



# CURRICULUM

## Start Your Own Food Business

Online course aimed at women in the Agri-food sector

VERSION

# ENGLISH

## Foreword

This curriculum has been developed as a primary output of the Erasmus+ funded project [“Advancing Women in Agri-Food Rural Environments \(AWARE\).”](#) This project is led by Atlantic Technological University Galway, Ireland, in partnership with Macra na Feirme, Ireland, Confederazione Italiana Agricoltori Toscana (CIA Toscana), Italy, The Polish Farm Advisory and Training Centre, Poland, University of Bedfordshire, UK and Propel Europe, Belgium.

The main aim of the *AWARE* project is to support the growth of women entrepreneurs through developing the “Start Your Own Food Business” online training course, mentorship resources, and various supplementary materials created specifically in response to women’s unique needs in the Agri-Food sector. This project will equip current and aspiring women in the Agri-Food sector with the knowledge, skills, and confidence to lever their business concepts into fruition.

The project team carried out initial research with female food entrepreneurs across Europe as part of a previous Erasmus+ *Educate to Innovate* project. The findings of this research indicated that women throughout Europe involved in the Agri-Food sector possess significantly different training needs in comparison to their male counterparts . Previous studies have shown that women oftentimes consider mentoring more important than men. They also show a significantly greater improvement in professional development from mentoring; however, women are less likely to have mentors or receive formal mentorship early in their careers compared with men (Cross et al.,2019). In recognition of these differences, this curriculum will be designed to specifically address the challenges that women currently face as entrepreneurs in the Agri-Food sector. Women will have access to specifically tailored entrepreneurial training and will be provided with the information necessary to develop an in-depth understanding of the importance of engaging with a business mentor(s) throughout their entrepreneurial endeavour. This will in turn contribute to supporting the societal need of engaging women in agri-food, thus further reducing the entrepreneurship gender gap present in the sector.

This curriculum, together with its associated project outputs will provide women with access to online entrepreneurial training to support their desire to start or further develop their Agri-Food related business in Europe. The agricultural sector is one of the world's leading producers of food products. It guarantees food, jobs and home security, serving as a major bases for employment, recreation and tourism throughout. With these beneficial societal impacts in mind, it is imperative that this tradition is cultivated.

TABLE OF CONTENTS	
<b>OVERVIEW</b>	3
<b>COURSE AIM AND OBJECTIVES</b>	3
<b>LEARNING OUTCOMES</b>	4
<b>RECOMMENDATIONS FOR COURSE DEVELOPMENT</b>	5
<b>ENTREPRENEURSHIP DEVELOPMENT</b>	5
<b>PEDOGOGY</b>	6
<b>ASSESSMENT METHODOLOGIES</b>	6
<b>MENTORING</b>	7
<b>RESEARCH</b>	7
<b>MODULE ONE</b>	10
<b>MODULE TWO</b>	18
<b>MODULE THREE</b>	28
<b>MODULE FOUR</b>	33
<b>APPENDIX</b>	
- <b>Appendix 1 – Survey Analysis</b>	41
- <b>Appendix 2 – Resources</b>	59

## COURSE OVERVIEW

<b>Course Title</b>	Start your own Food Business
<b>Level</b>	EQF Level 5
<b>Weighting</b>	30 credits
<b>Course Delivery Method</b>	Blended learning
<b>Notional Hours</b>	100 hours for every 10 credits

### Course Aim

The overall aim of the project is to support the growth of women entrepreneurs in the Agri-Food sector through training and mentorship. This will be achieved through development of this detailed curriculum and associated project outputs. The curriculum will ensure the development of an online course that will specifically address the challenges women face as entrepreneurs in the Agri-Food sector. The curriculum has also been informed by females in the Agri-Food sector who took part in an online survey at the development stages of their entrepreneurial endeavor. The curriculum:

1. Is informed by industry with contributions from food entrepreneurs, business mentors and the wider Agri-Food community,
2. Provides for the development of an online course accessible by Agri-Food women and educators across Europe,
3. Promotes mentorship for women in the Agri-Food sector,
4. Recognises the needs to support women in the sector by specifically tailoring education to meet their needs.

### Course Objectives

1. Provide accessible education that meets the specific training needs of women in the Agri-Food sector,
2. Increase income for women that are food entrepreneurs,
3. Increase awareness of the need to adequately support the growth of women in the Agri-Food sector,
4. Identify and create awareness around the specific barriers and challenges that women are facing in the Agri-Food sector,
5. Promote mentorship for women in the Agri-Food sector,
6. Grow the number of female mentors/mentees,
7. Teach processing, logistics, regulation, and digital skills of women in the Agri-Food sector,

8. Establish key skills of communications, personal and interpersonal and develop entrepreneurial skills for women in the Agri-Food sector,
9. Teach Business Skills/ICT skills for women in the Agri-Food sector,
10. Create awareness of food sustainable through entrepreneurship skills for women in the Agri-Food sector,

### Learning Outcomes

This course takes the approach of combining industry relevant skillsets with soft skills development related to enhancing entrepreneurial mind-sets within participants. The course builds knowledge and know-how of entrepreneurship through the topics outlined, however the teaching style of experiential and challenge-based learning enhances the competence of the participants for entrepreneurship and therefore venture execution. This approach requires a non-traditional learning environment that blends teaching and assessment techniques. Peer and experiential learning are at the core of the modules, with adequate facilitation playing a significant role in the student learning more over than the traditional style of lecturing.

On completion of the training course the learners will be able to:

- Identify and understand the barriers and challenges facing women in the Agri-Food sector,
- Recognise gaps in agricultural education and be aware of learning opportunities for women,
- Identify specific skills required in becoming a female Agri-Food entrepreneur,
- Demonstrate a clear understanding of the marketing principles for launching a start-up food business as a woman,
- Identify market needs, the best business model suited to the product or service, and the methods of accessing finances,
- Develop an awareness of the creative thinking process and the ability to demonstrate understanding and sufficient use of a range of business tools and techniques,
- Build brand awareness, and a social image and platform to engage an audience using social media,
- Learn how to engage with a mentor and understand the core characteristics and benefits of mentoring,
- Obtain the core food sector skills required for business creation and innovation,
- Be equipped with essential knowledge in nutrition, food legislation and safety, health claims, product labelling, packaging, and development.

## RECOMMENDATIONS FOR COURSE DEVELOPMENT

The overall aim of the curriculum is to support VET trainers in delivering education that is specifically tailored to meeting the training needs of women in the Agri-Food sector. The main outcome of the course will be the development of modules which support women entrepreneurs in the growth and development of their entrepreneurial mind-set and self-efficacy that can be applied to current or new food business ventures. The student archetype can range from a female farmer/food producer who lacks the entrepreneurial skillset to develop progressive opportunities to those who want to explore the food industry as an option for self-employment. The training course should take the approach of combining industry relevant skillsets with soft skills development to ensure that upon course completion, participants have an increased confidence across an array of relevant skills related to enhancing entrepreneurial mind-sets within females. Introducing experiential and challenge-based learning will enhance the competence of the participants for entrepreneurship and therefore venture execution. In structure the course should be timetabled to facilitate workshop-based practical learning with an element of self-directed learning for the students to undertake between sessions. Ideally, the training course should move away from the theory-heavy traditional style of teaching and incorporate a peer-ed flexible approach that facilitates the needs of the learners.

### Entrepreneurship Development

Entrepreneurs have a unique mind-set that enables them to visualise new ideas, apply them and act to harness the opportunity that leads to change for the entrepreneur or society in general. They play a key role in employment, innovation and change in society. Entrepreneurs perceive that they are risk takers and highly motivated, however their frame of mind is much more analytical and composed compared to others in society. With entrepreneurs playing such a significant role in Europe's society, it is vital that this unique mindset is nurtured. Entrepreneurship is a creative process of idea development to execution. The efficiency of this process like any other can be improved in students by creating a more practical learning environment.

This entrepreneurial process requires both hard and soft skills development and both should be nurtured in the training course. Resilience is a common soft skill required to implement a new idea or venture. Through the creation of a challenge-based/practical learning environment students will be exposed to situations that take them fully out of their comfort zone. Through facilitation and reflective practices, the students will create an awareness of their resilience levels, which will give them a solid skills platform for taking on a new venture. This example can be replicated for many other soft and hard skill developments.

## Pedagogy Relevant to the Course

The course will use a mixed approach to its delivery and achievement of the learning outcomes.

### Experiential learning

This will engage the student in learning-by-doing scenarios in a challenging but safe environment.

### Peer to peer learning

With effective facilitation the group dynamics will be nurtured to promote a peer learning environment and a community approach to development.

### Lecturing

Traditional style lecturing will be used but at a low proportion to the entire course content.

### Facilitating

Effective facilitation of the group will drive a significant portion of the learning outcomes. The facilitators will guide and allow discussions, debates, and student interactions to help the group achieve learning goals.

### Reflecting

The practice of reflection will be commonplace in this programme to ensure the students are analysing their relationship with the content and context of the programme.

## Assessment Methodologies

The assessment of entrepreneurial thinking is difficult, with consensus regarding a standard assessment method still lacking.

### Reflection Documents

Students will complete a reflective document in relation to their personal experiences and insights on the course topics. Because of the personal nature of these documents, answers will vary widely. These reflective documents will be graded on a pass or fail basis.

### Project Report

A group industry project report is recommended as a practice to support and encourage team dynamics. This essential report will comprise of detailed project methodologies descriptions, their desired outcomes, and recommendations for their improvement. This will be assessed on a percentage basis with each individual section receiving its own mark. All sections individual marks will then be compiled to determine the final grade. Sections will include a detailed discussion, proving a thorough understanding, of the host company and its potential issues, explanations of various innovative solutions and their relevance to the company, as well as an overall mark for the quality of the report.

## Project Presentations

Each student will complete a presentation on their project report. These presentations will be assessed on their content, its relevance to the topic, and the general presentation skills of the presenter. The content marking will be dependent on the information included the use of accompanying visual aids, and the presenters time keeping ability.

## Continuous Assessments

Continuous assessments throughout this programme will include questioning on the industry-specific skills outlines in Module 4. Each relevant industry skill will be designated its own individual continuous assessment exam.

## Mentoring<sup>1</sup>

Mentors play a critical role in the supporting of female entrepreneurs' growth and development within the Agri-Food sectors, and this is a key consideration of the AWARE project. Such relationships between mentor and mentee forms a significant part of this training course. Providing education to those within the Agri-Food sector regarding the extent to which the mentorship process positively impacts the ability of mentees to grow and sustain their business is an essential part of this. Through increasing the awareness of the substantial beneficial effects this relationship, women may be encouraged to partake in such a process. For women specifically, this process offers guidance while navigating the specific barriers they face in this field. Additionally, this relationship may boost their self-confidence and degree of positive self-talk, which will subsequently improve their performance. The successful delivery of this course and its individual modules will be dependent on the availability of external mentors and entrepreneurs drawn from the Agri-Food community. Only with sufficient input and involvement from these external sources throughout the delivery of this course will it be possible for the participants to gain a true, detailed insight and understanding of the Agri-Food realm, a critical aspect in supporting their development, growth, and subsequent success.

## Research

Both the curriculum and supplementary material included in this training course have been informed through conducting primary research, completed by the project consortium. The resulting information was collated, with results considered while developing this course. Such research provides educators with in-depth understanding of the training needs and business challenges of Agri-Food personnel. This ensures that the resulting course is specifically developed in response to the learners needs and

<sup>1</sup> Appendix 2 Mentoring Resource



highlights the common challenges and barriers oftentimes faces by these individuals. However, it is essential to recognise that the Agri-Food sector is dynamic and fast-paces, requiring its related education and training courses to undergo continuous revision and refinement to ensure it accurately reflects the current industry.

## START YOUR OWN FOOD BUSINESS – ONLINE TRAINING COURSE

The course will consist of 4 modules:

1. **Women in Agri-Food** – This module will establish and explore the plethora of challenges that women experience in the predominantly male Agri-Food sector.
2. **Opportunity Recognition in the Agri-Food Sector** – These modules will the opportunities available to the learners. This includes but is not limited to opportunity recognition, successful business modelling and financing, developing innovative thinking, building brand awareness, establishing a social media identity, and improving audience-engagement strategies.
3. **The Role of the Mentor** – This module will include topics relating to how best learners can identify and engage with a mentos as well as the roles and responsibilities of both the mentor and the mentee, and the requirements to be in either position.
4. **Food Sector Specific Skills** – This module will provide learners with information on food regulations, product development nutrition and testing, such as sensory, various labelling and packaging methodologies, as well as essential food quality and safety criteria.

**Module 1: Women in Agri-Food**  
7.5 ECTS (75 notional hours)

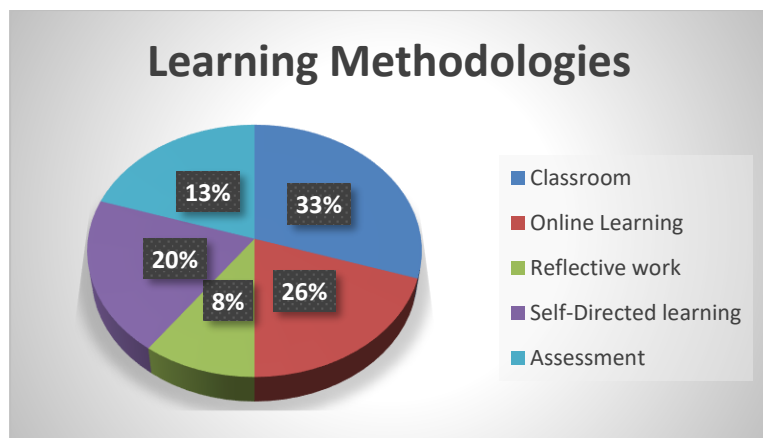
This module consists of 3 individual sessions, together aiming to address the challenges and barriers experienced by women in the Agri-Food sector, which is currently male dominated. It also provides the participants with the soft skills required for women to become entrepreneurs and highlights the opportunities available to them when starting their own Agri-Food business.

This module consists of three individual sessions which share the overarching objective of addressing the challenges and barriers that females within the agri-food, a heavily male-dominated, sector experience. This module will also provide learners with the relevant soft skills considered necessary for women to successfully branch into the Agri-Food sector. Moreover, this module will highlight the key opportunities available to women during the earlier phases of their Agri-Food business.

**On the completion of the module students will:**

1. Have gained a thorough understanding of the main challenges and barriers that women in the Agri-Food sector consider deterrent.
2. Have developed a detailed understanding of the knowledge and skills essential to develop for working in the Agri-Food sector, and of the opportunities available at the early phases of their endeavour.
3. Be equipped with the skills necessary to become a successful female entrepreneur, and how best to improve these skills.

**Learning Methodologies**



Learning Methodologies	Total Hours
Classroom	25
Online Learning	20
Reflective work	5
Self-Directed learning	15
Assessment	10
<b>Total:</b>	<b>75</b>

**Module Structure**

Sessions	Title	Week
1	Identifying barriers for women in the Agri-Food sector	1
2	Skills development	1, 2
3	How to start an Agri-Food business	3,4

## Session 1: Identifying Barriers for Women in the Agri-Food Sector

### Description

This session identifies and explores the specific challenges women face in the Agri-Food sector. The module aims to provide students with the specific skillsets they require to overcome these challenges.

The aim of this session is to identify and explore the myriad of gender-specific challenges women experience in the Agri-Food sector. In response to the established challenges, learners will be provided with sufficient relevant skills to counteract and overcome these barriers.

### Learning Outcomes

On completion of session one, students will:

- Have the ability to identify the gender-specific barriers and challenges that females experience in the Agri-Food sector,
- Possess sufficient knowledge about and understanding of how best to overcome the aforementioned gender-specific deterrents in the Agri-Food sector,
- Have the ability to adequately implement entrepreneurial soft skills into their practices.
- Be able to recognise supportive opportunities to their Agri-Food endeavour.

