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**Digital agriculture conquers young businesses**

***Precision farming and 4.0 systems are becoming increasingly popular among young entrepreneurs, but small farms are not always able to absorb the cost of the technologies. Transfarm 4.0, the interregional programme for the development of new technologies in the fields funded by Brussels, highlights the strengths and weaknesses of the innovation process in North-Eastern Italy. Digital systems for agriculture are the protagonists of numerous other meetings at EIMA International.***

It boasts an excellent and widespread network of producers and a good network of sales outlets. But it pays the price for the high average age of its entrepreneurs, who are mostly tied to traditional farming methods. In Italy too, however, precision farming is gaining ground. And it is winning over young farmers first and foremost. In a survey of 220 farmers, the Transfarm 4.0 interregional programme, funded by the European Union, takes stock of the expansion of precision farming in some European areas, including Austria, Italy, Hungary, Slovenia and Poland. While the sector is increasingly attracting the younger generations, the Italian system suffers from the weakness of still being very fragmented, characterised as it is by small farms that are often unable to meet the cost of new technologies to innovate cultivation methods. Another weakness is that companies often lack the necessary skills to develop precision agriculture and growers are not always able to tap into the European resources made available to stimulate investment, while the lack of availability of technology could act as a brake on growth. The Transfarm 4.0 programme was presented at EIMA, the international exhibition of machinery for agriculture and gardening currently taking place in the halls of BolognaFiere. A presentation with several stages of a programme based on three fundamental pillars: the use of big data, sensors and Isobus, the communication system between operating machines and tractors. In Italy the programme, which will end in June next year, involves Crea, the Council for agricultural research and economics, and FederUnacoma, the trade association of agricultural machinery manufacturers. In addition to Emilia Romagna, it concerns the North East of the country. Innovations at the service of precision agriculture were also the focus of other meetings and discussions at the exhibition today. These included the conference on "Implement 4.0: digital technologies to increase productivity and safety and reduce the environmental impact of agricultural production", promoted by Agia/Cia. Space was given over to training with "Agriculture 4.0: profitable use of Canbus and Isobus data", organized by the University of Bologna as part of "EIMA Campus", the space dedicated to university training organized in collaboration with the AIIA agricultural engineering association and various Italian universities; in-depth studies on the theme of "Sustainable precision irrigation" - an event organized by Irritec - and on " Remote control

of machines: a technology within everyone's reach?" - meeting promoted by Edagricole - further enriched knowledge of the most advanced digital technologies for cultivation practices. With the meeting "Precision feeding: the ReCCo service for the milk supply chain", by Rural Set, new innovative services were reveiwed, while EIMA Campus and the University of Florence made a contribution to training on "Protocols for the optimized management and organization of data in digital agriculture". Lastly, the meeting "Subsidies for agriculture 4.0. Focus on tax credits and Sabatini", offered by Assist Consulting, and the event "Young people and digital: the agriculture of the future. From the CAP to the Farm2Fork strategy", with the presentation of the ParteciPac project by Image Line.

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