaccination strategies;

## ONLINE MEETINGS OF THE PROJECT TEAM

Despite the restrictions and difficulties caused by the consequences of the Coronavirus health emergency, the BREED project team promptly reacted by rescheduling the planned activities in order to continue the project without major revisions of the planned work plan.

In particular, intensive use was made of digital communication and the planned in-person technical meetings were rescheduled and conducted online.

In this way, it was possible to constantly monitor the progress of the project and implement the activities at the planned quality level.

## CREATION OF NATIONAL GROUPS OF EXPERTS

In the early stages of the project, a group of 120 experts was created from the five European countries participating in the project: Italy, Poland, Greece, Lithuania and Portugal.

The experts, selected from among operators in sectors related to agro-livestock issues, are VET teachers, breeders, processors, researchers and academics. The experts play a fundamental role in the project, as they are constantly consulted in order to produce professional outputs that effectively meet the needs of the learners and the difficulties and problems of the sector.

The first involvement of the national group of experts took place with the administration of a series of questions to guide the construction of the BREED course.



## NEXT STEPS

- The Guide to Quality Pig Breeding for VET trainers
- The BREED online training course
- Best practices
- BREED toolkit
- The BREED events of peer training among the project staff, on pig breeding in Northern Italy and Poland.

### Partners:



### MORE INFORMATION:

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