Indicative Syllabus			
Topic	Methodology	Activities	Relevant External Resources
<b>Identifying barriers:</b> Research, Survey, Case Studies, Policy, Supports	Online lectures, Classroom lectures, Self-directed learning	Survey analysis, Focus group talks Group discussions Guest speakers Industry visits	<a href="#">Challenges women face in business in 2021</a>  <a href="#">The professional status of women in the EU</a>  <a href="#">Changing the Gender Bias in Agriculture</a>  <a href="#">Females in the field   European Commission</a>  <a href="#">Welcome to WEgate - European gateway for women's entrepreneurship</a>  <a href="#">Women entrepreneurs</a>
<b>Entrepreneurial traits and skills:</b> Identifying traits, Self-assessment	Online lectures, Supplementary material analysis	Guest Speaker – Local Food Entrepreneur video profile, Identifying personality traits, Analysing other entrepreneurs, Self-assessment, Case studies, Problem solving, Reviewing materials	Burns, P. (2022) Entrepreneurship and Small Business. London, England: Red Globe Press.  <a href="http://ecorner.stanford.edu/videos/365/What-are-the-Best-Qualities-of-Successful-Entrepreneurs">http://ecorner.stanford.edu/videos/365/What-are-the-Best-Qualities-of-Successful-Entrepreneurs</a>  <a href="http://ecorner.stanford.edu/videos/366/Five-Critical-Skills-That-Entrepreneurs-Need">http://ecorner.stanford.edu/videos/366/Five-Critical-Skills-That-Entrepreneurs-Need</a>  <a href="https://www.ofc.org.uk/sites/ofc/files/research/ofcreport2016a5final.pdf">https://www.ofc.org.uk/sites/ofc/files/research/ofcreport2016a5final.pdf</a>  O'Hara, B. (2011) Entrepreneurship in Ireland. Dublin, Gill & Macmillan.  <a href="https://www.ofc.org.uk/sites/ofc/files/research/ofcreport2016a5final.pdf">https://www.ofc.org.uk/sites/ofc/files/research/ofcreport2016a5final.pdf</a>
<b>Self-Assessment:</b> Identifying skills, traits, strengths, and weaknesses	Classroom lectures, Online lectures, Self-directed learning.	Complete Self-Assessment Instrument	<a href="http://wrdp.org/wp-content/uploads/Entrepreneur-Self-Assessment-Survey.pdf">http://wrdp.org/wp-content/uploads/Entrepreneur-Self-Assessment-Survey.pdf</a>  <a href="http://iMA-linkedin.com">http://iMA-linkedin.com</a>

<p>Opportunity recognition Idea Generation customer empathy Body storming Story boarding Prototyping</p>	<p>Classroom lectures</p>	<p>Develop customer empathy map, Using the 5 stages of the Design Thinking process develop and present a prototype, Review development of prototypes, Review methods of prototyping i.e. Napkin sketch, wire frame, landing page, blogs, videos, pop up shops etc</p>	<p><a href="https://www.interaction-design.org/literature/article/5-stages-in-the-design-thinking-process">https://www.interaction-design.org/literature/article/5-stages-in-the-design-thinking-process</a>  Video links to body storming and story boarding  <i>Serious Creativity</i> – Edward de Bono  <i>Thinking fast and slow</i> by Daniel Kahneman  <i>The Creative Habit</i> by Twyla Tharp</p>
--	---------------------------	---	---

## Session 2: Skills Development

### Description

This session focuses on achieving social inclusion through education and learning. This session will aim to concentrate on improving the basic soft skills required by the female entrepreneur to establish and run a business.

The focus of this session is on successfully achieving social inclusion through increased education and learning. To do so, this session will aim to identify and improve the soft skills considered necessary for female entrepreneurs to establish and further develop their business.

### Learning Outcomes

On completion of session two, students will:

- Have the ability to plan, design and deliver effective oral presentations for current business practices using appropriate communication methods,
- Be able to confidently become actively involved in the creation of networking opportunities with like-minded individuals, enabling them to broaden their understanding of their place within the Agri-Food infrastructure,
- Have the ability to manage their time and prioritise tasks in order to work to a high level of efficiency,
- Understand the significance and importance of establishing realistic and attainable goals to maintain a feeling of control over their workload and situation in general.

Indicative Syllabus			
Topic	Methodology	Activities	Relevant Resources
<p><b>Communication:</b></p> <p>3-minute elevator pitching Presentation using visual aids</p>	<p><b>Online Lecture</b></p> <p><b>Self-Directed</b></p>	<p>Students will be required to deliver an elevator pitch in class incorporating their goal, target audience and USP (unique selling point)</p>	<p><a href="#">The Best Start-Up Pitches</a></p> <p><a href="#">Pitch Deck Templates for your Business</a></p> <p><a href="#">How to improve communication</a></p>
<p><b>Networking:</b></p> <p>Create or act upon business opportunities</p>	<p><b>Online Lecture</b></p> <p><b>Self-Directed</b></p>	<p>Track events happening in your area (panel discussion, ceremonies, symposiums)</p>	<p><a href="#">Support tools and Networks for Women in Business</a></p> <p>Business Networking (linkedin.com)</p> <p><a href="#">The importance of Networking</a></p>
<p><b>Time Management:</b></p> <p>How to plan and using time blocking technique</p>	<p><b>Online Lecture</b></p> <p><b>Self-Directed</b></p>	<p>Students will create a plan based on tasks they need completed in the coming months</p> <p>Use calendar apps and scheduling apps for recurring expenses and contractors</p>	<p><a href="#">Work Life Balance</a></p> <p><a href="https://michiganrown.org/work-life-balance-motherhood-and-farming/">https://michiganrown.org/work-life-balance-motherhood-and-farming/</a></p>
<p><b>Self Confidence:</b></p> <p>Training to become more resilient</p> <p>Identifying personal and interpersonal Entrepreneurial Traits</p>	<p><b>Online Lecture</b></p> <p><b>Self-Directed</b></p> <p><b>Analysis of recommended videos and text</b></p>	<p>Watch Guest Speaker – Local Food Entrepreneur video profile</p> <p>Complete short exercise to identify personality traits, awareness raising and control over resources</p>	<p>Video Profiles from Local Food Entrepreneurs</p> <p><a href="#">Women's Economic Empowerment</a></p>
<p><b>Team Theory</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Six hats theory</li> <li>• Belbin and DeBono team theories</li> <li>• Team based techniques.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Online lecture</b> with videos on six hats theory and Belbin and DeBono team theories</p>	<p>Students will work together to identify and recognise the role each team member should play based on iMA dialects</p>	<p><i>Six hats thinking</i> – Edward de Bono</p> <p><i>Serious Creativity</i> – Edward de Bono</p> <p><a href="https://www.ofc.org.uk/sites/ofc/files/research/ofcreport2016a5fi">https://www.ofc.org.uk/sites/ofc/files/research/ofcreport2016a5fi</a></p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Team management and selection</li> </ul>			<a href="#">nal.pdf</a>
<p><b>Co-operative Working Environments</b> Group Development</p> <p>Conformity and groupthink</p> <p>Team roles</p> <p>Gender and intercultural team communication</p>	<p><b>Online lecture</b> on group communication strategies, team building, the stages of group formation , importance of carrying out group activities and identifying team roles</p>	<p>Group Project and presentation assessment</p> <p>Carry out recommended group activities and team building techniques</p>	<p>Jaques, David, <i>Learning in Groups</i>, Kogan Page, London.</p> <p>Gill Hasson 2012 <i>Brilliant Communication Skills: What the best communicators know, do and say</i></p> <p>Geoffrey Tumlin 2013 <i>Stop Talking, Start Communicating: Counterintuitive Secrets to Success in Business and in Life</i></p>



**Session 3: How to Start an Agri-Food Business**

**Description**

This session identifies and explores the core principles required to successfully launch a start-up within the Agri-Food sector. The aim of the session is to assist in the development of a business plan and formalising the strategy the company intends to adopt. It also aims to provide examples of various opportunities available to the women entrepreneurs in the Agri-Food sector.

This session identifies and explores the core principles required for a female to successfully launch a start-up within the Agri-Food sector. This session aims to assist in the creation and development of a business plan, as well as information on the business strategy the entrepreneur intends to adopt and practice throughout their endeavour. In addition to this, this session provides a myriad of examples regarding the opportunities which female entrepreneurs in the Agri-Food realm may avail of.

**Learning Outcomes**

On completion of session three, students will:

- Be able to confidently identify their specific market targets, with a clear understanding what their product offers within their sector,
- Have the ability to not only define the role of women in a multifunctional Agri-Food environment, but also to understand it’s accompanying responsibilities and tasks,
- Have an in-depth understanding of the importance of developing and executing a comprehensive business plan for their future success,
- Possess the ability to identify niche opportunities for female-led business within the agi-food sector.

Indicative Syllabus			
Topic	Methodology	Activities	Relevant Resources
<p><b>Multifunctional Agriculture:</b></p> <p>Creating an innovative business</p> <p>Target a specific market for products</p>	<p><b>Online Lecture</b></p> <p><b>Self-Directed</b></p>	<p>Ideation and brainstorming activities</p> <p>Create a customer empathy map</p> <p>Carry out customer discovery i.e., surveys, questionnaires, focus groups – validate the business idea</p> <p>Review Pieter Seunek and Bettina B. Bock (2015)</p>	<p><a href="#">Work Life Balance: Motherhood and farming</a></p> <p><a href="#">Work Life Balance</a></p> <p><a href="#">Women in the Field</a></p> <p><a href="#">Agroturystyka w Puszczy Noteckiej - noclegi Skwierzyna Międzychód (nadwarta.com)</a></p> <p><a href="#">sofi-book-small-size-for-web.pdf (europa.eu)</a></p>

			<a href="https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S1573521415000159?via%3Dihub">https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S1573521415000159?via%3Dihub</a>
<p><b>Business Planning:</b> Business Plan Cycle</p> <p>Goal Setting (SMART – Specific, Measurable, Agreed, Relevant, Timely)</p> <p>SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats) Analysis</p> <p>P.E.S.T. (Political, Economical, Socio cultural, Technological) Analysis</p> <p>Porters 5 forces Analysis</p> <p>Competitor Analysis</p> <p>Business Model Canvas</p>	<p><b>Online Lecture</b></p> <p><b>Self-Directed</b></p>	<p>Students must set a vision for their business</p> <p>Students will complete a final business model canvas for inclusion in the business plan</p>	<p><a href="#">What is a Business Plan?</a></p> <p><a href="https://www.empowerwomen.org/en">https://www.empowerwomen.org/en</a></p> <p><a href="https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/980198/Guidance3-Women--Net-Zero-Economy-Briefing1.pdf">https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/980198/Guidance3-Women--Net-Zero-Economy-Briefing1.pdf</a></p>

**The module requires a minimum 20 hours self-directed learning during which, students are encouraged to read/view and review the recommended resources.**

**Module 2: Opportunity Recognition in the Agri-Food Sector**  
7.5 ECTS (75 notional hours)

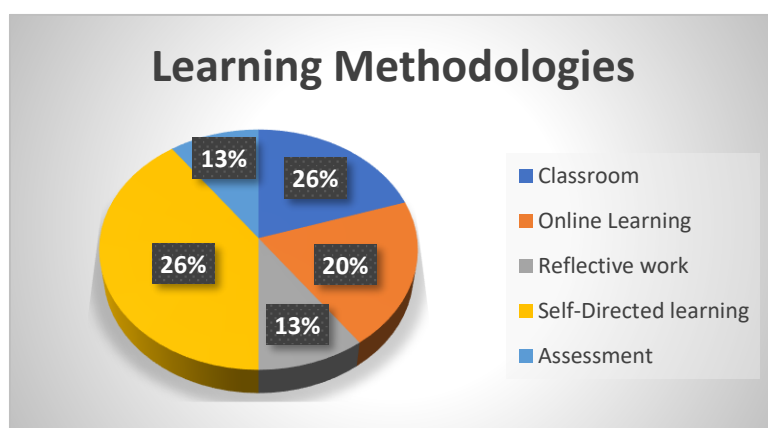
This module consists of 4 sessions and covers topics such as market research, business modelling, financing, innovative thinking and the use of various tools and techniques. It also aims to provide information of marketing principles, building brand awareness and promotion.

This module consists of four separate sessions which together share the combined aim of increasing the ability of females in the Agri-Food sector to further develop and grow their business through recognising and seizing opportunities as they arise. The contents of this module include information related to performing market research, developing business models, managing finances, and implementing innovative thinking into the workspace. Participants will be introduced to and become competent in an array of relevant tools and techniques to support their learnings. Furthering this, learners will be provided with information regarding various marketing principles, and practices to build and promote their brand.

On the completion of the module students will:

1. Have the ability to identify new business opportunities as they arise through understanding the needs of customers, prototyping various products, and testing those more promising.
2. Demonstrate a thorough understanding of a range of business models and useful start-up tools and resources, with confidence in their ability to use and interpret their results.
3. Be skilled in interpreting and evaluating basic financial modelling, enabling them to develop financial plans which they can confidently manage and control.
4. Understand the best practices to employ when building brand awareness and marketing their business online.
5. Effectively communicate and demonstrate the appropriate teamworking and management skills relevant to their field.

**Learning Methodologies**



Learning Methodologies	Total Hours
Classroom	20
Online learning	15
Reflective work	10
Self-directed learning	20
Assessment	10
<b>Total:</b>	<b>75</b>

**Module Structure**

Sessions	Title	Week
1	Market Research	1
2	Business Modelling	1
3	Financing	2,3
4	Building Brand Awareness	4
5	Communication and Social Media	4,5

### Session 1: Market Research

#### Description

This session focuses on identifying the target audience, market demands and competitor analysis. Students will also learn how to complete a customer empathy map which will enable students to examine idea selection and marketing validation.

This session encompasses how best to identify one’s target audience, understand current market demands and conduct a competitor analysis. Students will also be supplied with the knowledge and skills necessary to perform a customer empathy map, which will enable them to investigate idea selection and marketing validation.

#### Learning Outcomes

On completion of session one, students will:

1. Be able to evaluate customer discovery techniques.
2. Have developed a high degree of awareness regarding the process of creative thinking and be able to demonstrate a range of tools and techniques to stimulate this process.
3. Understand the significance of the customer discovery process for food businesses and have the ability to develop strategies to engage that process.

Indicative Syllabus			
Topic	Methodology	Activities	Relevant Resources
<b>Customer Discovery:</b>  Customer development process i.e., Identifying potential customers, market sizing  Empathy Map	<b>Online Lecture</b>  <b>Self-directed</b>	Short quiz for students on identifying their customer base  Each student must complete the empathy map template and present their customer profile  Identify touchpoints for interacting with customers, customer	Burns, P. (2022) Entrepreneurship and Small Business. London, England: Red Globe Press. Chapter 4  <a href="#">Consumer Research Quiz to gain insights to your target customers</a>  <a href="#">How to Start a Business: A Step-by-Step Guide</a>

		types, growing customer base	
<p><b>Identify Market Demands:</b></p> <p>Idea selection</p> <p>Product fit for market</p> <p>Customer development process</p>	<p><b>Online Lecture</b></p> <p><b>Self-directed</b></p>	<p>Open discussion on ideation and market fit – how will you know if your product is what the customer wants? What are the key considerations for new product development?</p> <p>Group challenge to be carried out implementing this process on an established business</p> <p>Based on the ideation process and customer discovery students are required to design, create and deliver a product for testing</p>	<p>Burns, P. (2022) Entrepreneurship and Small Business. London, England: Red Globe Press.</p> <p>Via: New Venture Creation A Framework for Entrepreneurial Start-Ups – Chapter 4</p> <p>The other side of innovation – Vijay Govindarajan &amp; Chris Trimble</p> <p>The Innovator’s Dilemma &amp; The Innovator’s Solution – Clayton M. Christensen</p>

**Session 2: Business Modelling**

**Description**

This session focuses on providing entrepreneurs with the skills to choose or create a business model and lean start up principles specific to their Agri-Food enterprise. The aim of this session is to equip the students with the knowledge required to critically analyse the strengths and weaknesses of a business model and have the ability to create insights and interpretations.

The overarching goal of this session is to provide entrepreneurs with the sufficient skills to create and further develop a business model and lean start-up principles specific to their Agri-Food enterprise. This aims to equip students with the knowledge to confidently and critically analyse both the strengths and weaknesses of various business models, and to interpret results to gain insights.

**Learning Outcomes**

On completion of session two, students will:

1. Have the skills necessary to identify market needs and how best to market products,
2. Demonstrate an in-depth understanding of both direct and indirect competition,

3. Be able to create, further develop, and subsequently implement the most appropriate business model for their enterprise,
4. Be proficient in identifying funding opportunities relevant to them as they arise,
5. Have the knowledge and ability to successfully promote their business branding.

