



Farmer's diary

Manual for the practice diary

The practice diary is an essential part of practical education at the Farm School.

A minimum of two years' worth of carefully kept diary entries will produce a document that can be used by the trainee later in their professional life. Ideally, the diary can become a personal handbook that bears witness to the trainee's journey as a farmer and preserves the fullness of newly acquired knowledge and experience.

The diary is structured in a schematic way and, through its various sections (daily notes, weekly work plan, routine report, practice report, etc.), encourages the trainee to take note of the structure of the farm, the purpose of the work carried out or the particularities of the landscape, climate and seasonal cycle. The diary will thus make the trainee reflect on things that he may not be doing directly, but which must be mastered in order to pass the final examinations at the end of the third year.

The structure of the diary, however, also depends to some extent on the trainee himself. The trainee can add additional pages, notes, photos, drawings, interesting articles and personal statements as needed. There are no limits to imagination and creativity. The diary is primarily done for the trainee's needs and can be a source of valuable information and personal memories in the future.

A practice diary kept for at least two years is a prerequisite for an admission to the final examinations.

The traineeship diary also serves as a basis for an interview with the mentoring farmer and helps to determine the trainee's future direction of their development.

Trainee

Personal information:

Last name:

Name:

Date and place of birth:

Practise on farm:

1st farm from:

to:

Name of the farm

Mentor's name

Street, no.

City, postcode

Phone

E-mail



Practise on farm:

2st farm from:

to:

Name of the farm	
Mentor's name	
Street, no.	
City, postcode	
Phone	
E-mail	

Short description of the farm

The trainee always makes a short description as soon as he arrives at the farm to get a first orientation.

Year		
Farm		
Location/Address		
Total area (ha)		
Arable land (ha)		
Meadows, pastures (ha)		
Vegetable farming (ha)		
Forest (ha)		
Other areas		
Cultivation of plants	ha	ha
cereals		
vegetables		
potatoes		
compound feed		
Animal husbandry	quantity	quantity
dairy cattle		
heifers		



sows + boars		
pigs		
laying hens		
sheeps		

Description of the farm – 1st farm

Educator/ farmer:

Name

Year of training

Farm:

Address

Farm manager

Location:

In the centre, on the outskirts, secluded

Soil:

Soil kind

Soil type

Bonification

Topography:

Elevation

Climatic conditions:

Temperature (annual

Precipitation (annual total)

Farm area:

ha

Arable land



Meadows, pastures	
Vegetable area	
Greenhouse	
Forest	
Built-up area	
Other area	
Total area	

Land distribution:

(the land is arondissed, the plots are scattered)

Sowing practice:

Main crop	Intercrop, tillage, fertilizer

Labour:

	Number
Farm manager	
Full time	
Part time	
Trainees	
Seasonal workers	



Animal	Number
Dairy cows	
Meat cows	
Calves up to 1/2 year old	
Heifers, bulls ½ to 1 year	
Heifers, bulls 1 to 2 years	
Heifers, bulls 2 years	
Breeding bull	
Boars / sows	
Piglets up to 25 kg	
Meat pigs from 25 to 60 kg	
Meat pigs from 60 kg to 130 kg	
Laying hens	
Meat hens	
Turkeys/geese/ducks	
Meat sheep / dairy sheep	
Goats	
Lambs/goats	
Horses	



Use of fertilizers:

Type of the fertiliser	Total amount /year	Used for

Vegetables (+ Greenhouse):

Main crops	Area (ha/m ²)	Number of



Mechanisation:

Machine and its usage (factory product + year of manufacture)	Used for

Buildings and structures:

Name	Type	Use



Method of Sale:

Method	At what intervals

Special features:



Description of the farm – 2nd farm

Educator/ farmer:

Name	
Year of training	

Farm:

Address	
Farm manager	

Location:

In the centre, on the outskirts, secluded	
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Soil:

Soil kind	
Soil type	
Bonification	

Topography:

Elevation	
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Climatic conditions:

Temperature (annual	
Precipitation (annual total)	

Farm area:

	ha
Arable land	
Meadows, pastures	
Vegetable area	
Greenhouse	
Forest	
Built-up area	
Other area	
Total area	

Land distribution:

(the land is arondissed, the plots are scattered)	
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Sowing practice:

Main crop	Intercrop, tillage, fertilizer

Labour:

	Number
Farm manager	
Full time	
Part time	
Trainees	
Seasonal workers	



Livestock breeding:

