PACT FOR SKILLS Leader

An initiative of the European Commission

Co-funded by the European Union

AGRIFOOD SKILLS Newsletter

Issue 2 | December 2025

Overview

Welcome to the second edition of the **AGRIFOODSKILLS Newsletter**! This issue highlights key developments from July to December 2025, including the impact of Agrifood Open Days across Europe, progress toward a shared 2050 vision for the agri-food sector, and the first-year achievements of the Agri-Food Pact for Skills Observatory. You'll also discover new tools supporting agri-food education through the AgrifoodSkills databases, and an invitation to engage in shaping future skills at the 2026 Agrifood Pact for Skills Annual Event. Together, we continue building a skilled, resilient, and future-ready agri-food workforce!

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Welcome Note from the Coordinator

Dear colleagues and partners,

It is with great pleasure that I welcome you to the second edition of our project newsletter, covering the period from July to December 2025.

Over the past months, AGRIFOODSKILLS has continued to advance its mission of strengthening skills development across the European agri-food sector. Our regional partnerships, training initiatives, and Open Days have brought us closer to stakeholders on the ground, while the second Forum 2050 meeting has been proved a valuable way to discuss emerging skills, future scenarios, and innovation priorities for the sector.

At the heart of our work remains the Observatory of the Agri-food (OAF) Pact for Skills, structured around active working groups. It continues to enhance skills intelligence, coordinate targeted training efforts, and support the Agri-food Pact for Skills.

Looking ahead, the OAF Pact for Skills and Forum 2050 will remain central to guiding the project's strategic direction, ensuring that our efforts are aligned with broader EU objectives and responsive to evolving global challenges. Together, we are not only advancing AGRIFOODSKILLS' objectives but also building a lasting community of practice to support the sector far beyond today's milestones.

I am also pleased to highlight our upcoming Agri-food Pact for Skills event on 21st April, an important opportunity for partners and stakeholders to meet, exchange insights, and further strengthen our community. Please mark your calendars.

Warm regards,

Prof. Remigio Berruto
Project Coordinator – University of Turin
remigio.berruto@unito.it

Advancing agri-food skills for the future

AGRIFOODSKILLS Open Days: A European Success in Agri-Food Sector Training

Between September and early December 2025, the AGRIFOODSKILLS project successfully organized 13 Open Days across 10 European countries, achieving significant results in promoting future skills for the agri-food sector. The events recorded an overall attendance of more than 500 professionals, including university students, young agricultural entrepreneurs, food industry technicians, researchers, and representatives from private companies. This diverse group of stakeholders enabled a fruitful exchange between academia, industry, and institutions. Particularly important was the presence of young farmers and students from agricultural technical schools, who showed great interest in topics related to digital innovation and sustainability. The events fully met the project indicators, ensuring the participation of at least 10 national stakeholders at each occasion, and in many cases involving a much higher number of active participants.

The training sessions varied from introductions to smart farming and precision agriculture to eco-design and biodegradable materials, sustainable supply chain management, and animal health and welfare.

A distinctive feature of the Open Days was their strong practical orientation, with guided tours of cutting-edge facilities: research laboratories on microplastics and sustainable packaging (Austria), technological platforms for food quality monitoring (France), livestock and veterinary medicine centres (Netherlands), wine cooperatives with digital systems for viticulture (Portugal), milling and food production plants (Italy), agricultural fairs showcasing innovative machinery (Slovenia, Spain). In Germany, participants visited the Chair of Agricultural Systems Engineering at the Technical University of Munich, where they had the opportunity to experience Smart Farming technologies firsthand through demonstrations on tractors, functional models of Vario transmissions, and power take-off (PTO) systems, gaining practical skills in integrating software with real agricultural machinery. In Hungary, the event combined a company visit with an interactive workshop on soft skills, using participatory methodologies to develop competencies in communication, teamwork, and self-awareness—crucial elements for addressing human resource management challenges in the sector. Practical demonstrations included the use of drones for crop monitoring, ecological plowing systems, precision farming technologies, and digital tools for supply chain traceability. In Greece, a field demonstration showcased the integration of unmanned aerial vehicles with digital farm management systems.

The AGRIFOODSKILLS Open Days have demonstrated the importance of combining theory and practice in agri-food sector training, confirming the validity of the project's modular approach and the relevance of the identified skills to support the green and digital transition of European Agri-food sector

Bridging training, innovation and practice

Forum 2050 Advances Europe's Strategic Vision for the Future of the Agri-food Sector

The Forum 2050 was established as a moment for dialogue among the main agrifood stakeholders at European level. It takes the form of a "umbrella" structure – a high-level technical and scientific committee tasked with identifying the strategic priorities for the future of the sector, with a dual vocation: on the one hand, to develop skills; on the other, to keep a constant focus on geopolitical scenarios and international events that influence agrifood, supporting the business community in its decision-making processes.