Indicative Syllabus			
Topic	Methodology	Activities	Relevant Resources
<b>Business Models:</b>  Market Fit  Market Validation  Business Model Adaption  Business model canvas  Value Proposition	<b>Online Lecture</b>  <b>Self-directed</b>	Students will create a draft business model canvas for their own business idea/product  Quiz on what problem(s) does their product solve for customers?  Complete template to identify the features and benefits of their product/business	<a href="#">New business models for Short Food Supply Chains: enhancing the competitiveness and sustainability of the European Agri-Food system</a> <a href="#">Closing the loop: Circular Economy Business Models in the Electronics and Agri-Food sectors</a>  The business model canvas & The value proposition canvas – Alex Osterwalder  The Tipping Point: How Little Things Can Make a Big Difference by Malcolm Gladwell  <a href="#">Business Models for Sustainable Agrifood Systems</a>  <a href="https://www.fao.org/policy-support/tools-and-publications/resources-details/en/c/522942/">https://www.fao.org/policy-support/tools-and-publications/resources-details/en/c/522942/</a>  <a href="https://rural-urban.eu/news/new-business-models-short-food-supply-chains-enhancing-competitiveness-and-sustainability">https://rural-urban.eu/news/new-business-models-short-food-supply-chains-enhancing-competitiveness-and-sustainability</a>  <a href="https://energypedia.in">https://energypedia.in</a>

			<a href="https://fo/wiki/Business_Models_for_Sustainable_Agrifood_Systems">fo/wiki/Business Models for Sustainable Agrifood Systems</a>
<p><b>Lean Start Up Principles:</b></p> <p>Venture development and testing</p> <p>Step start techniques</p> <p>Minimum viable product and prototyping</p>	<p><b>Online and classroom lecture</b></p> <p><b>Self-directed</b></p>	<p>Pitch business idea to peer group</p> <p>Facilitated group sessions to brainstorm ideas, set goals and action plan</p>	<p>The Lean start up – Eric Ries</p> <p>The Entrepreneurs Guide to Customer Discovery – Brent Cooper and Patrick Vlaskovits</p> <p>The Lean Entrepreneur: How Visionaries Create Products, Innovate with New Ventures, and Disrupt Markets, 2nd Edition – Brant Cooper, Patrick Vlaskovits, Eric Ries</p> <p><a href="https://hbr.org/2015/06/why-the-lean-start-up-changes-everything/">Why the Lean Start-Up Changes Everything (hbr.org)</a></p>
<p><b>Business Funding</b></p>	<p><b>Online lecture</b></p>	<p>Desk analysis of funding opportunities</p> <p>Guest speakers from funding agencies and research centre</p> <p>Access to financial mentor</p>	<p><a href="https://ec.europa.eu/info/food-farming-fisheries/key-policies/common-agricultural-policy/market-measures/promotion-eu-farm-products_en">https://ec.europa.eu/info/food-farming-fisheries/key-policies/common-agricultural-policy/market-measures/promotion-eu-farm-products_en</a></p> <p><a href="https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/find-funding/eu-funding-programmes/european-agricultural-guarantee-fund-eagf_en">https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/find-funding/eu-funding-programmes/european-agricultural-guarantee-fund-eagf_en</a></p> <p>ESF+ includes EASI and Microfinance: <a href="https://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=325&amp;langId=en">https://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=325&amp;langId=en</a></p>

			National Funds
--	--	--	----------------

**Session 3: Financing**

**Description**

This session explores the various options available to Agri-Food entrepreneurs to assist them in financial planning methods for their business. It will also equip them with the knowledge of how to access these finances for their business.

This session is dedicated to determining and exploring the variety of options available to Agri-Food which assist them in the financial aspects of their business. Students will become equipped with the knowledge and skills necessary to source these financial aids in order to overcome any barriers they encounter.

**Learning Outcomes**

On completion of session 3, students will:

1. Be able to interpret and evaluate basic financial modelling for their Agri-Food business, and have the ability to conduct financial planning, as well as control and manage their finances,
2. Have a greater understanding of where to source and access financial aid for their start-up business

Indicative Syllabus			
Topic	Methodology	Activities	Relevant Resources
<b>Financial Planning:</b>  Key Resources  Revenue Streams Cost  Projections	<b>Online Lectures</b>	Desk analysis of funding opportunities  Guest speakers from funding agencies and research centre  Access to financial mentor  Develop a cost structure for the business – each student should know the unit costs and margins, project their sales, project their cash flow and profit  Review EU gender smart financing	Entrepreneur’s choice between venture capitalist and business angel for start-up financing – Daniel Schmidt  <a href="https://ec.europa.eu/info/food-farming-fisheries/key-policies/common-agricultural-policy/market-measures/promotion-eu-farm-products_en">https://ec.europa.eu/info/food-farming-fisheries/key-policies/common-agricultural-policy/market-measures/promotion-eu-farm-products_en</a>  <a href="https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/find-funding/eu-funding-programmes/europea">https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/find-funding/eu-funding-programmes/europea</a>



			<p><a href="#">n-agricultural-guarantee-fund-eagf_en</a></p> <p>ESF+ includes EASI and Microfinance:  <a href="https://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=325&amp;langId=en">https://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=325&amp;langId=en</a></p> <p><a href="https://ec.europa.eu/info/sites/default/files/economy-finance/dp129_en.pdf">https://ec.europa.eu/info/sites/default/files/economy-finance/dp129_en.pdf</a></p> <p>National Funds</p>
--	--	--	--

#### Session 4: Building Brand Awareness

#### Description

This session is dedicated to improving students understanding of the marketing strategy best suited to their specific enterprise. They will be equipped with the skills required to create brand awareness and subsequently expand their enterprise.

#### Learning Outcomes

On completion of session 4, students will:

1. Demonstrate a clear, detailed understanding of the principles of branding which are important when launching an Agri-Food business.
2. Formulate individualised, high-quality brand strategies specific to their business,
3. Understand and have the ability to use social media and digital marketing tools to further develop and expand their brand.

#### Indicative Syllabus

Topic	Methodology	Activities	Relevant Resources
<b>Creative Thinking</b>	Classroom Lecture  Self-directed	Group activity – develop story boards, ideation and brainstorming techniques	<p><a href="https://thelogocompany.net/growing-season-marketing-branding-for-the-farm-agricultural-industry/">https://thelogocompany.net/growing-season-marketing-branding-for-the-farm-agricultural-industry/</a></p> <p><a href="https://morganmyers.com/blog/2021/10/26">https://morganmyers.com/blog/2021/10/26</a></p>

			<p><a href="#">/agriculture-content-marketing-guide/</a></p> <p><a href="https://femaleentrepreneurassociation.com">https://femaleentrepreneurassociation.com</a></p>
<p><b>Branding</b> perceptions and images that represent a business/service</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Advertising</li> <li>- Content marketing</li> <li>- Various events</li> <li>- Influencer marketing</li> <li>- Promotions and subscriptions</li> </ul>	<p>Classroom and Online lecture</p> <p>Self-Directed</p>	<p>Group exercise on developing a brand strategy for a fictional/personal business</p> <p>Group activity – analyse and discuss the brand metrics for popular company i.e. Star Bucks, McDonalds</p>	<p><a href="https://femaleentrepreneurassociation.com">https://femaleentrepreneurassociation.com</a> Brand Zero: the complete branding guide for start-ups – Tai, Jackey</p> <p><a href="https://marketing.farmpress.com/solutions/">https://marketing.farmpress.com/solutions/</a></p> <p><a href="https://lgpress.clemson.edu/publication/10-tips-for-farm-social-media/">https://lgpress.clemson.edu/publication/10-tips-for-farm-social-media/</a></p> <p><a href="https://ec.europa.eu/info/sites/default/files/economy-finance/dp129_en.pdf">https://ec.europa.eu/info/sites/default/files/economy-finance/dp129_en.pdf</a></p> <p><a href="https://www.foodcircle.com/">https://www.foodcircle.com/</a></p>
<p><b>General Marketing Principles</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- What is marketing</li> <li>- Social Media Marketing</li> <li>- Marketing Mix (The 5 P'S Price, Product, Place, Promotion, People)</li> <li>- Market Touch Points</li> </ul>	<p>Classroom and Online lecture</p> <p>Self-Directed</p>	<p>Set up social media platforms and engage in marketing activity</p> <p>Create a marketing mix for a fictional/personal business</p> <p>Group activity: Identify marketing touch points for different high profile business'</p>	<p>European Marketing Journal</p> <p>Inside the Tornado: Marketing Strategies from Silicon Valley's Cutting Edge</p> <p>The Tipping Point: How Little Things Can Make a Big Difference by Malcolm Gladwell</p> <p><a href="#">E-Commerce Essentials: How to Start a Successful Online Business   Tracey Wallace   Skillshare</a></p> <p><a href="#">How To Start Your</a></p>

			<p><a href="#">Own Business - Free Online Courses My Own Business Institute (scu.edu)</a></p> <p><a href="#">How To Start Your Own Business - Free Online Courses My Own Business Institute (scu.edu)</a></p>
<p><b>Social media</b></p> <p>Social Media and business management platforms</p> <p>Facebook</p> <p>LinkedIn</p> <p>Twitter</p> <p>Instagram</p> <p>Blogs</p> <p>Website Design</p> <p>Online consumer behaviours</p> <p>The Gold Circle</p>	<p><b>Classroom and Online lecture</b></p> <p><b>Self-Directed</b></p>	<p>Set up business profiles on selected platforms</p> <p>Research difference, advantages, and disadvantages of Blog v's Business website</p> <p>Complete Gold Circle activity</p> <p>Group discussion and activities using various methods of social media</p> <p>Complete an online customer engagement activity</p>	<p><a href="https://www.designanalyzer.com/blog/unlock-your-social-media-strategy">https://www.designanalyzer.com/blog/unlock-your-social-media-strategy</a></p> <p><a href="http://www.socialmediaexaminer.com/5-social-media-management-tools-to-save-time/">http://www.socialmediaexaminer.com/5-social-media-management-tools-to-save-time/</a></p> <p>Digital Marketing Strategy, Implementation &amp; Practice - Dave Chaffey &amp; Fiona Ellis-Chadwick</p> <p>Marketing with social media: a LTTA guide – Thomsett Scott, Beth C</p> <p><a href="https://www.entrepreneur.com/article/175242">https://www.entrepreneur.com/article/175242</a></p> <p>The Dynamics of Business Communication: How to Communicate Efficiently and Effectively – Kennedy J, Lawlor G</p> <p>Blog, Inc.: Blogging for Passion, Profit, and to Create Community – Joy Deangdeelert Cho, Meg Mareo Ilascc,</p>

			<p>Grace Bonney (2012) <a href="https://www.forbes.com/sites/johnrampton/2014/07/09/100-ways-to-build-your-business-online/#4934446a7bb6">https://www.forbes.com/sites/johnrampton/2014/07/09/100-ways-to-build-your-business-online/#4934446a7bb6</a></p> <p>Ec.europa.eu. 2022. <i>Social media - statistics on the use by enterprises - Statistics Explained</i>. <a href="https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php?title=Social_media_statistics_on_the_use_by_enterprises#Types_of_social_media_used_over_time.282013-2019.29">https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php?title=Social_media_statistics_on_the_use_by_enterprises#Types_of_social_media_used_over_time.282013-2019.29</a> [Accessed 3 March 2022]</p> <p>Europe Social Network Users 2022. <a href="https://www.emarketer.com/content/europe-social-network-users-2022">https://www.emarketer.com/content/europe-social-network-users-2022</a></p>
--	--	--	---

**Session 5: Communication and Skills Development**

**Description**

This session introduces students to the basic principles of business skills. The session will enable students to develop key communication, presentation and team management skills that will support the growth of their business. Building an online business profile and communicating to customers and stakeholders is vital for any business to become successful. Session 3 will focus on providing students with the skills necessary to develop a professional online business profile. Business pitching, delivering professional business presentations and creating a curriculum vitae will also be core to this session.

This session introduces students to the basic principles of business skills, such as effective communication and team management skills. Students will be equipped with the skills enabling them to effectively develop and expand their business. In addition to this, students will be supplied with the information and skills necessary for them to build an online business profile, through which they can

target their audience and communicate with their customers or potential stakeholders. Students will be trained in business pitching, delivering professional business presentations, and creating a curriculum vitae which reflects their strengths.

**Learning Outcomes**

On completion of session three, students will

1. Be aware of and possess the skills necessary to effectively operate within a working environment and professional settings,
2. Possess the skills and knowledge regarding how best to design and deliver a professional oral presentation,
3. Demonstrate an understanding of effective communication strategies which will in turn aid them in the development and expansion of their business.

Indicative Syllabus			
Topic	Methodology	Activities	Resources
<p><b>Communication – Presenting Skills</b></p> <p>Oral presentation techniques</p> <p>Written presentation formats and techniques</p> <p>Visual presentations (posters or prototypes)</p>	<p><b>Classroom and Online</b></p> <p><b>Self-Directed</b></p>	<p>Participate in short individual and group presentations on various topics</p> <p>Students take part in various pitching scenarios i.e., elevator pitches</p> <p>Review various methods of presentations i.e., Ignite, Pecha Kucha</p> <p>Upload short group presentations using a range of mediums and presentation tools</p>	<p>Joseph A. DeVito 2013 The Interpersonal Communication Book</p> <p>Gill Hasson 2012 Brilliant Communication Skills: What the best communicators know, do and say.</p> <p>Geoffrey Tumlin 2013 Stop Talking, Start Communicating: Counterintuitive Secrets to Success in Business and in Life, with a foreword by Martha Mendoza McGraw-Hill</p> <p>Arthur Samuel Joseph 2013 Vocal Power: Harness Your Inner Voice to Conquer Everyday Communication Challenges, with a foreword by Michael Irvin McGraw-Hill</p> <p>Henry J. McClave Communication for Business</p> <p>Entrepreneurship Development and Communication Skills R.R. Chole,P.S. Kapse,P.R. Deshmukh</p> <p>Presentation Zen: Simple Ideas on Presentation Design and Delivery (2nd Edition) (Voices That Matter) Paperback – December 18,</p>

			<p>2011 by <a href="#">Garr Reynolds</a></p> <p>The Visual Display of Quantitative Information 2nd Edition by <a href="#">Edward R. Tufte</a></p>
--	--	--	---

The module requires a minimum of 20-hours of self-directed learning. During this, students are encouraged to read/view and review the recommended resources.

**Module 3: The role of the Mentor**  
7.5 ECTS (75 notional hours)

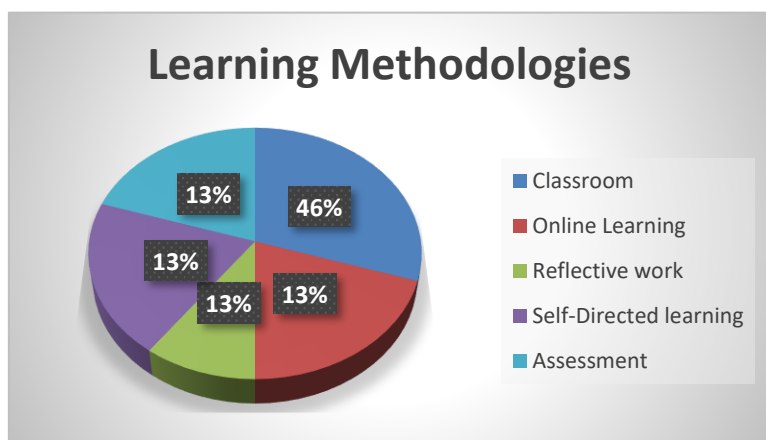
This module consists of sessions and will provide learners with a comprehensive understanding of identifying and engaging with the correct mentor to suit the needs and style of the mentee’s business. During the development stage of the curriculum, a survey was distributed to those working in the Agri-Food sector in Ireland, the UK, Belgium, Italy, and Poland. The survey asked a number of questions relating to mentoring the findings of which have informed this module.

This module is comprised of four sessions which together will provide learners with a comprehensive understanding of how to correctly identify a mentor best suited to their individualised needs and the style of their Agri-Food business. Additionally, students will be provided with information on how best to communicate and engage with their mentors to ensure they have the most beneficial results possible. Throughout developing this curriculum, a survey was distributed to personnel working in the Agri-Food sector in Ireland, the United Kingdom, Belgium, Italy, and Poland. The questions in this survey revolved around opinions and perceptions on mentoring relationships with the findings being used to inform the development of this module.

On the completion of this module students will:

1. Be able to identify and understand the core characteristics of a mentor-mentee relationship,
2. Understand the role and benefits of partaking in a mentorship agreement,
3. Recognise the importance of pairing a mentee with an appropriate mentor whose skills and advice are relevant to the mentees specific needs,
4. Have the knowledge to confidently communicate and address the various barriers to mentorships,
5. Recognize how best to engage with a mentor,
6. Possess the skills to evaluate the different mentoring approaches currently practices and assess which approach best suits their needs in relation to their business stage.

**Learning Methodologies**



Learning Methodologies	Total Hours
Classroom	35
Online Learning	10
Reflective work	10
Self-Directed learning	10
Assessment	10
<b>Total:</b>	<b>75</b>

## Module Structure

Sessions	Title	Week
1	Characteristics of the Mentor/Mentee	1
2	Benefits and Barriers of Mentorship	2,3
3	How to Engage with a Mentor	4

### Session 1: Characteristics of the Mentor/Mentee

#### Description

This session examines the core characteristics of mentorship, the needs of the mentee and the development of a mentorship agreement.