Animal	Number
Dairy cows	
Meat cows	
Calves up to 1/2 year old	
Heifers, bulls ½ to 1 year	
Heifers, bulls 1 to 2 years	
Heifers, bulls 2 years	
Breeding bull	
Boars / sows	
Piglets up to 25 kg	
Meat pigs from 25 to 60 kg	
Meat pigs from 60 kg to 130 kg	
Laying hens	
Meat hens	
Turkeys/geese/ducks	
Meat sheep / dairy sheep	
Goats	
Lambs/goats	
Horses	



Use of fertilizers:

Type of the fertiliser	Total amount /year	Used for

Vegetables (+ Greenhouse):

Main crops	Area (ha/m ²)	Number of



Mechanisation:

Machine and its usage (factory product + year of manufacture)	Used for

Buildings and structures:

Name	Type	Use



Method of Sale:

Method	At what intervals

Special features:



Description of the farm – 3rd farm

Educator/ farmer:

Name	
Year of training	

Farm:

Address	
Farm manager	

Location:

In the centre, on the outskirts, secluded	
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Soil:

Soil kind	
Soil type	
Bonification	

Topography:

Elevation	
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Climatic conditions:

Temperature (annual	
Precipitation (annual total)	

Farm area:

	ha
Arable land	
Meadows, pastures	
Vegetable area	
Greenhouse	
Forest	
Built-up area	
Other area	
Total area	

Land distribution:

(the land is arondissed, the plots are scattered)	
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Sowing practice:

Main crop	Intercrop, tillage, fertilizer

Labour:

	Number
Farm manager	
Full time	
Part time	
Trainees	
Seasonal workers	



Livestock breeding:

Animal	Number
Dairy cows	
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Heifers, bulls 2 years	
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Boars / sows	
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Laying hens	
Meat hens	
Turkeys/geese/ducks	
Meat sheep / dairy sheep	
Goats	
Lambs/goats	
Horses	



Use of fertilizers:

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Method of Sale:

Method	At what intervals

Special features:



Daily notes

The daily notes should provide a full account of the work done during the first two years of practice. Therefore, all important work and events during the day should be recorded.

In particular, the notes should include the following:

- **date, day of the week, weather observations**
- **the work carried out (by other colleagues if necessary)**
- the machines the trainee worked with (performance data)
- workload (time, utility)
- seed used (crop, variety, sowing rate)
- fertilisers used (type, nutrient content, quantity)
- use of plant protection products (designation, dose, quantity)
- feeding (type, composition, quantity)
- observation of animal behaviour
- observations in the field (description of current situation)
- alternatives to the work carried out and their consequences (I could have done something differently)
- special events on the farm
- social interactions
- new knowledge

Weather observations are made by the trainee throughout the first two years of education at the Farm School. In particular, he/she records daily minimum and maximum temperature, wind strength and direction, cloud cover, precipitation, pressure, etc. For these observations it is advisable to make a simple table and to fill in the data every day. In addition, the table can be supplemented with the current moon phases and planetary constellations.

Advices to deepening your daily notes:

1st year:

Daily records of performed activities can be expanded after the basic question "**What** did I do?" to include "**How** did I perform it? **Why** did I do it in this way? **How long** did it take?" etc.

2nd year:

In addition, notes on one's own important work should be supplemented by a record of the work of other staff members. This involves collecting relevant data that may point to connections with the season, weather observations, etc. At the same time, the trainee should keep a continuous record of the work planned and the work actually carried out. It is also advisable to justify the work carried out correctly (e.g. using literature) and to try to understand its significance.

- On every farm there are a number of activities that are repeated in cycles (stable work, milking, harvesting, etc.). On specialised farms, some work is repeated several times during the year. In these cases, it is advisable to draw up a '**routine report**' to which the trainee refers on each day. This will simplify and speed up the recording. There can always be mentioned a particular feature that goes beyond the routine report. How to compile a routine report can be found below.
- Daily entries should actually be made every day, but in a short form so they take no more than 5-10 minutes. Notes from seminars or internal operational training sessions are attached.
- In times of leave or sickness, entries do not need to be taken, but it should be noted for what reason the entries are missing.
- The form of record keeping is left to the trainee, but handwritten text must be legible.
- The diary is submitted regularly, but at least once a month, to the trainee's supervisor for checking the factual accuracy, correction and signature.



Weekly work plan

In the second year, the trainee should understand the operation of the farm to the extent that he/she is able to anticipate the following week's work and make a plan, i.e. a **weekly work plan**, at least twice a year. Here the trainee practises how far he/she is able to decide independently which work on the farm must be done at the moment and what should be postponed. In order for everything to run smoothly, they have to prepare certain things in advance and distribute the work meaningfully to the whole work team. The trainee then consults his weekly plan with the responsible farmer.

