Press release no. 6/2025

**Agrilevante: a platform for Italian-Saudi cooperation**

***The eighth annual exhibition dedicated to specific technologies for Mediterranean agriculture was presented this morning in Riyadh. Several new features are planned by the organizers of FederUnacoma, starting with the REAL space for robotics and the Levante Green Showcase dedicated to gardening. Some 120 foreign delegates are expected in Bari to take part in B2B meetings with Italian exhibitors. Agrilevante is also an event of interest for Saudi Arabia where the demand for agricultural machinery is expected to increase in the short and medium term.***

“Italy and Saudi Arabia are experiencing a special moment in their bilateral relationship, especially after the visit of the Prime Minister last January and the elevating of relations to the strategic level,” said Ambassador Carlo Baldocci, opening the press conference for the presentation of Agrilevante 2025, which was held this morning in Riyadh. In addition to Ambassador Baldocci, the meeting was attended by Romano Baruzzi, Commissioner of Riad office of the Italian Trade Agency (ICE), Fabio Ricci, Deputy Director of FederUnacoma (the Italian federation of agricultural machinery manufacturers) and Federica Tugnoli, Secretary of Comagarden, the organization that represents gardening machinery manufacturers within the Federation. “There is a great demand for Italy in the Kingdom and the interest of our companies in this market is growing. We are working together with our Saudi colleagues on shared methods and objectives that will allow us to render our relationship increasingly more concrete from a partnership perspective. Agribusiness is certainly part of this scheme because Italian technology, models and products are increasingly sought after and appreciated, as well as being particularly suited to Saudi needs. Presenting Agrilevante here goes exactly in the direction of promoting greater mutual understanding between Italian and Saudi operators and stakeholders to support our exports and for the purpose of shared growth. This, too, is growth diplomacy and fits perfectly with the objective of the new export plan on high-potential markets, among which Riyadh is a full member" continued the Ambassador, expressing hopes for a large Saudi presence in Bari and reiterating the full availability of the players of the Italian System in the Kingdom to provide every possible support.

“Agrilevante is an extraordinary opportunity to strengthen the economic dialogue between Italy and Saudi Arabia in the agro-industrial sector. As the Italian Trade Agency, we strongly believe in the potential of this cooperation, which combines Italian technological innovation with ambitious Saudi agricultural development strategies. Our commitment is to facilitate meetings between companies, create the conditions for new synergies and promote a model of sustainable and shared growth", added the Trade Commissioner of ICE's Riad office, Romano Baruzzi.

According to forecasts by the company Exportplanning, 2025 should mark a recovery in sales of agricultural machinery in Saudi Arabia after the decrease witnessed over the past twelve months (going from EUR 453 to 318 million). This year should in fact close with a growth of 2.9%, which seems destined to further strengthen in the following three years, characterized by average annual increases of 4%, continuing that long incremental trend that has, albeit with alternating phases, lasted since the early 2000s. “Long-term data shows that between 2006 and 2024 the Saudi Arabian agricultural machinery market has grown significantly, going from EUR 106 million in 2006 to 318 million in 2024.

Italy – Ricci stated – is among the main suppliers with a 6.3% share of total local imports. According to Istat data, Saudi farmers mainly purchase livestock farming machinery, equipment for initial post-harvest processing and systems for sowing, transplanting and fertilizing from Italian companies”. The market leaders are Chinese manufacturers (19.9%) who, however, offer machinery that is affordable but not very innovative and, therefore, not very suitable for the development needs of Saudi agriculture, affected by prohibitive environmental conditions. Lack of arable land, scarcity of water resources and extremely unfavorable climatic characteristics are the main challenges that the primary sector has to deal with and overcome. “The answer to these challenges – added Ricci – can only be a technological response, with machinery and systems specifically designed to counter the critical environmental factors that handicap the primary sector”. In this perspective, the 2025 Agrilevante exhibition of agricultural mechanics for the Mediterranean basin to be held in Bari from 9 to 12 October, will become an enormous platform for calling awareness to the vast range of specific solutions for each crop in Saudi Arabia and more generally in the Mediterranean basin, and as the ideal place to explore the needs and priorities of the agricultural economies of the basin also in terms of training, as a "forum" for discussion on topics of common interest and opportunities for cooperation. The Bari event, which in 2023 saw the participation of 350 exhibiting industries from 20 countries and was attended by 95,000 visitors (of which 4,000 foreigners from 27 countries), is thus truly an event of international caliber. In addition to buyers, operators and technicians from the Mediterranean area, the Balkan and Middle Eastern regions, as well as sub-Saharan Africa, 120 foreign delegates representing 38 countries, including Saudi Arabia, are expected to come to Bari. During the four days of the event, foreign delegates, whose incoming is organized by the Italian Trade Agency in collaboration with FederUnacoma, will be engaged in business to business meetings with the exhibiting industries.

The organizers have planned several new features for the 2025 Agrilevante event, starting with the REAL space, an area specifically dedicated to robotic technologies for the primary sector, and the meeting of the Bologna Club, which is being held in Bari for the first time. The technical innovations competition also has a new look, divided into two categories: the first for the most significant new innovations for the agricultural sector, and the second specifically for technologies for green maintenance. “Another important new development is that related to the gardening sector with the Levante Green showcase, which will see the most advanced machines and equipment for the care of those green spaces that make up an essential element of contemporary urban landscapes and a factor of well-being for life in the city”, added Federica Tugnoli. “From this perspective, the Levante Green Show represents an area of certain interest for Saudi operators, given the strong expansion that gardening is witnessing in the Middle Eastern country. Over the last five years – added Tugnoli – we have in fact seen a surge in demand for high-quality gardening equipment, in Saudi Arabia and throughout the Gulf”. Parks, luxury resorts, golf courses and sports facilities are expanding rapidly, setting new benchmarks for both beauty and sustainability. This growing interest is attested to by the trend in sales of garden technologies. In 2024, Saudi Arabia imported EUR 9 million worth of lawnmowers, an increase of 5% over 2023 and a whopping 241% compared to 2022, when imports accounted for only EUR 2.6 million. “Today, Italy is the eighth largest supplier of gardening machinery and applications, but – concluded Tugnoli – the Saudi market offers Italian industries important growth opportunities, especially in the segment of lawnmowers, weeders and manual equipment”.

**Riyadh, May 12, 2025**