This session is dedicated to exploring the core characteristics of a mentoring relationship, the various potential needs of a mentee, and how best to develop a mentorship agreement. This agreement between the mentor and mentee will ensure that the goals of their relationship are clearly defined, as well as their individual roles and responsibilities within this relationship.

#### Learning Outcomes

On completion of session one, students will

1. Have the ability to create a mentorship agreement which outlines the key goals which the mentee hopes to gain from the relationship and the activities which the mentor will carry out in order to achieve these objectives,
2. Be knowledgeable on how to identify the various barriers which may need to be addressed in order to improve their enterprise. These include but are not limited to their geographical location, the amount of time they can commit to this endeavour, and any possible gender preferences they may have for this relationship in addition to their possible reasoning.

#### Indicative Syllabus

Topic	Methodology	Activities	Relevant Resources
<b>Identifying Mentors</b>  Identify personal and interpersonal traits of the mentee and mentor  Matching mentor and mentee	<b>Online Learning</b>  <b>Self-Directed</b>	Complete short exercise to identify personality traits  Review typical characteristics of a mentor using class materials/research/recommended reading	<a href="#">Grow Mentoring Programme</a>  <a href="#">Empower Start Programme</a>  <a href="#">The Alison Rose Review of Female Entrepreneurship –</a>



Considerations i.e. Gender, what expertise does the Mentor need to be able to assist		Develop a skills “wish” list – discussion groups  Review survey analysis  Identify the need for a Mentor	<a href="http://Gov.uk">Gov.uk</a>  Dahlberg & Byars–Winston 2019
<b>Self-Assessment:</b> identifying skills, traits, strengths and weaknesses. For Mentor and Mentee	<b>Classroom and Online Learning</b>  <b>Self-Directed</b>	Complete Self-Assessment Instrument	<a href="#">Advice Skills Academy</a>  <a href="#">Characteristics of an Excellent Mentor</a>

## Session 2: Benefits and Barriers of Mentorship

### Description

The focus point of this session is to explore the mentoring experience and practices which can support the development of the mentees’ business to a new, superior level. Throughout this session, learners will be provided with a myriad of networking opportunities and be offered practical advice to improve their experience as mentees. Also addressed in this session, is this common issues which may potentially arise when approaching and communicating with a mentor.

### Learning Outcomes

On completion of session two, students will:

1. Have an in-depth understanding of the significance of properly interacting with a mentor in order to ensure they gain the most knowledge possible,
2. Possess a host of problem-solving strategies to employ as and when necessary,
3. Have created new connections and networked with relevant personnel, such as other entrepreneurs in their sector,
4. Be able to define the experience and advice a mentee oftentimes seeks from a mentor,
5. Have the confidence to identify and approach a suitable mentor who’s experience and advice will suit their specific business,
6. Be able to identify any specific concerns that a mentee may have when it comes to finding a mentor in their particular business area

Indicative Syllabus			
Topic	Methodology	Activities	Relevant Resources
Benefits of Mentoring	Classroom and Online	One-to-One Activities	<a href="#">Networking: The</a>

<p>Identifying suitable Mentors</p> <p>Communication around benefits in mentoring</p> <p>Previous mentoring cohorts' success stories</p>	<p><b>Learning</b></p> <p><b>Self-Directed</b></p>	<p>with potential mentors to identify suitable pairings</p> <p>Attendance at educations and professional development events to expand knowledge and skills</p> <p>Video analysis of previous success stories and how it can be applied to their business</p>	<p><a href="#">Benefits of Having a Mentor</a></p> <p><a href="#">Supporting Women and Entrepreneurship</a></p> <p><a href="#">WIIS Italy Mentoring Programme</a></p> <p><a href="#">Mother Empower</a></p>
<p><b>Barriers to Mentoring</b></p> <p>Critical analysis of potential barriers i.e. gender, access to mentors, lack of confidence</p> <p>Identify methods of overcoming any barriers to being a mentee/mentor</p>	<p><b>Classroom and Online Learning</b></p> <p><b>Self-Directed</b></p>	<p>Group discussion on identifying barriers to becoming a Mentor/Mentee</p> <p>Brainstorm solutions to barriers</p> <p>Mentors and Mentees as guest speakers</p> <p>Organise meetings with Mentor/Mentee to learn their experience</p> <p>Review survey analysis</p>	<p><a href="https://www.asha.org/students/mentoring/excmentor/">https://www.asha.org/students/mentoring/excmentor/</a></p> <p><a href="#">Lack of mentorship biggest hurdle for women in agriculture - Agriland.ie</a></p> <p><a href="#">Mentorship Program - Women in Food and Agriculture (wfa-initiative.com)</a></p>

#### Session 4: How to Engage with a Mentor

#### Description

The focal point of this session is to explore and gain a better understanding of the various ways a mentor may engage with their mentee. Additionally, it aims to provide learners with a more clear and comprehensive understanding of the expectations often expected from the mentor or mentee and define in detail the specific roles of a mentor in this relationship.

#### Learning Outcomes

On completion of session 4, students will:

1. Have a clear understanding of their specific expectations in a mentor-mentee relationship and be able to clarify their wants from such an experience,
2. Be able to create or attend a variety of networking opportunities and at such events, be able to build relevant contacts suitable to their business needs.

Indicative Syllabus			
Topic	Methodology	Activities	Relevant Resources
<b>Engaging a Mentor</b>  Identifying the right Mentor  Pitching to a Mentor  Discovering networking opportunities within the business sector	<b>Online Learning</b>  <b>Self-Directed</b>	Identify routes to accessing Mentors  Create a clear plan of the role you want the mentor to play  Set up meetings to ensure you have connected with the right mentor for the business  Organise a meeting with a potential mentor to be clear on commitment and expectations	<a href="#">Enterprise Nation</a>  <a href="#">Mentoring Women in Business</a>  <a href="#">Mentors Me</a>  <a href="#">Local Enterprise Ireland</a>  <a href="https://www.aiche.org/chenected/2019/02/networking-benefits-having-mentor">https://www.aiche.org/chenected/2019/02/networking-benefits-having-mentor</a>  <a href="#">Mentoring Programme   Wiis Italy</a>  <a href="#">The Santander Breakthrough Women Business Leaders' Mentoring Programme   Santander Breakthrough</a>

The module requires a minimum of 20 hours of self-directed learning. During which, students are encouraged to read/view and review the recommended resources.

**Module 4: Food Business Regulations and Sustainability**  
7.5 ECTS (75 notional hours)

This fourth module is dedicated to furthering learners understanding and development of the principal skills required for their venture to become successful.

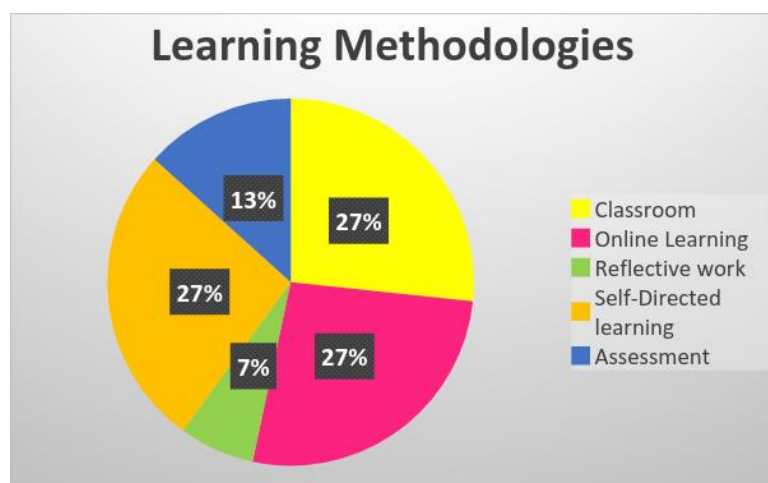
These teachings on include the following topics;

1. Food related regulations (region, product, market access, business regulations, labelling),
2. Quality assurance – quality systems,
3. Processing,
4. Nutrition,
5. Sustainability,
6. Adding value/value added: Logistics, distribution, market access,
7. Online Marketing.

On completion of the module students will:

1. Be able to demonstrate an in-depth understanding of both food labelling and food packaging laws and regulations,
2. Possess the knowledge and understanding to confidently discuss and acknowledge food quality, safety, health claims and hygiene regulations,
3. Have the ability to adequately describe and demonstrate the entirety of their product development process,
4. Be equipped with a thorough understanding of the process behind creating a business plan, including knowledge on employing basic financial needs assessments, and conduct financial planning, control and pricing for business growth,

**Learning Methodologies**



	Total Hours
Classroom	20
Online Learning	20
Self-Directed learning	20
Reflective work	5
Assessment	10
<b>Total:</b>	<b>75</b>

The module requires a minimum of 20 hours of self-directed learning. During which, students are encouraged to read and review the recommended resources.

**Module Structure**

Sessions	Title	Week
1	Regulation and Legislation	1,2
2	New Product Development	2,3

### Session 1: Regulation and Legislation

#### Description

Having a thorough and up-to-date understanding of the laws and regulations relevant to this sector is imperative for the successful development and expansion of any food business. In recognition of this, this section is dedicated to informing students of the current food laws and regulations which may affect their food business. In doing so, students will partake in various practical applications of these laws by assessing which particular regulations apply to their product or business, as well as investigating and reviewing relevant case studies.

#### Learning Outcomes

On completion of session one, students will:

1. Be able to demonstrate an in-depth understanding of a plethora of food labelling and packaging laws and regulations,
2. Possess the ability to interpret food law, regulation and hygiene standards and apply those of relevance to their product development and business plans,
3. Understand both the European and International general food law principles,
4. Be able to develop and implement food hygiene plans in line with national/international standards.

Indicative Syllabus			
Topic	Methodology	Activities	Resources
Regulations	Online and classroom lectures  Self-directed	Review EU Regulation  MCQ	Regulation (EU) No. 1169/2011  <a href="https://www.fsai.ie/nutrition-information-under-fic-summary">Nutrition information under FIC - Summary (fsai.ie)</a>
Labelling  -General and Mandatory labelling requirements	Online and classroom lectures  Self-directed	Activity: present mock up label for fictional/personal food product	<a href="https://ec.europa.eu/info/food-farming-fisheries/food-safety-and-quality/labelling-and-standards_en">https://ec.europa.eu/info/food-farming-fisheries/food-safety-and-quality/labelling-and-standards_en</a>  <a href="https://ec.europa.eu/food/safety/labelling-and-nutrition/food-information-consumers-legislation/mandatory-food-information_en">https://ec.europa.eu/food/safety/labelling-and-nutrition/food-information-consumers-legislation/mandatory-food-information_en</a>
General Principles of	Classroom and Online lecture	Examine what health claims	<a href="http://www.eurofoodlaw.com/">http://www.eurofoodlaw.com/</a>

<p>Food Law</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Food Labelling – information, consideration, design, nutrient calculation</li> <li>• Food Hygiene Plans</li> <li>• Food Processing storage and transport</li> <li>• Health Claims</li> <li>• Nutritional Claims</li> </ul>	<p>Self-Directed</p>	<p>can be included in food labelling</p> <p>Case Studies and Scenario review</p> <p>Analysis of relevant regulations applicable to the students own product/service /business</p>	<p><a href="https://ec.europa.eu/food/safety_en">https://ec.europa.eu/food/safety_en</a></p> <p><a href="https://www.food.gov.uk/enforcement/regulation/europeleg">https://www.food.gov.uk/enforcement/regulation/europeleg</a></p> <p>New Food Labelling Legislation: <a href="#">Regulation (EU) No 1169/2011</a></p> <p>Food Safety Authority of Ireland (FSAI) <a href="https://www.fsai.ie/legislation/food_legislation/food_information_fic/food_information-fic.html">https://www.fsai.ie/legislation/food_legislation/food_information_fic/food_information-fic.html</a></p> <p>Regulation (EU) No. 1169/2011: <a href="https://www.fsai.ie/uploadedFiles/ConsoI_Reg1169_2011.pdf">https://www.fsai.ie/uploadedFiles/ConsoI_Reg1169_2011.pdf</a> <a href="http://www.safefood.eu">www.safefood.eu</a></p>
<p>Allergens</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Definition and list</li> <li>• Intolerances</li> <li>• Symptoms</li> <li>• Declaration</li> </ul>	<p>Classroom and Online lecture</p> <p>Self-Directed</p>	<p>Identify allergen list</p> <p>Review requirements</p> <p>Create allergen declaration</p> <p>Complete allergen fact sheet for product</p> <p>Product allergen analysis</p> <p>Class Quiz</p>	<p>Regulation (EU) No. 1169/2011</p> <p><a href="#">EUR-Lex - CELEX:52017XC1213(01 - EN - EUR-Lex (europa.eu))</a></p> <p><a href="#">Farm to Fork Strategy (europa.eu)</a></p>
<p>General Principles of Food Law</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Food Labelling – information, consideration, design, nutrient calculation</li> <li>• Food Hygiene Plans (HACCP)</li> <li>• Food Processing storage and transport</li> </ul>	<p>Classroom and Online lecture</p> <p>Self-Directed</p>	<p>Design product label</p> <p>Develop Health and Safety Plan</p> <p>Examine what health claims can be included in food labelling</p> <p>Case Studies</p>	<p><a href="http://www.eurofoodlaw.com/">http://www.eurofoodlaw.com/</a></p> <p><a href="https://ec.europa.eu/food/safety_en">https://ec.europa.eu/food/safety_en</a></p> <p><a href="https://www.food.gov.uk/enforcement/regulation/europeleg">https://www.food.gov.uk/enforcement/regulation/europeleg</a></p> <p>New Food Labelling Legislation: <a href="#">Regulation (EU) No 1169/2011</a></p> <p>Food Safety Authority of Ireland</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Health Claims</li> <li>• Nutritional Claims</li> </ul>		<p>and Scenario review</p> <p>Analysis of relevant regulations applicable to the students own product/service/business</p>	<p>(FSAI)</p> <p><a href="https://www.fsai.ie/legislation/food_legislation/food_information_fic/food_information-fic.html">https://www.fsai.ie/legislation/food_legislation/food_information_fic/food_information-fic.html</a></p> <p>Regulation (EU) No. 1169/2011: <a href="https://www.fsai.ie/uploadedFiles/Conso_l_Reg1169_2011.pdf">https://www.fsai.ie/uploadedFiles/Conso_l_Reg1169_2011.pdf</a> <a href="http://www.safefood.eu">www.safefood.eu</a></p>
---	--	--	---

## Session 2: New Product Development

### Description

Session two is intended to provide students with a detailed understanding of the process behind developing a new product, in addition to investigating and examining novel functional ingredients. Students will be introduced to the various complex food development theories and concepts, and the techniques which they entail. Core topics of focus throughout this session include the significance of developing an innovative business strategy, understanding consumer purchasing and interest trends, the thinking processes behind designing new products, and the financial modelling essential to understand for product pricing and sales.

### Learning Outcomes

On completion of session two, students will:

1. Be able to critically evaluate the process behind new product development and it's significance in the food sectors,
2. Be aware of food trend data from a variety of sources and be confident in their interpretation of this data in order to identify potential market opportunities,
3. Have experience exploring the various conceptual steps involved in developing a new food product.