However, it is still quite possible that for various reasons the intended plans cannot be implemented at all or only partially. The trainee has to consider all this and learn to react to the changes that occur.

At the end of the planning period, the **'Implementation and control'** section must indicate which works could not be carried out as intended and the reasons for this. It must also be described which, if any, extra work has been carried out. Finally, conclusions should be drawn for future planning.

Advices for producing a routine report

On every farm, the trainee will encounter many cyclical activities (feeding, milking, cheese making ...). In these cases, it is advisable to draw up a routine report that describes the activity in detail. The trainee will only refer to this **routine report** each time in his Daily notes.

It should be possible to carry out the activity according to the routine report as per the instructions. The trainee's mentor will check and sign the routine report.

During the first two years of training at the Farm School, the trainee will compile at least six different routine reports!

Suggested topics for the routine report

Crop production:

- Storage and cleaning of cereals
- Tractor and machinery maintenance (oil change, oil filter change, lubrication, air filter, fuel filter, air pressure, etc.)
- preparing the drill for sowing (determining the sowing rate)
- working with biodynamic preparations
- weeding with weeding machine
- compost preparation
- harvesting hay/silage
- setting up the tillage machine (plough, cultivator)
- spreading manure
- ...

Livestock breeding:

- milking
- mucking out stables
- feeding
- ...



Vegetables:

- bed preparation
- irrigation
- sowing
- weeding
- harvesting
- mulching
- greenhouse work
- ...

Workshop:

- Drill/saw work
- welding
- changing tractor tyres
- ...

Notes on the practice report

The practice report tells about a specific practical experience in one of the main areas of the farm, which the trainee will do during his/her training. This is mainly experience in livestock farming, crop production and horticulture (see below). The trainee report contains the trainee's personal experience and opinion, but also acts as a detailed guide to the activity and should show that the trainee has understood, can explain and justify the activity described in context.

It should also be clear that the trainee can plan the activity logically, execute it correctly and monitor its progress. This demonstrates his/her ability to find solutions and adapt to realistic operating conditions. As the individual activities on the farm are usually tied to a specific period of time, it is necessary to consult the intended activity with the farmer mentor in advance to document it properly.

During the first two years of training, the trainee will compile at least six practice reports, with reports covering the various activities and at least two detailing the process of growing the selected crop. The template for this report can be found below.

The practice reports also serve as preparation for the final examination.

Suggested topics for the practice report

Cultivation of crops/vegetables/fruit etc.

- Soil types on the farm and the farming practices applied to them
- soil processing (pre-sowing soil preparation, incorporation of post-harvest residues)
- intercropping
- storage and use of manure (manure, suds, cattle slurry, compost,...)
- green manuring
- Treatment of manure and compost
- sowing cereals (wheat, oats, buckwheat)
- weed control in cereals
- harvesting cereals
- drying, storage, cleaning and further processing of cereals
- planting (potatoes, carrots, pumpkins,...)
- weed control in vegetables
- harvesting and storage of vegetables
- sales



Pasturage / grazing

- care of permanent grassland and pastures
- haymaking
- silage production
- pasture management
- Meadow establishment / reseedling
- clover grasses (their importance)
- fodder production

Livestock breeding

- rearing and feeding of calves
- calculation of feed rations (dairy cattle, beef cattle,...)
- summer and winter feeding (dairy cattle, sheep, goats,...)
- production of scrap and compound feed
- rearing and feeding of heifers
- rearing and feeding of pigs
- milking and milk processing
- description of the working day in the barn (dairy cattle, pigs)
- rearing and feeding piglets until weaning
- processing and selling meat (beef cattle,...)
- rearing and feeding of other livestock

Other topics:

- biodynamic preparations (production, application, storage)
- sale of farm products (method)
- workshop
- tractor and mechanisation (care, repair)

Notes on the maintenance of the herbarium

Part of the practice diary is a **herbarium**, which after two years contains at least 30 plants, including specimens. Each plant in the herbarium is pressed and carefully labelled. A handwritten drawing is an option, and all important features of the plant must be recognisable.

The description of the plant states:

- Czech and Latin name
- Family
- Date and place of discovery (meadow, pasture, field, forest,...)

More detailed observations or drawings may be attached to contribute to a better understanding of the plant.

- Place of discovery (soil species/type, shade, sun-exposed site, wet or dry site)
- Description of plant characteristics (flower, leaf form, fruit, annual/perennial,...)
- Uses (medicinal, edible, tea,...)