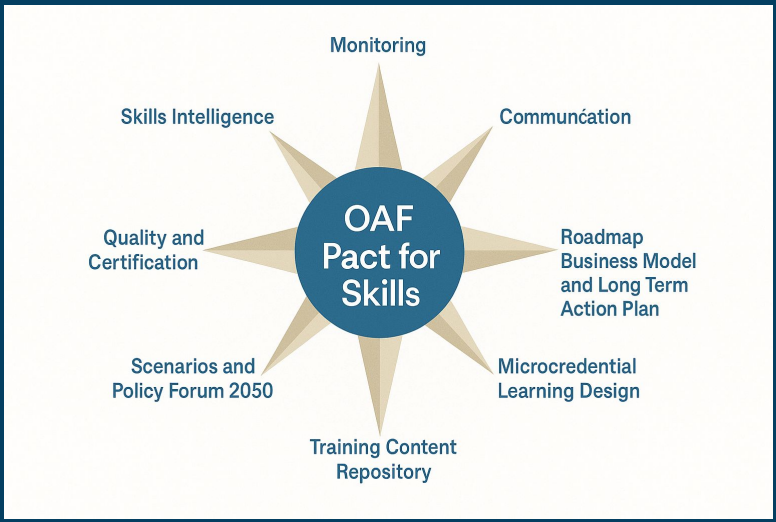
The second meeting of the Forum 2050 was held on 30 September 2025 at Confagricoltura's headquarters in Rome. Chaired by Prof. Piero Mastroberardino and AgrifoodSkills coordinator Remigio Berruto, the event brought together the AGRIFOODSKILLS partnership, international experts, representatives of the European Commission and the business world to discuss how to build scenarios towards 2040 and 2050, concretely linking foresight analysis, skills needs and public policies.

During the day, updates to the position papers and their impact on the OAF Pact for Skills working groups were presented: crisis management, entrepreneurial training, medium- and long-term scenarios, the evolution of consumer lifestyles, innovation uptake and policy guidance on best practices. The OAF working group leaders, presented the state of progress of their activities and the evolution of the different scenarios, opening a discussion on the identification of strategic and operational tools for developing innovative skills and responding to training needs.

As recalled by Daniel Rossi, Confagricoltura's Delegate for Research and Innovation and co-coordinator of the AGRIFOODSKILLS project, interpreting and managing uncertainty and risk in dynamic conditions means rethinking the skills, foresight tools and risk management models made available to businesses. From this perspective, the Forum 2050 aims to be not only a space for reflection, but also a driver of new training initiatives and knowledge transfer, in synergy with the Entrepreneurial AgriFood Academy and the next steps of AGRIFOODSKILLS, starting from the meetings already planned for 2026.

Observatory of the Agri-food (OAF) Pact for skills: Summary of First-Year Achievements

OAF Pact for Skills has successfully completed its first year of activities, laying the groundwork for a dynamic and collaborative platform that anticipates skills needs and supports workforce development across the European agri-food sector. Through its eight thematic Working Groups, the Observatory has delivered key outputs such as the first annual monitoring survey, a comprehensive mapping of 240 occupational profiles, and the design of a 12-year strategic roadmap to ensure long-term sustainability. These achievements reflect a strong commitment to evidence-based planning, stakeholder engagement, and alignment with EU priorities on digitalisation, sustainability, and skills innovation.



Forward-looking, collaborative framework for agri-food skills

A major milestone this year was the development and refinement of sectoral scenarios by the Scenarios and Policy Forum 2050 Working Group. These scenarios—Sustainable Path, High-Tech Path, and Established Path—provide strategic foresight for the agri-food sector, helping stakeholders anticipate future trends in sustainability, technology, and business models. By integrating scenario analysis with skills intelligence and policy recommendations, the Observatory ensures that its outputs remain relevant and forward-looking, supporting both immediate and long-term transformation across the ecosystem.

Looking ahead, the Observatory will build on these foundations by consolidating operational practices and intensifying collaboration among partners. Upcoming actions include the launch of skill needs identification sessions, expansion of the training content repository, and further work on the development of micro-credential frameworks to foster lifelong learning. With its participatory governance model and forward-looking approach, the Observatory is positioned as a key driver of transformation in the agri-food ecosystem, ensuring that skills intelligence, quality standards, and innovative learning pathways remain at the heart of Europe's green and digital transitions.

How can you benefit?