### Indicative Syllabus

Topic	Methodology	Activities	Relevant Resources
<p><b>Business Planning</b></p> <p>Business Plan Market Analysis Design Thinking Process</p>	<p><b>Classroom and Online lecture</b></p> <p><b>Self-Directed</b></p>	<p>Complete customer empathy map</p> <p>Complete Lean canvas business model</p>	<p>The Tipping Point: How Little Things Can Make a Big Difference by Malcolm Gladwell</p>

		<p>Present model to class</p> <p>Implement the 5 step Design thinking process using classroom challenge</p>	<p>If You Build It Will They Come? Three Steps to Test and Validate Any Market Opportunity, Rob Adam</p> <p><a href="https://www.indeed.com/career-advice/career-development/business-analysis-model">https://www.indeed.com/career-advice/career-development/business-analysis-model</a></p>
<p><b>New Product Development</b></p> <p>Innovation strategy Trends Food Sustainability Distribution and route to market Relevant Case Studies</p>	<p><b>Classroom and Online lecture</b></p> <p><b>Self-Directed</b></p>	<p>Complete an innovation strategy for the business</p> <p>Identify trends in the Agri-Food sector through group projects</p> <p>Carry out customer discovery and market research</p> <p>Identify innovative distribution models/methods for smaller businesses</p>	<p><a href="https://www.indeed.com/career-advice/career-development/business-analysis-model">7 Stages of the New Product Development Process (netsolutions.com)</a></p> <p><a href="https://blog.hubspot.com/marketing/product-development-process">https://blog.hubspot.com/marketing/product-development-process</a></p>
<p><b>Finances</b></p> <p>Financial Modelling Forecasting Funding opportunities</p>	<p><b>Classroom and Online lecture</b></p> <p><b>Self-Directed</b></p>	<p>Develop financial plan/cost structure plan</p> <p>Identify Revenue streams</p> <p>Guest Mentor - engage with financial gest mentor to review and develop business finances</p> <p>Implement forecasting strategy</p> <p>Identify and engage with funding sources</p>	<p>Predictable Revenue: Turn Your Business into a Sales Machine with the \$100 Million Best Practices of Salesforce.com – Aaron Ross and Marylou Tyler</p> <p><a href="https://www.entrepreneur.com/entrepreneur-choice-between-venture-capitalist-and-business-angel-for-start-up-financing">Entrepreneur's choice between venture capitalist and business angel for start-up financing - Daniel Schmidt.</a></p> <p><a href="https://www.entrepreneur.com/en/funding-supports/company/large-company-funding/">https://www.entrepreneur.com/en/funding-supports/company/large-company-funding/</a></p>



			<p><a href="https://www.parp.gov.pl/component/grants/grantss">https://www.parp.gov.pl/component/grants/grantss</a></p> <p><a href="https://be.brussels/online-services/working-doing-business/doing-business-in-brussels/funds-grants-and-subsidies">https://be.brussels/online-services/working-doing-business/doing-business-in-brussels/funds-grants-and-subsidies</a></p> <p><a href="https://www.gov.uk/business-finance-support">https://www.gov.uk/business-finance-support</a></p> <p><a href="https://www.mise.gov.it/index.php/it/incentivi/impresa/fondo-a-sostegno-impresa-femminile">https://www.mise.gov.it/index.php/it/incentivi/impresa/fondo-a-sostegno-impresa-femminile</a></p> <p><a href="#">EU funding programmes - Your Europe (europa.eu)</a></p> <p><a href="#">Access to finance - Your Europe (europa.eu)</a></p>
--	--	--	---

# Appendix

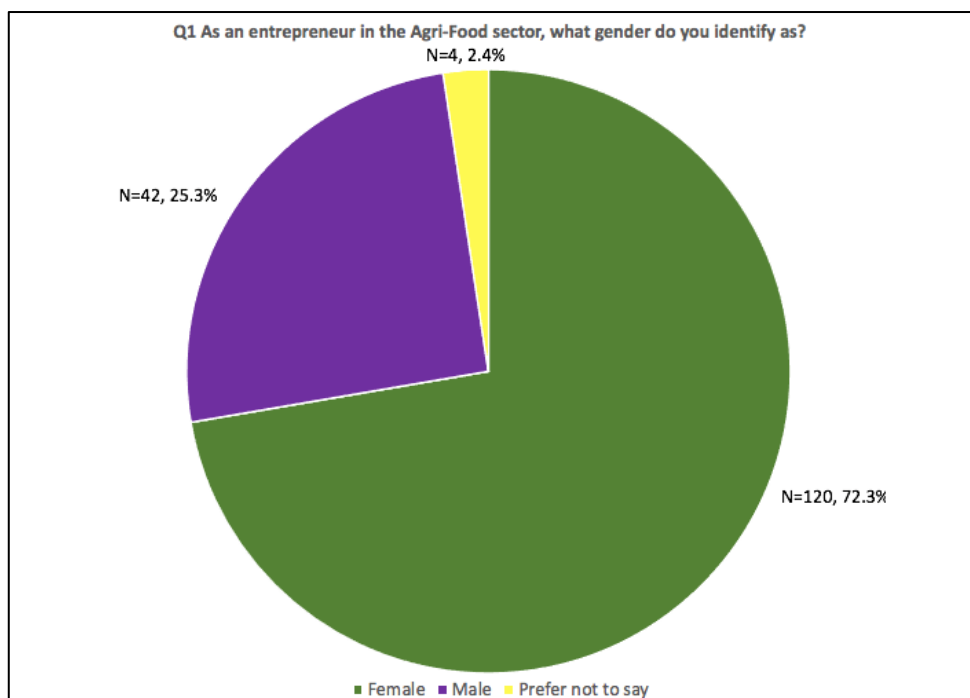
## Appendix 1

### Survey Summary

- ❖ 166 respondents, entrepreneurs in the Agri-Food sector from all across Europe took part in this survey.
- ❖ When asked what stage their Agri-Food business / idea was at 30.1% (n=50) of entrepreneurs answered that they were in the early stage idea, 15.1% (n=25) of entrepreneurs consider themselves in the start-up phase, 34.3% (n=57) would categorize their business as in its first 5 years and making a profit, 1.8% (n=3) have not started a business yet, 5.4% (n=9) have been in business for 5 years but are not making a profit, 6.6% (n=11) of respondents would consider themselves in the development stage. **Question 3, Figure 1.3**
- ❖ When Entrepreneurs in the Agri-Food sector were asked in **Question 4** “What is your Agri-Food idea/ business?” 25.3% (n=42) selected Farm to fork/ Raw material to market, 38% (n=63) chose the product option, 15.7% (n=26) selected the category service for their Agri-Food business, 8.4% (n=14) put their Agri-Food business in the consulting category, 3.6% (n=6) chose the agritourism option, 6% (n=10) **Figure 1.4**
- ❖ 12.2% (n=68) lack of own time as a barrier, 12.9% (n=72) limited financial opportunities, 9.7% (n=54) old thought patterns/ traditional ways of working and 9.7% (n=54) lack of local supply chain/ lack of access to customers were selected as the top barriers to growth and business development
- ❖ The highest ranked skills and training opportunities that entrepreneurs believe would drive them to success include 22.1% (n=86) networking opportunities, 17.7% (n=69) access to industry events and 15.4% (n=60) creating a work/ life balance. **Question 6, Figure 1.6**
- ❖ 48.1% of respondents have an online presence and believe the benefits of this presence include easier to target customers, targets nationwide, creating brand awareness, product display, market research, its free and visibility **Question 7 & 8 Figure 1.7**
- ❖ Early stages of planning 25% (N=21), time constraints 22.6% (n=19) and lack of social media knowledge 17.9% (n=15) were selected as the top reasons that prevented entrepreneurs from starting an online presence. **Question 9, Figure 1.9**
- ❖ Entrepreneurs were asked in **Question 11** “If given the opportunity, would you engage with a mentor”? 12.7% (n=21) said no while 87.3% (n=144) responded yes. **Figure 1.11**
- ❖ The top ranked reasons that prevent entrepreneurs from engaging with a mentor include. 17.6% (n=56) no mentors in my area, 25.4% (n=81) money concerns, , 16.6% (n=53) lack of time. **Question 13 Figure 1.12.**
- ❖ Being able to give constructive feedback 14.7% (n=94), honesty 13.1% (n=84) and trust and confidentiality 11.1% (n=71) were selected as the most important traits for a mentor to possess by the entrepreneurs. **Question 16 Figure 1.14**

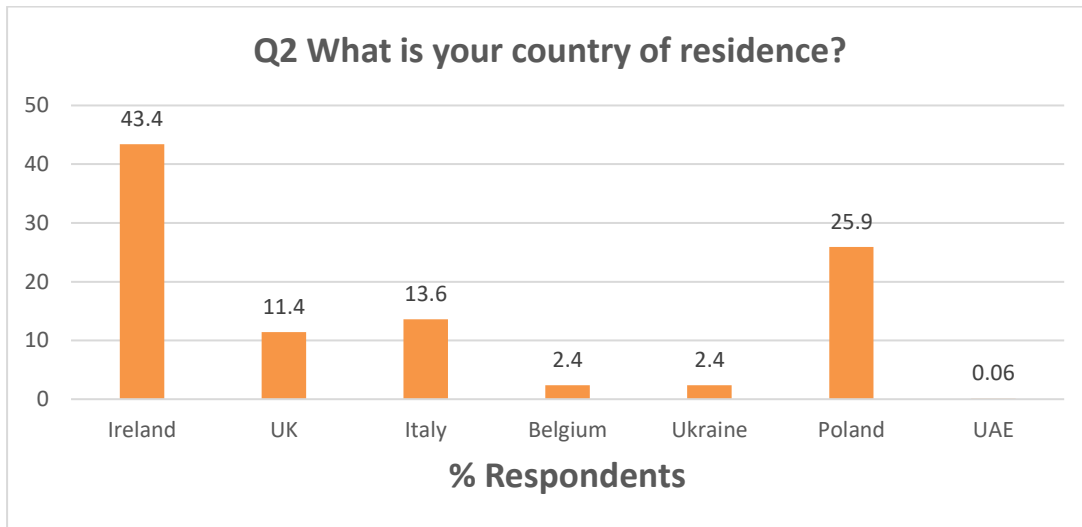
- ❖ **Figure 1.18** What entrepreneurs in the Agri-Food sector think a mentor would help them succeed. 25.3% (n=91) commented on gaining practical working advice, 25.3% (n=91) learn from experience, 22.8% (n=82) establish relationships and develop networks, 23.4% (n=84) develop problem solving strategies and 3.1% (n=11) entrepreneurs selected the other option.
- ❖ The top ranked reasons selected for what entrepreneurs feel how mentors would help them succeed include gaining practical working advice 25.3% (n=91), learning from experience 25.3% (n=91) and developing problem solving strategies 23.4% (n=84) **Question 18 Figure 1.18**
- ❖ When Entrepreneurs in the Agri-Food sector were asked in **Question 19** if it was important for them to have a gender specific mentor, 86.7% (n=144) responded No while 13.3% (n=22) responded yes. **Figure 1.19**

### Question 1



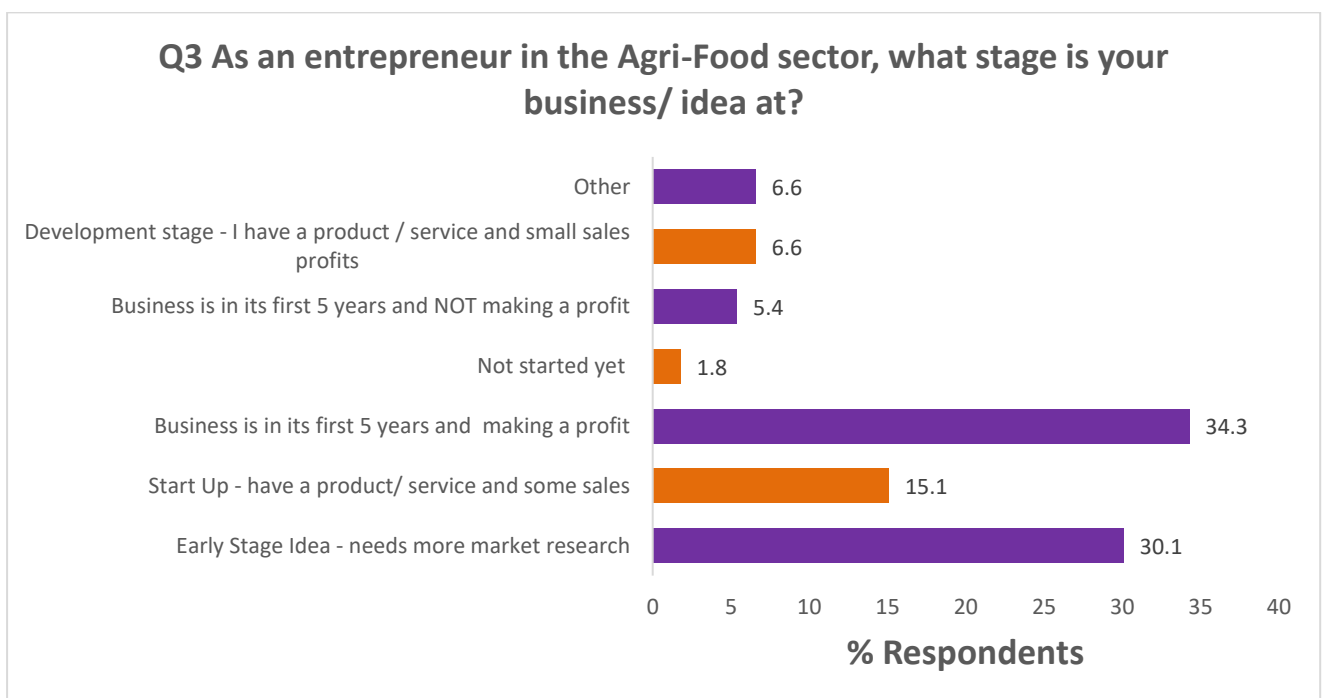
**Figure 1.1:** The entrepreneurs were asked in Question 1 “what gender they identify as”. 166 responded, 120 of these identify as female, 42 identify as male and 4 would prefer not to say.

**Question 2**



**Figure 1.2:** Question 2, 166 Europeans took part in this survey, 43.4% (n=72) are Irish, 11.4% (n=19) of them are from the UK, 13.6% (n=23) are Italian, 2.4% (n=4) are from Belgium, 2.4% (n=4) are from Ukraine, 25.9% (n=43) are from Poland and 0.06% (n=1) are from the United Arab Emirates.

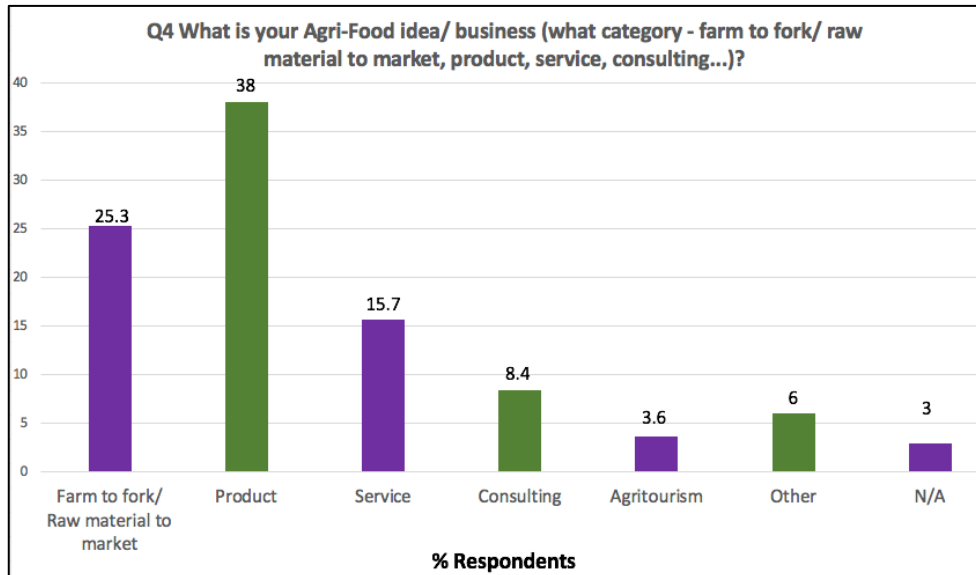
**Question 3**



**Figure 1.3** Entrepreneurs in the Agri-Food sector outline in question 3 what stage their business/ idea at. There were 166 respondents for **Question 3**, 30.1% (n=50) of entrepreneurs are in the early stage idea, 15.1% (n=25) of respondents consider themselves in the startup phase, 34.3% (n=57) would categorize their business as in its first 5 years and making a profit, 1.8% (n=3) have not started a business yet, 5.4% (n=9) have been in business for 5 years but are not making a profit, 6.6% (n=11) of

respondents would consider themselves in the development stage and 6.6% (n=11) selected other as an option.

