



International Agricultural
Machinery Exhibition

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EIMA International: Visitor Numbers Climb as Foreign Visitors Double

The first two days of EIMA International 2008 saw a 5% growth of visitors over the last edition in 2006, but a doubling of the foreign visitors as technical and policy forums continued on Day Three with government officials in attendance.

Bologna, 14 November – Yet another river of visitors flooded into the Bologna fair quarter for the third day of EIMA International, Italy's and one of the world's premium industrial fairs for agricultural and related equipment.

UNACOMA Service srl, which organises the event, said that, in the first two days, there were over 40,000 visitors, 5% up on 2006. The figures also showed that the number of foreign visitors doubled to account for about 20% of the total. The fair was still only open to professionals.

Commenting on the announcement of a major new cooperation agreement between Modena-based Destura and TopCon of Japan, two leaders in mechatronics, Carlo Giovanardi, an undersecretary at the Prime Minister's office, said it showed Italian companies could go international not only by taking their production to countries offering low-cost labour, but also by attracting investments from leading foreign enterprises. He also cited EIMA's international prestige and reminded his audience of the need for greater rationalisation and integration right down the agro-industrial production line.

Making a keynote speech at a forum organised by Coldiretti, Antonio Bonfiglio, an undersecretary at the Ministry for Agricultural Policies, pointed out that agriculture had to face a scenario of significant change. The forum was in fact debating "short production lines and multi-functionality" in farms supplying crops for energy production.

"For the entire agricultural sector, new and important scenarios are opening up, above all linked to an enhancement of the link between agriculture and territory," said Bonfiglio. "Agricultural machines play a fundamental role in promoting Made in Italy. This is precisely why I am in favour of creating a register of agricultural machines."

Earlier, UNACOMA President Massimo Goldoni highlighted the importance of close cooperation between farmers and agricultural machine makers, a point echoed by Coldiretti President Sergio Marini. "As a representative of the farmers," said Marini, "we have found points of agreement with the machine manufacturers' association to define a completely Italian agro-food sector, an objective that is as demanding as it is innovative and important."

As regards bioenergy, added Giorgio Piazza, president of Coldiretti's *Fattorie del Sole*, "we ask the institutions to define clear regulations as soon as possible to give an incentive for the production of alternative energy, a sector with excellent opportunities of development."

Biofuels were also the issue at hand in a conference on biogas organised by CRPA, Italy's Centre for Research on Animal Production. There was also a UNACOMA meeting on techniques of no-till soil management, which, in his opening remarks, UNACOMA Vice-President Carlo Tonutti said "brings significant agronomic, economic and environmental benefits," adding that "studies in this field are not just limited to theory, but have produced concrete results – equipment for no-till soil management are already available."

There were also press conferences organised by Pessl Instruments to report on new advances in monitoring soil humidity and by the Faresin group, which is a leader in equipment for agriculture, industry and construction, especially telescopic handlers and feed mix wagons. Journalists also met with UNACOMA and UNACOMA Service to here about the agenda facing the Club of Bologna this year. The main issue will be an analysis of market trends in various parts of the world. "The Club will be meeting tomorrow," said Goldoni, "and will use the wealth of information acquired during the Agrievolution forum held in Rome in May."

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PRESS RELEASE