*Press release no. 28*

**EDP, focus on agriculture 4.0**

***The second day of EDP, the virtual exhibition of agricultural machinery, gave special emphasis to the topic of agriculture 4.0 technologies. There were numerous meetings and webinars that presented machines, systems and agricultural practices which are currently available, and that suggested scenarios for the near future.***

* Internet of things, robotization, and autonomous driving systems are causing a revolutionary change in the way we farm, with the spread of "tailor-made" processes aimed at increasing yields and optimizing cultivation processes. The structural change of the primary sector does not only concern the production side, but also affects the industry's professional roles. Already today, agricultural workers are required to gain specific skills on latest generation machines, devices and systems. However, this transformation will be even more evident in the coming years, when the impact of 4.0 technologies on agriculture will become more pervasive and profound. This is the strong topic of the second day of EDP, the virtual exhibition of agricultural machinery, which today dedicated an important space to worker training initiatives, including the Sparkle project. Promoted by the European Union with an allocation of over 775 thousand euros from the Erasmus+ fund, the initiative came to fruition just this year. It involved four countries in the Mediterranean area (Greece, Italy, Portugal and Spain) and 11 partners, such as universities and farms. Created with the participation of FederUnacoma, the Sparkle project was organized to promote the dissemination of sustainable practices for precision agriculture.
* Training was also discussed during the webinar entitled "IFTS Digital Farming Specialist: a funded course for the agriculture of the future". Dedicated to smart farming and now in its third edition, the course (800 hours, 300 of which internships) is entirely co-financed by the European Social Fund and the Emilia Romagna Region, with the partnership of many industry players, including RURALSET SRL and FederUnacoma. The course - explained the speakers - will start at the end of November with the aim of training technicians specialized in the use of digital technologies applied to the agricultural sector.
* In terms of agriculture 4.0, the EU is called upon to make a strategic contribution, not only to promote training initiatives, but also to promote research activities and the subsequent application of new technologies. This role of the European Union was outlined during the event entitled "Digital agriculture: technologies of the future, protagonists of the present" organized by Image Line, highlighting the need to simplify and facilitate the digitization process to ensure sustainable production and profitability of crops. Paolo De Castro, Coordinator of the S&D Group at the Agriculture and Rural Development Commission of the European Parliament, spoke at the conference, focusing on the framing of digital agriculture within the common agricultural policy. The president of AGIA (Young Farmers' Association), Stefano Francia, addressed the issue from the point of view of the industry's players. On the theme of the latest generation technologies for the primary sector, Agia was the protagonist of a second meeting - organized by the association itself - entitled "Agriculture 4.0 in the Mediterranean area: a challenge for the sustainability of natural, economic and social resources (how technology can help us have a greener agriculture)". Still on the subject of 4.0, the second day of EDP saw numerous specialist meetings. Among others, we must mention the webinars on ISOBUS, the protocol that helps manage the communication between tractors, software, equipment. The meeting entitled "ISOBUS Green: simple, eco-friendly, Italian", promoted by IDEAgri, focused on some practical applications of the protocol, while the online conference entitled "Future Developments in the ISOBUS World - Activities of (three of) the AEF Project teams", organized by the Agricultural Industry Electronic Foundation (AEF) explored the future development possibilities of the ISOBUS.
* Among the innovative solutions that agriculture 4.0 makes available to farmers, the use of drones has become increasingly frequent in recent years, especially for monitoring the territory. This makes it possible to create those prescription maps that guide the on-demand processes. A broad overview of agricultural drone applications was provided by the webinar titled "Use of drones in agriculture", held by DronEzine and Macchine Trattori. The rich calendar of events for the second day of EDP includes several initiatives promoted by the exhibiting companies (also on agriculture 4.0), including those created by Cobo, Maschio Gaspardo and Netafim, who presented some new products.

**Rome, 12 November 2020**