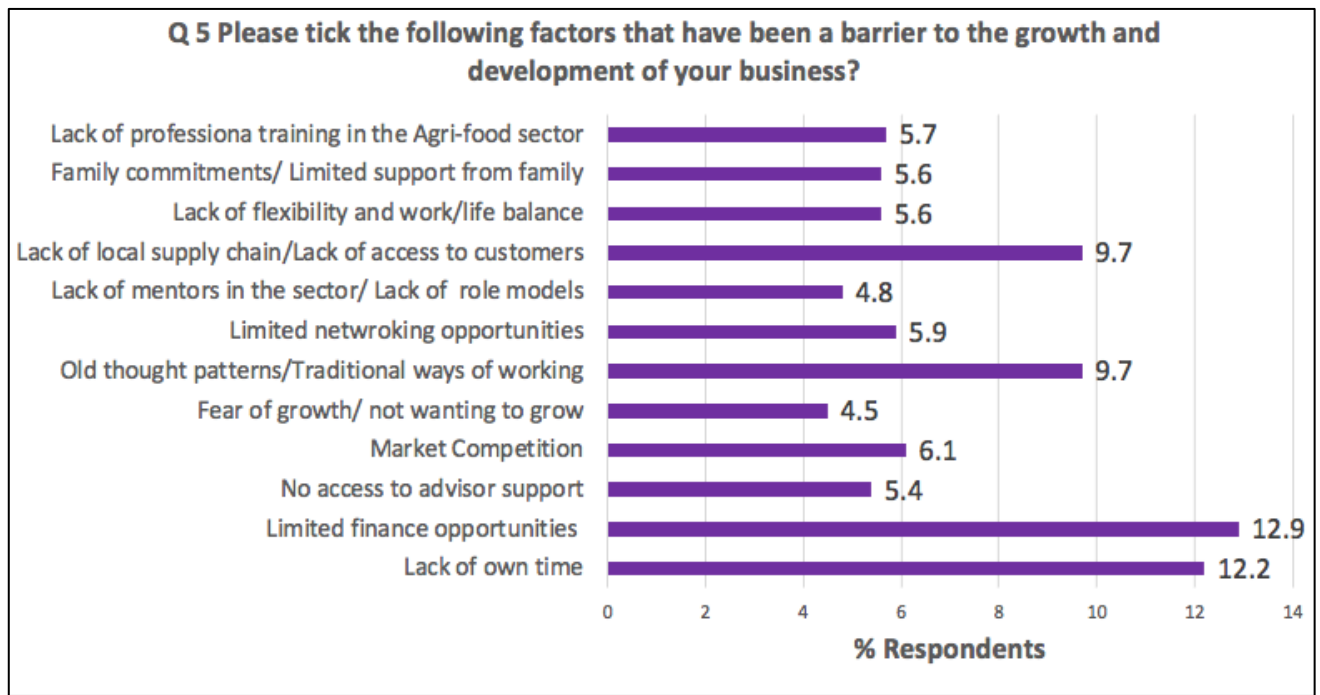
### Question 4



**Figure 1.4**

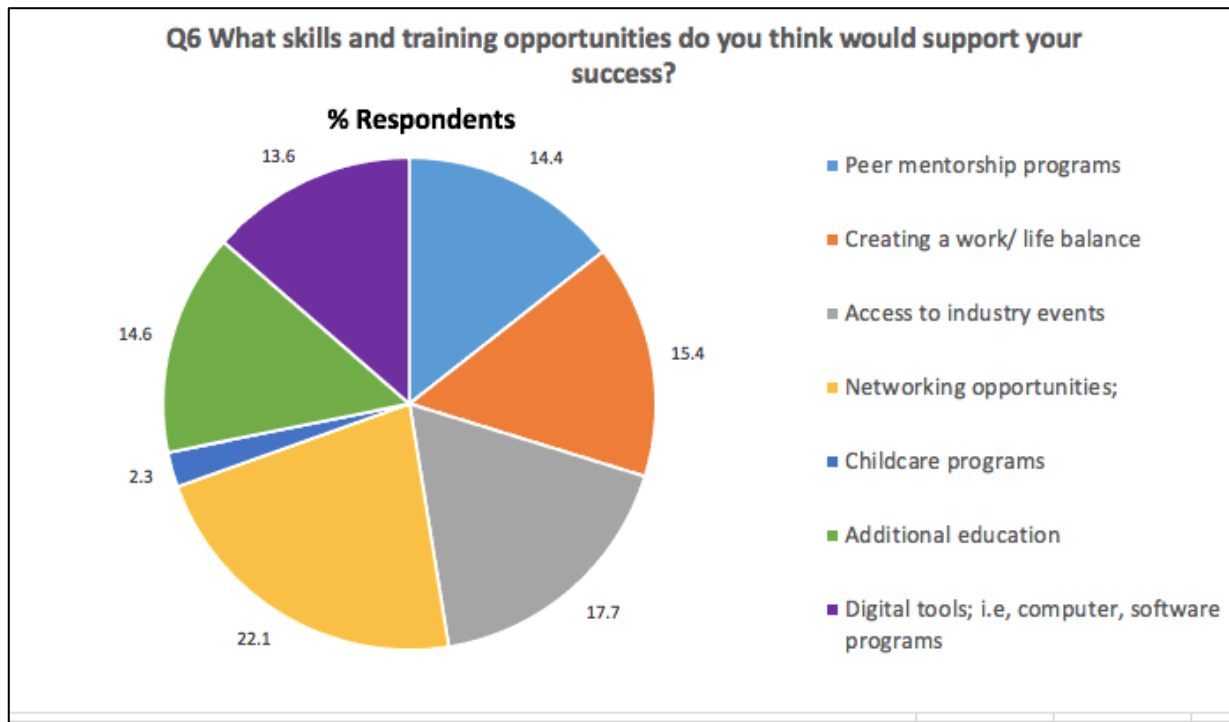
Entrepreneurs in the Agri-Food sector were asked in **Question 4** “What is your Agri-Food idea/ business?”. There was 166 responses for **Question 4**, 25.3% (n=42) selected Farm to fork/ Raw material to market, 38% (n=63) chose the product option, 15.7% (n=26) selected the category service for their Agri-Food business, 8.4% (n=14) put their Agri-Food business in the consulting category, 3.6% (n=6) chose the agritourism option, 6% (n=10) selected other and 3% (n=5) preferred not to say.

Question 5



**Figure 1.5** Entrepreneurs outlined what factors have been barriers to the growth and development of their businesses in **Question 5**. All 166 entrepreneurs answered this question but as it was a multiple choice question there was 557 responses. 12.2% (n=68) mentioned lack of own time as a barrier, 12.9% (n=72) limited financial opportunities, 5.4% (n=30) no access to advisor support, 6.1% (n=34) market competition, 4.5% (n=25) fear of growth/ not wanting to grow, 9.7% (n=54) old thought patterns/ traditional ways of working , 5.9% (n=33) limited networking opportunities, 4.8% (n=27) lack of mentors in the sector/ lack of role models ,9.7% (n=54) lack of local supply chain/ lack of access to customers, 5.6% (n=31), lack of flexibility/ work/ life balance, 5.6% (n=31) family commitments / limited support from family and 5.7%(n= 32) selected lack of professional training in the Agri-Food sector.

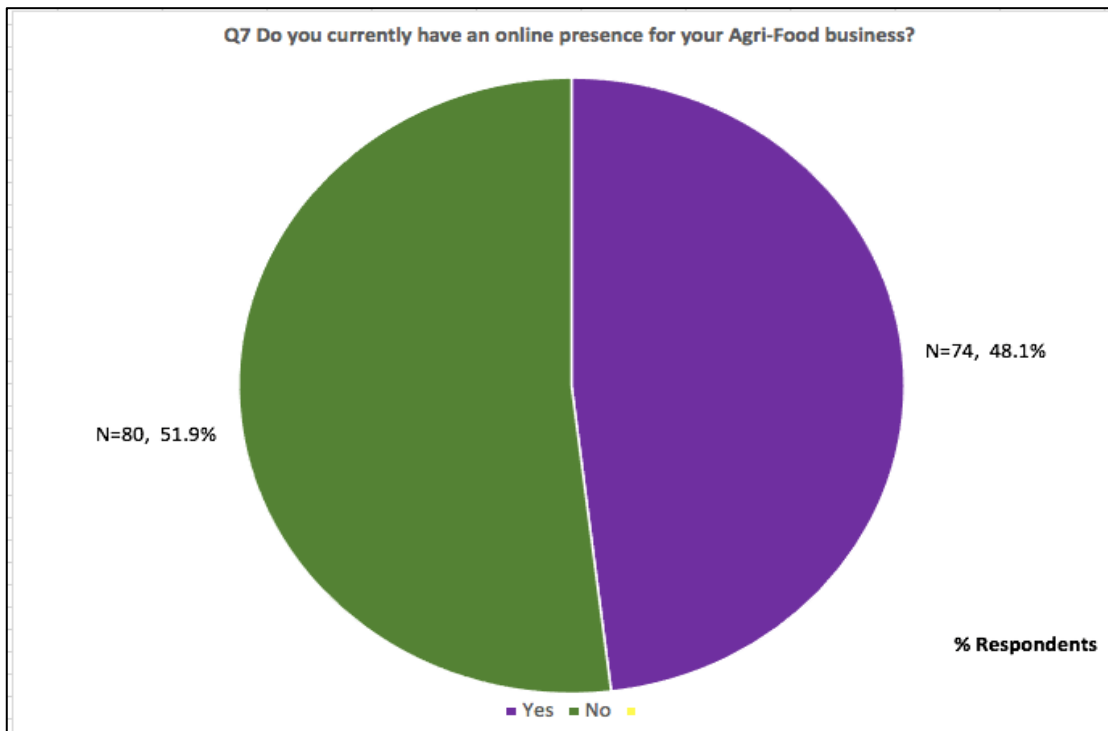
Question 6



**Figure 1.6** What entrepreneurs in the Agri-Food business selected for what skills and training opportunities would support their success. There were 166 respondents but 390 responses as this question was a multiple choice answer. Responses are presented in Figure 1.6 above. 14.4% (n=56) commented on peer mentorship programs, 15.4% (n=60) creating a work/ life balance, 17.7% (n=69) access to industry events, 22.1% (n=86) networking opportunities 2.3% (n=9) childcare programs, 14.6% (n=57) additional education and 13.6% (n=53) commented on digital tools.

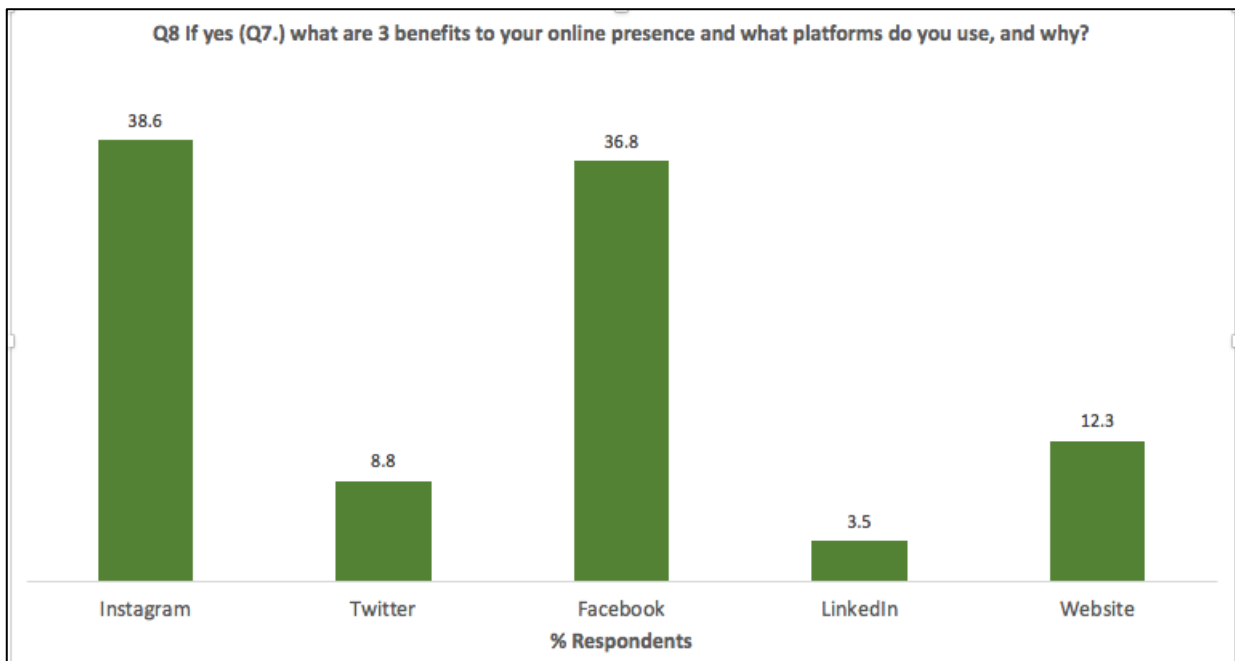


**Question 7**



**Figure 1.7** Entrepreneurs were asked in **Question 7** if they currently have an online presence for their Agri-Food business. 154 responded while 12 skipped this question. 74% (n=74) responded yes and 51.9% (n=80) no.

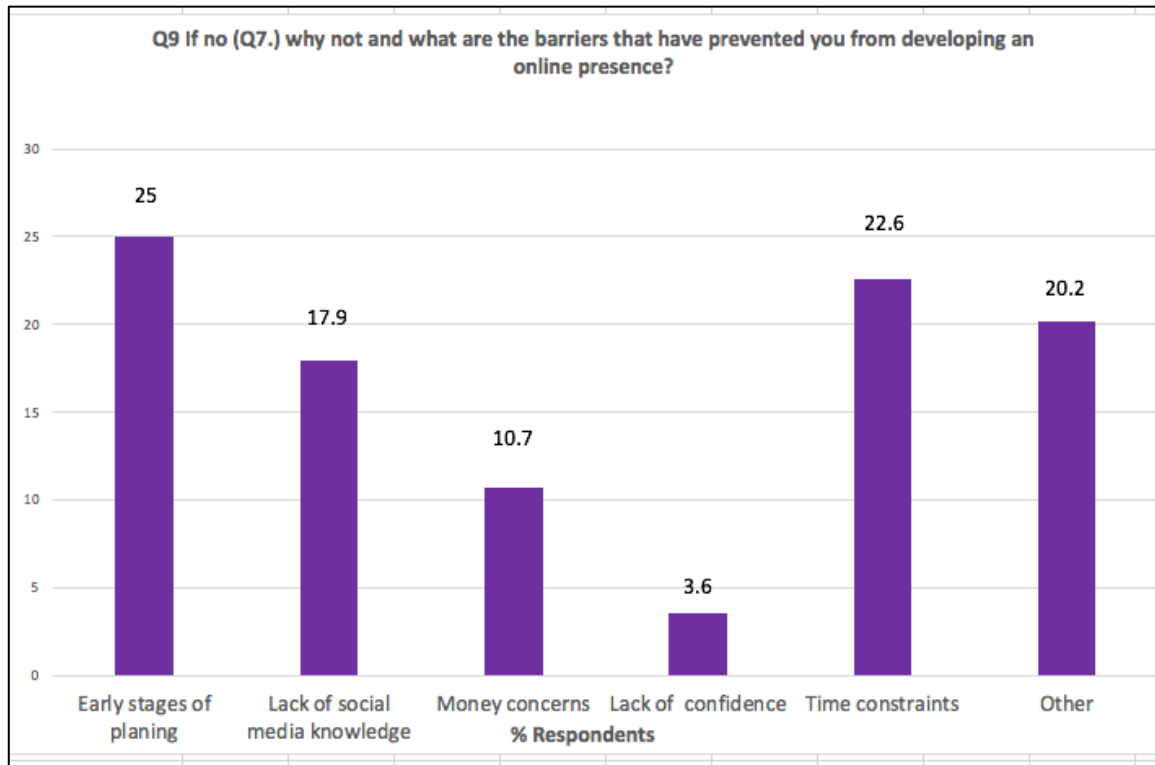
**Question 8**



**Figure 1.8** Question 8 was a two part question, the first part “What are 3 benefits to your online presence” had a multitude of answers, the most common include comments such as, easier to target customers, targets nationwide, creating brand awareness, product display, market research, its free and

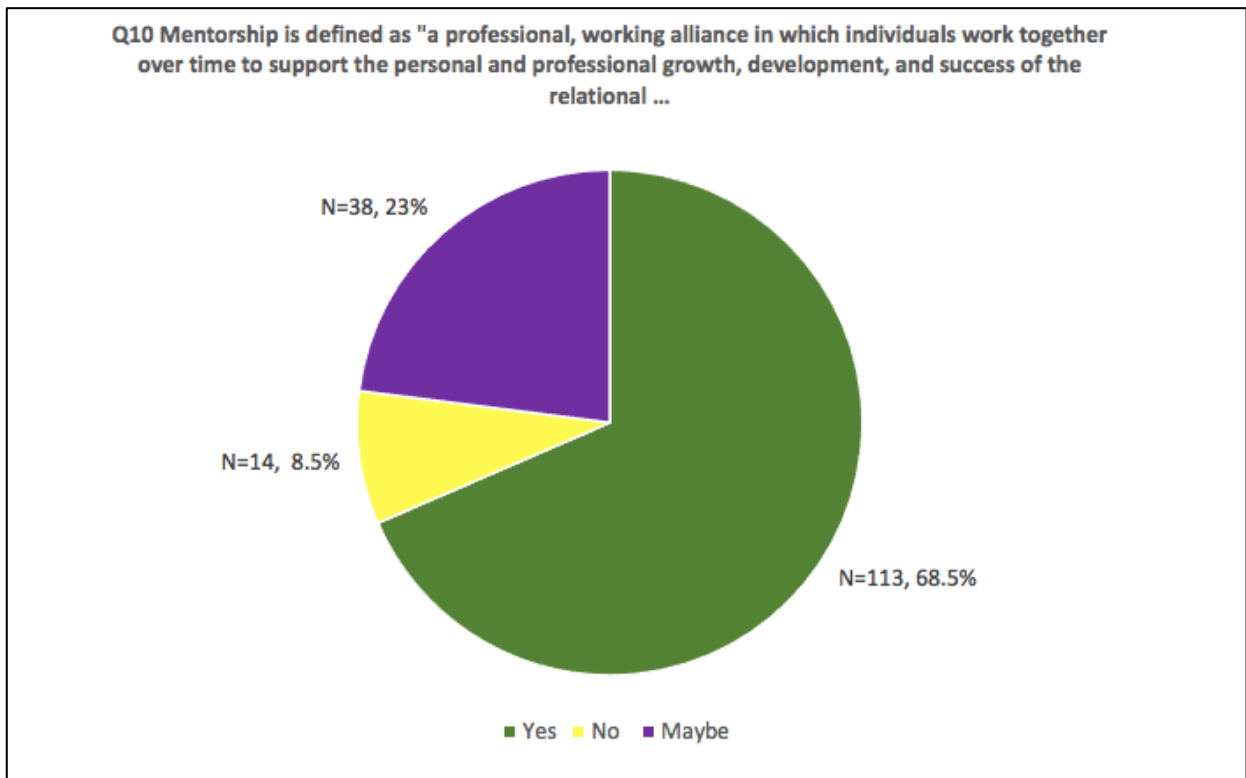
visibility. **Figure 1.8** displays the responses of the 57 entrepreneurs who chose to answer this question “What platforms do you use and why”. 38.6% (n=22) mentioned Instagram, 8.8% (n=5) twitter, 36.8% (n=21) Facebook, 3.5% (n=2) LinkedIn and 12.3% (n=7) mentioned how they had a website.