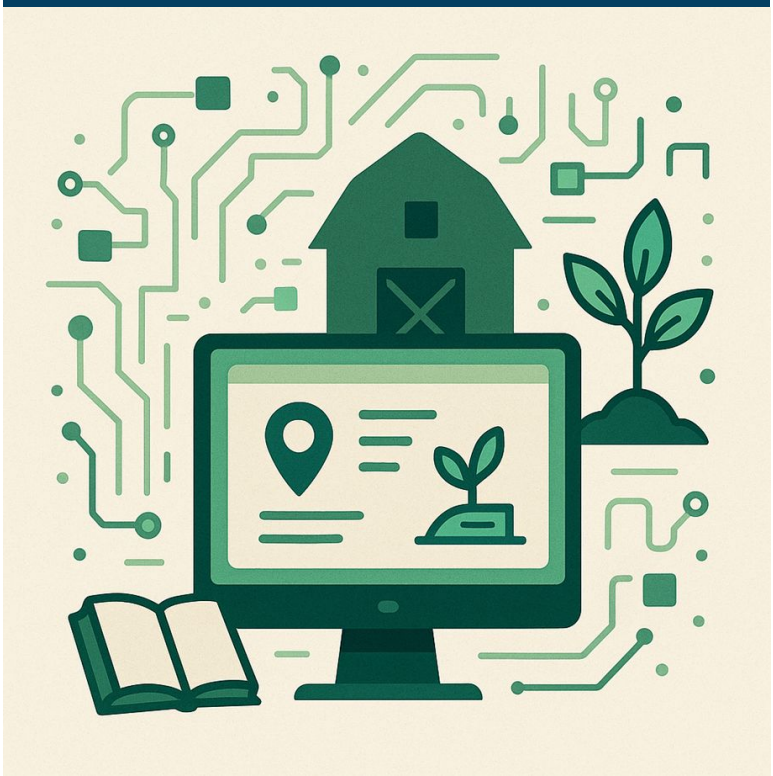
The most direct way to benefit from the Observatory's activities is by joining the Agri-food Pact for Skills. Members gain access to tailored insights, training, tools, and networking opportunities. They also benefit from shared resources, guidance on funding opportunities, and continuous learning support across the agri-food ecosystem—ensuring they stay at the forefront of sector developments and skills innovation.

AGRIFOODSKILLS Databases Offer a One-Stop Hub for Agri-Food Education

AGRIFOODSKILLS has recently updated its state-of-the-art databases designed to support education and training across the agri-food sector. These resources were originally developed within our sister projects, FIELDS and I-RESTART, and have now been expanded and improved.

By gathering diverse, up-to-date information in one place, the databases serve as a comprehensive hub for anyone looking to design curricula, connect with training providers, explore innovative educational projects and best practices, consult relevant regulatory frameworks, or identify funding opportunities for new training initiatives.

Integrated databases for training and innovation



Five datasets are available:

- **Curricula** – Information on education and training programmes from secondary to university level across Europe, including the institutions that offer them.
- **Projects** – An overview of cutting-edge European educational projects in the agri-food sector, with a focus on key trends such as digitalisation, sustainability, one-health, and entrepreneurship.
- **Best Practices** – Real examples of successful technological applications in areas including sustainability, digitalisation, bioeconomy, soft skills, and emerging agri-food technologies.
- **Regulatory Frameworks** – Local, regional, national, European, and international regulations supporting policy implementation and multi-level governance in education and training.
- **Funding Opportunities** – Information on available regional, national, and European funding to support education and training initiatives.

Access for free to the databases through the AGRIFOODSKILLS project website!

Shaping skills for the future: join the 2026 Agrifood Pact for Skills Annual Event

The 2026 edition of the Agrifood Pact for Skills Annual Event, titled "Shaping Skills for the Future", will take place in Brussels and bring together leading actors from across Europe's agri-food ecosystem. This year's edition will place a strong focus on attracting and inspiring the next generation of talent, while showcasing impactful initiatives that respond to the sector's rapidly evolving skills landscape.

Through a mix of high-level dialogues, project insights, youth-led moments, and networking opportunities, the event will:

- Highlight successful training actions and EU-funded projects that help make agri-food more attractive and future-proof
- Give voice to young professionals and students through dedicated panels and testimonial campaigns
- Foster connections between industry, education and training providers, public authorities, and youth organisations.

Whether you are a business leader, policymaker, educator, or student, this event is a unique opportunity to shape a shared vision for skills development in agri-food – and to co-create concrete solutions supporting Europe's green and digital transitions.

Register here - More details to follow, stay tuned!

Follow us on social media!

agrifoodskills.eu

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