



International Agricultural
Machinery Exhibition

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EIMA International 2008: Focus on Innovation

Visitors at Thursday's session of EIMA International 2008 were treated to key-note events on agricultural and rural development policies as well as getting a glimpse of how electronics and hydraulics may combine in farm equipment to outline new rural horizons.

Another crowded day at the EIMA International agricultural equipment fair with heavy attendance of businessmen, farmers and sub-contractors for a packed schedule of events, among them debates on new agricultural and rural development policies as well as the new frontiers of farm equipment design.

Figures for attendance yesterday showed another successful edition of the event. Organisers were especially up-beat about the number of foreign visitors: 20% of the total and almost double the number counted on the first day of the 2006 edition.

A key appointment for Italian visitors was a forum organised by the Ministry for Agricultural Policies and Agri 2000 on new measures brought in by the ministry to encourage what is being described officially as 'aggregated agricultural enterprises', medium to small farms joining into larger units to improve their competitiveness.

Rural development was also the main issue at the presentation of a book by Andrea Fugaro on the EU's "new rural development policy" in the period 20'07-13. The book is published by Il Sole-24 Ore Business Media.

UNACOMA's president, Massimo Goldoni, said that the sector needs "synergic and shared" strategic lines: "Italian manufacturers are against an indiscriminate rain of subsidies. Better a system of targeted incentives which encourage users to renovate and modernise their machines... To use modern, efficient, safe and non-polluting machines means to produce more efficiently and more profitably".

Earlier, speaking at a conference on the safety of forestry equipment organised by UNACOMA and ISPESL, Goldoni once more highlighted the dynamism of Italian agricultural machine makers: "In the fair, you can admire over 25,000 different products. Such a marked diversification of the range represents the true strong-point of the Italian manufacturers, second in the world in terms of the value of what they make only to the United States ... We are showing how Italian enterprise can will the global competitive challenge".

One of the areas in which that challenge is being met is the use of mechatronics in designing agricultural machinery, the subject of a conference organised by the Italian Mechatronics Club and Comacomp, the UNACOMA association in which component makers are represented. Other technical topics also found space in a series of workshops: alternatives to methyl bromide for soil pest control (organised by PROF.i); an AWARE workshop on how to optimise plant treatments and preserve the environment (EU Life Programme coordinated by Cemagref, the agricultural and environmental engineering research institute); and agro-forestry biomass as a sustainable resource (CNR-Ivalsa/Itabia).

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