**Question 9**



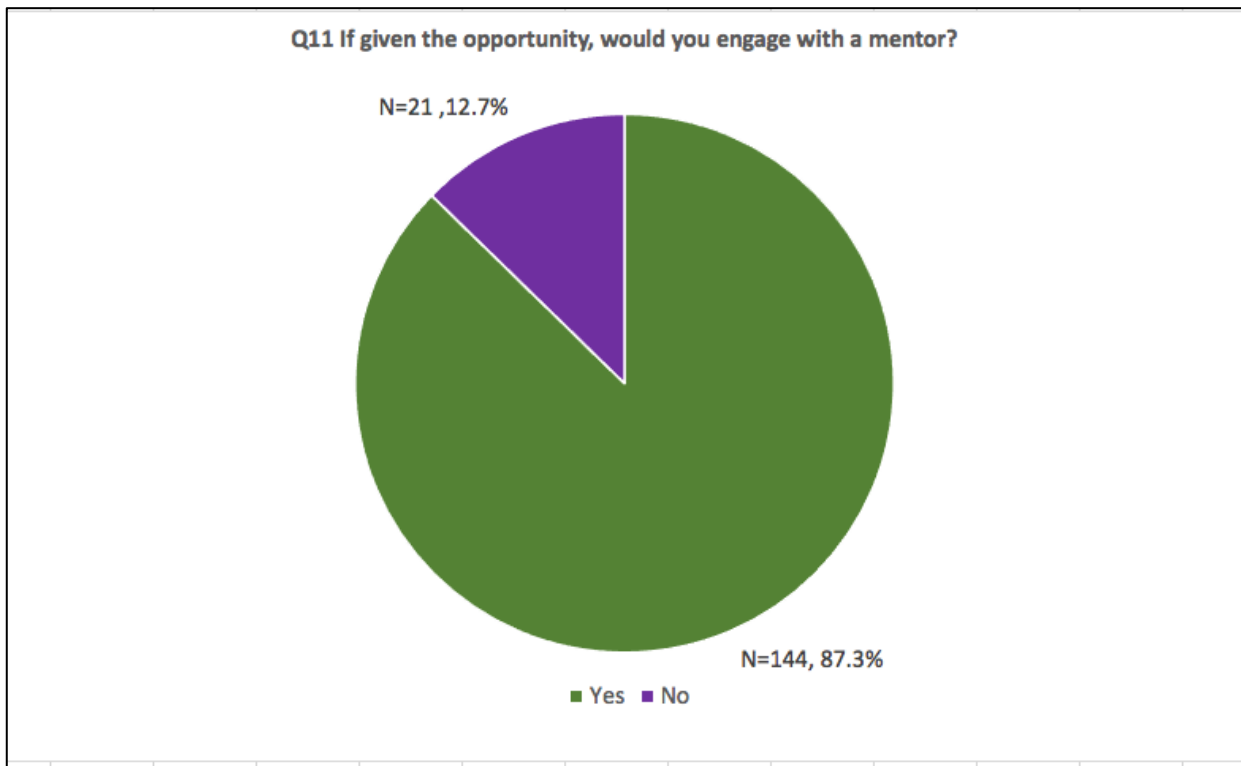
**Figure 1.9** What the entrepreneurs in the Agri-Food sector think the barriers that have prevented them from developing an online presence are. There were 84 respondents to **Question 9**. The responses are presented in themes in **Figure 1.9**. Of the entrepreneurs that commented 25% (n=21) commented on early stages of planning, 17.9% (n=15) lack of social media knowledge, 10.7% (n=9) money concerns, 3.6% (n=3) lack of confidence, 22.6% (n=19) time constraints and 20.2% (n=17) selected the other option.

**Question 10**



**Figure 1.10** Entrepreneurs outlined in question 10 if they agreed with the statement “Mentorship is defined as a professional, working alliance in which individuals work together over time to support the personal and professional growth and development and success of the relational partners through the provision of career and psychosocial support”. 165 responded 1 skipped this question, 23% (n=38) commented maybe, 8.5% (n=14) no and 68.5% (n=113) yes.

**Question 11**

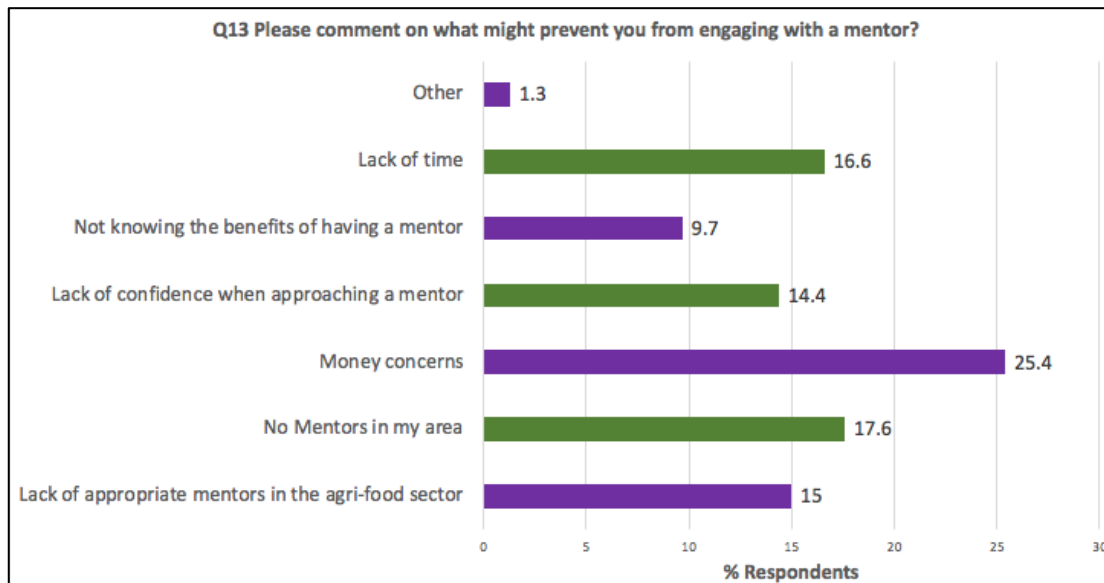


**Figure 1.11** Entrepreneurs in the Agri-Food sector were asked in **Question 11** “If given the opportunity, would you engage with a mentor”? 165 entrepreneurs responded, 1 entrepreneur skipped this question. 12.7% (n=21) said no while 87.3% (n=144) responded yes.

**Question 12 Please comment on what might prevent you from engaging with a mentor?**

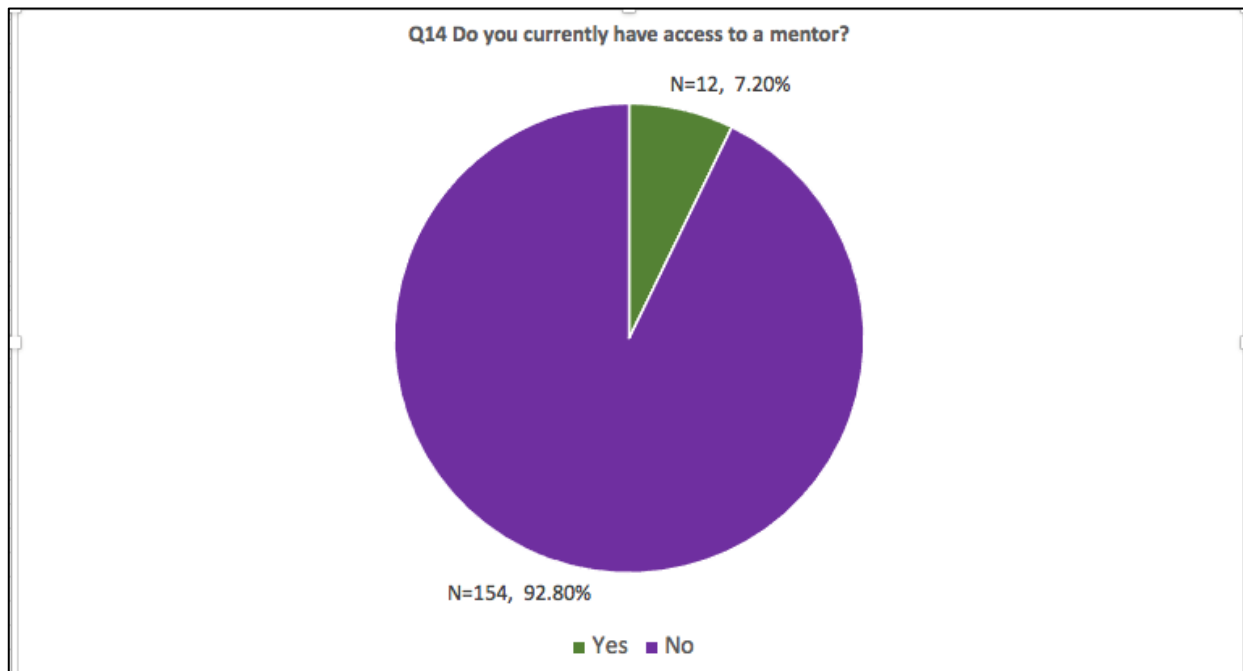
118 entrepreneurs answered this question, while 48 skipped this question. There was a multitude of answers given for this question and some of the most common answers that weren't an option in question 13 include , skills/ relevance of the mentor, not knowing where to find a mentor, trust, family opinion and lack of sector knowledge.

**Question 13**



**Figure 1.12** What entrepreneurs think might prevent them from engaging with a mentor. There were 166 responses but as this question was multiple choice, there was 319 answers. Responses are presented above in **Figure 1.12**. Of the entrepreneurs that commented 15% (n=48) commented on lack of appropriate mentors in the Agri-Food sector, 17.6% (n=56) no mentors in my area, 25.4% (n=81) money concerns, 14.4% (n=46) lack of confidence when approaching a mentor, 9.7% (n=31) not knowing the benefits of having a mentor, 16.6% (n=53) lack of time and 1.3% (n=4) commented other.

**Question 14**

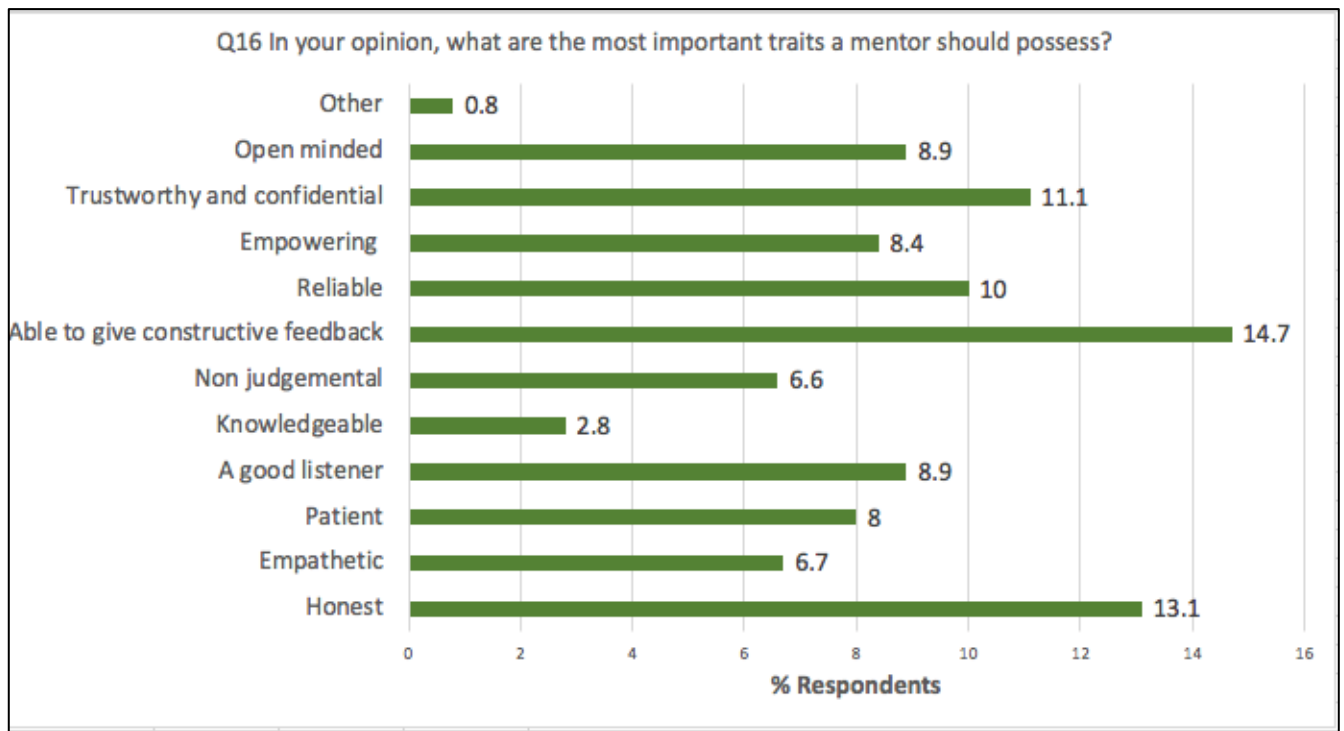


**Figure 1.13** All 166 entrepreneurs answered **Question 14** “Do you currently have access to a mentor”? 92.8% (n=154) answered Yes while 7.2% (n=12) answered No.

