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**Agrilevante: innovative technologies for quality food**

***The growing dissemination of specialized crops, resulting from a profound change in dietary styles, is creating a new demand for agricultural machines dedicated to high quality crops. The evolution of dietary habits and the cultivation guidelines - claims the president of the Puglia Region Emiliano - represents a strategic indication also for the purpose of preparing the new rural development plan.***

This morning in Bari, the sixth edition of Agrilevante, the international exhibition of agricultural machinery, will open for four days, until Sunday 13, to showcase the best technologies for agriculture in the Mediterranean area. The cutting of the ribbon - in the presence of the president of the Puglia Region Emiliano, the president of the Fiera del Levante Alessandro Ambrosi, the president of FederUnacoma Alessandro Malavolti and the managing director of FederUnacoma surl Massimo Goldoni - symbolically gave the "green light" to the vast audience of farmers, businesspeople and technicians who will crowd the exhibition complex over the next four days, until Sunday afternoon. The strong theme of this edition is the evolution of food consumption in the world, and the role that the Mediterranean area will take in meeting the demand for high quality products. The eating habits of the world population are indeed changing rapidly. This is shown by the growing weight of specialized crops (wine, oil, fruit and vegetables), which between 2000 and 2016 increased worldwide in terms of area under cultivation (+5.5%), yields (+20.5%) and value of production (+24%). The new consumption habits tend to favour quality products over more conventional foodstuffs (grains, potatoes, industrial crops). This is what emerged yesterday morning when this edition of Agrilevante was presented to the press. A diet that includes greater consumption of fruit and vegetables - explained FederUnacoma president Alessandro Malavolti during the conference - is not only healthier, but also more sustainable from an economic and environmental point of view. FAO itself notes that, to prevent the onset of chronic diseases, each person should eat at least 400 grams of fruit and vegetables per day. The new eating styles are also reflected in the mechanization sector, creating the premises for a new demand for agricultural technologies centred around specialized crops. Only 11% of the area devoted to the cultivation of fruit, equal to 85 million hectares, presents satisfactory levels of mechanization - recalled Malavolti - while a substantial 73% is characterized by the use of machines that are completely inadequate to the needs. In other words, there is a strong demand for dedicated mechanical means, which is bound to grow in the coming years. We are expecting a record edition - added Massimo Goldoni, CEO of FederUnacoma surl - with more than 350 exhibiting industries and over 80 thousand expected visitors. The success of the event is due to its marked Mediterranean vocation, and the Puglia Region, with its specialization in olive growing and viticulture, represents an area of reference. The indications on the evolution of consumption styles and on the role of mechanization have a strategic value - said president Emiliano during the conference yesterday - also for the purpose of setting the new RDP Puglia, which must be focused on some priorities. The Rural Development Plan of the Region will have to consider specialized crops and the associated mechanization - this is the message that comes from Agrilevante - not only as a peculiarity of the Puglia region, but as a sector that will have consistent increases in the near future just to satisfy a demand of food that is rapidly evolving.

**Bari, 10 October 2019**