**Q15, If yes to Q14, how is it impacting you and your business?**

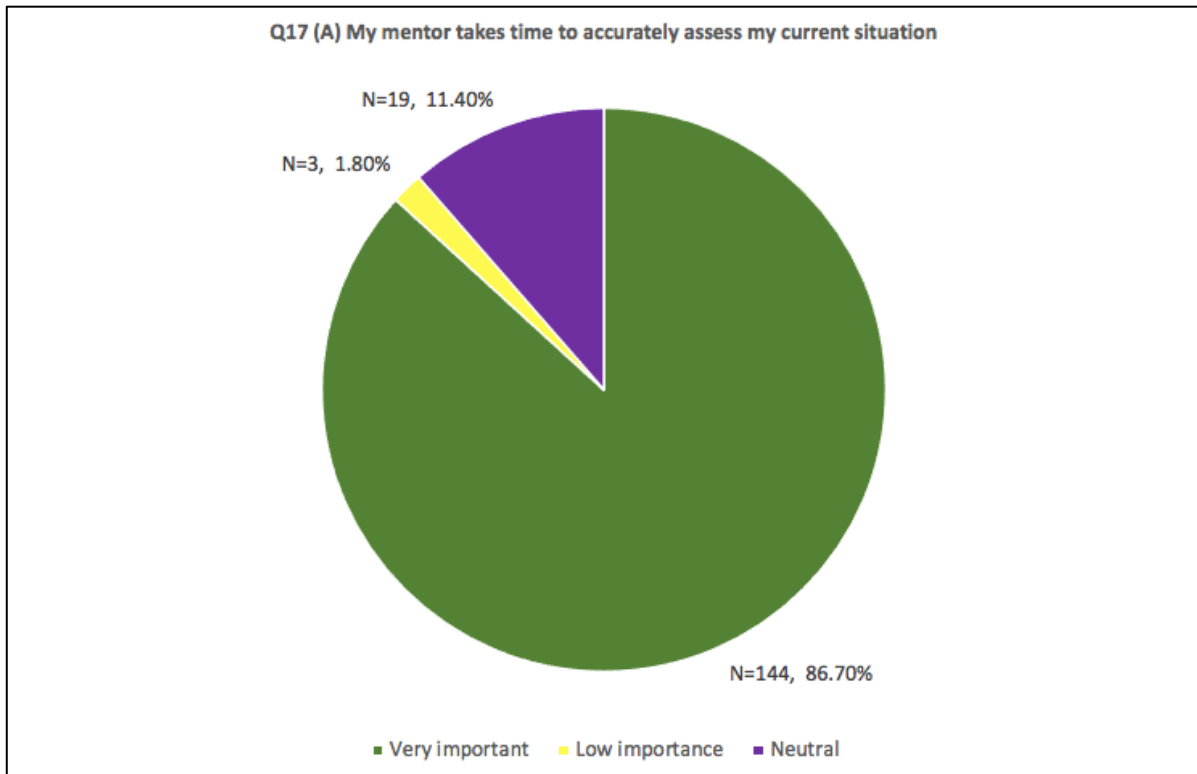
For question 15, 11 of the 12 entrepreneurs who answered yes to Q14 responded. All entrepreneurs who have access to a mentor found the relationship to positively impact their business. The most common responses included were, my mentor provides me with practical advice, constant support, boosts confidence, imparts knowledge, steers decision making, networking opportunities and helping with the development of the business.

**Question 16**



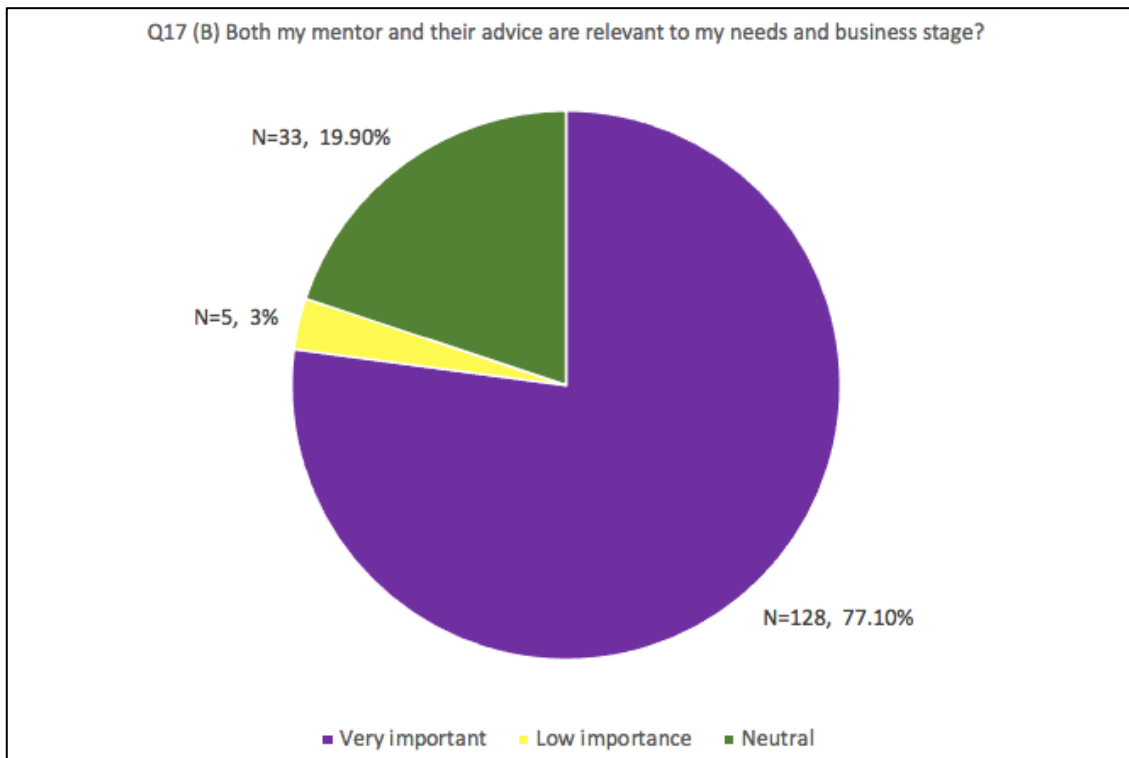
**Figure 1.14** The most important traits for a mentor to possess. All 166 entrepreneurs in the Agri-Food business answered this question, this question was a multiple choice and so there was 640 responses. The responses the entrepreneurs gave included, 13.1% (n=84) mentioning honesty, 6.7% (n=43) empathy, 8% (n=51) patience, 8.9% (n=57) a good listener, 2.8% (n=18) knowledgeable, 6.6% (n=42) non-judgmental, 14.7% (n=94) able to give constructive feedback, 10% (n=64) reliable, 8.4% (n=54), 11.1% (n=71) trustworthy and confidential and 0.8% (n=%) entrepreneurs chose other.

**Question 17**  
**(A)**



**Figure 1.15** Entrepreneurs in the Agri-Food sector were asked in **Question 17(A)** At what level of importance do they agree with the following statement, “My mentor takes time to accurately assess my current situation”? 166 entrepreneurs responded, 1.8% (n=3) selected the neutral option, 11.4% (n=19) responded low importance while 86.7% (n=144) responded very important.

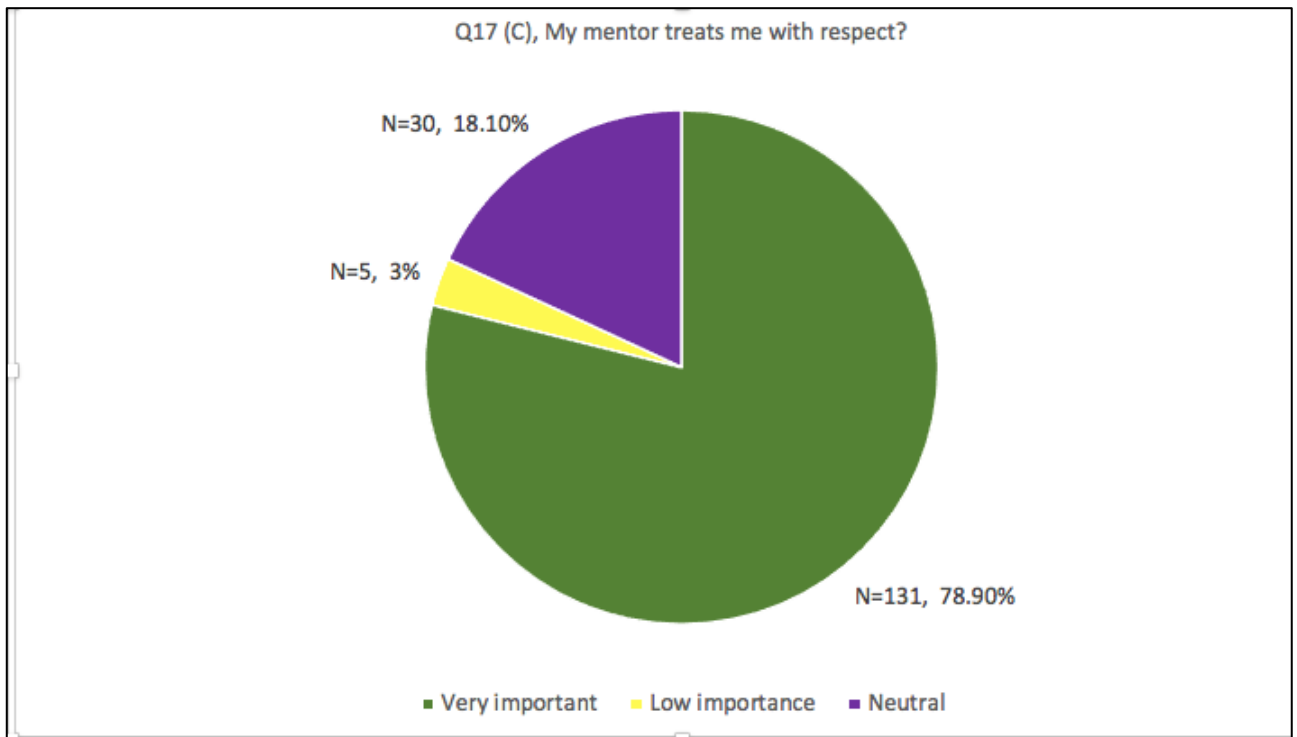
**Question 17 (B)**



**Figure 1.16** Entrepreneurs in the Agri-Food sector were asked in **Question 17(B)** At what level of importance do they agree with the following statement, “ Both my mentor and their advice are relevant to my needs and business stage”?? 166 entrepreneurs responded, 3% (n=5) selected the neutral option, 19.9% (n=33) responded low importance while 77.1% (n=144) responded very important



**Question 17 ( C )**



**Figure 1.17** Entrepreneurs in the Agri-Food sector were asked in **Question 17( C )** At what level of importance do they agree with the following statement, “My mentor treats me with respect”? 166 entrepreneurs responded, 3% (n=5) selected the neutral option, 18.1% (n=30) responded low importance while 78.9% (n=131) responded very important

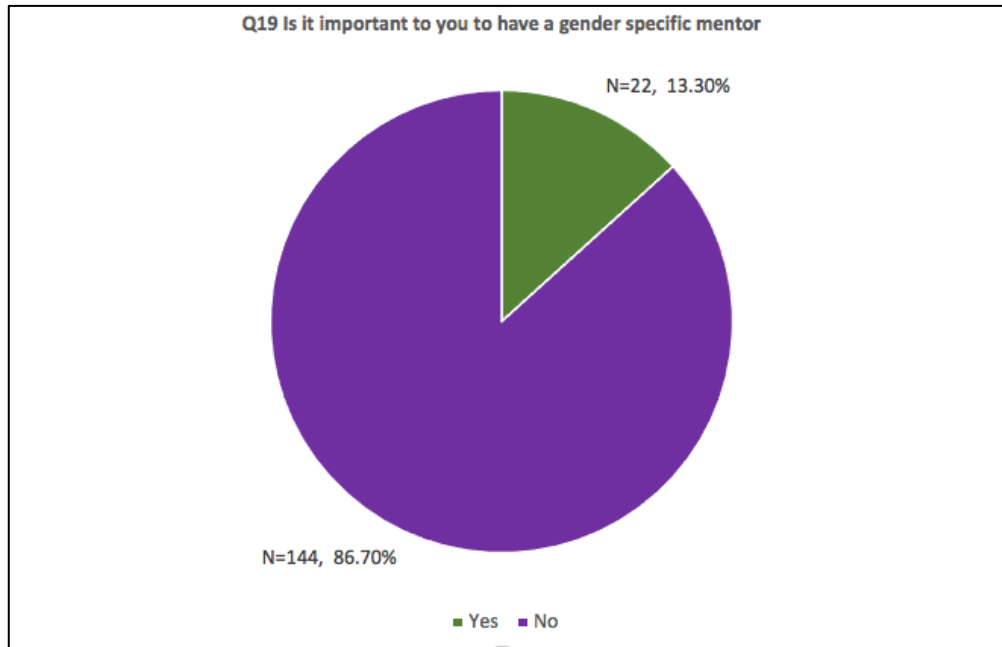
**Question 18**



**Figure 1.18** What entrepreneurs in the Agri-Food sector think a mentor would help them succeed. All

166 entrepreneurs responded to Question 18 but it was a multiple choice question so there was 359 answers. 25.3% (n=91) commented on gaining practical working advice, 25.3% (n=91) learn from experience, 22.8% (n=82) establish relationships and develop networks, 23.4% (n=84) develop problem solving strategies and 3.1% (n=11) entrepreneurs selected the other option.

**Question 19**



**Figure 1.19** Entrepreneurs in the Agri-Food sector were then asked in **Question 19** if it was important for them to have a gender specific mentor? 166 respondents took part in this question. 86.7% (n=144) responded No while 13.3% (n=22) responded yes.

**Q20 If yes to Q18, please provide more information on why.**

19 of the 22 entrepreneurs responded to this question, 3 entrepreneurs skipped this question. Some responses from this question include, being more comfortable with a specific gender, women understand the barriers other women face in business, gain more confidence with same sex mentor, two answers contradict each other one entrepreneur finds women more understanding while another finds men understanding and one entrepreneur believes male mentors have more contacts.

**Q21 If you were a mentor, what qualities, expertise and skills could you provide your mentee in the Agri-Food sector?**

123 entrepreneurs responded to Question 21, while 43 entrepreneurs skipped this question. There was a multitude of answers for this question the qualities, and skills that appeared the most include, honesty, knowledge, empathy, advice on grants and aids available, experience in their areas, networking opportunities, a good listener and patience.

# Appendix 2

## Appendix 2

### Mentor Criteria

When selecting mentors to contribute to the course it is important to note that no one mentor will be able to deliver the full course. A multidisciplinary team is the most appropriate to achieving successful delivery of the training course. It should include a panel of academics, food entrepreneurs and mentors. The panel should be of **mixed gender**. Below is a list of suggested criteria to refer to when selecting Food Entrepreneurs and Mentors to become involved in the course:

#### Communication

- Demonstrate an understanding and have the skills to communicate effectively with FFEs in a peer-based learning environment
- Design and deliver a professional oral presentation to females
- Demonstrate effective communication strategies that will aid females in developing and promoting their business
- Communicate with confidence, on their product, vision, brand and points of value
- Written and oral communication skills
- Online communication skills – the use of social media for business promotion and development
- Each mentor should be in a position to provide examples of real-life situations where implementing communication strategies were key to developing the growth and sustainability of their business

#### Mentoring

- Select a person who understands the challenges faced by the FFEs. Non bias judgment free mentorship is a great advantage. For established female entrepreneurs in the food sector, the opportunity to share expertise and soft skills can be greatly satisfying. The mentoring process is not about theory alone. FFEs need to hear that **other FFEs/Entrepreneurs have had similar struggles** and get advice on how they overcame challenges/fears/barriers. Sharing gender-related frustrations is an essential part of the process.
- A **competent** mentor can make the difference between success and failure for emerging FFEs.
- Mentors should provide encouragement. Many females have great business ideas. However, a lack of courage or an unhealthy amount of self-doubt often cause females to give up on those ideas. Entrepreneurship requires taking large risks to seek larger rewards.

- Not risk averse – females should be encouraged by successful entrepreneurs to aspire to take the risk. Taking the risk will serve as a series of valuable lessons. Success is not linear.
- Mentors should be **proactive** in their approach to mentoring FFEs – Open to helping females that are reluctant to ask for help. Research<sup>2</sup> has indicated that the fear of being rejected or ridiculed is high amongst FFEs.
- Trainers/ mentors need to be **approachable**. Having an open-door policy will encourage more engagement with the mentor - that opening move creates an opportunity for a mentoring relationship to begin.
- FFE **Mentoring in a group** - One-to-one contact can be very intense and might be intimidating for some FFEs. Group mentoring sessions may prove just as successful. A mentor can create a platform where the FFEs can meet online as many may be experiencing similar challenges.
- The mentor should play more of a facilitating role i.e. starts the session, gives advice and guidance, and then opens the floor for discussion.
- Have the ability to give **honest feedback** even when it's negative
- One of the most important aspects of a mentoring relationship is feedback. The FFEs should **learn from their successes and mistakes**. Having a mentor who shies away from pointing out shortcomings is not beneficial to the FFE.
- **Share real-life experiences** as part of the mentorship
- **Gender-related issues** are still a struggle for many female entrepreneurs despite gender equality legislation in many countries. It is often still difficult for females to enter male-dominated industries. In some societies, females have traditional responsibilities like housekeeping and childrearing to contend with while climbing the ladder to success. Discussing how to balance work and life will give the students strength to persevere.
- **Empathic** mentoring is an effective approach. Empathic mentoring makes the student **feel reassured and secure in the relationship**. Feeling safe in the space created by the mentor will make the student more likely to share everything instead of holding back.

Empathic mentoring is an approach known to create a long-term relationship. The skills needed for this approach may not come naturally to the mentor. They can be developed with time and patience.

<sup>2</sup> Survey Monkey Inc, 2019