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**Agricultural machinery. Made in Italy protagonist in Uganda**

***On March 21 and 22, a cognitive event dedicated to Italian agricultural mechanics was held in Kampala. Manufacturers presented specific technologies for the mechanisation needs of Uganda. During the event, which also saw the participation of the Italian Ambassador Mauro Massoni and the director of the ICE of Addis Ababa Riccardo Zucconi, the 46th edition of EIMA was presented.***

Italian agricultural mechanics was the focus of a cognitive and promotional event that was held on 21 and 22 March in the capital of Uganda, Kampala. Organised by the Italian Trade Agency and FederUnacoma Association of Agricultural Machinery Manufacturers, the event saw the participation of well-known brands in the agromechanical sector, who showed Ugandan farmers and technicians the most suitable technological solutions to meet their mechanisation needs. In the afternoon of March 21, at the end of the presentation, business to business meetings were held between the participating companies and the operators of the African country, which thus had the opportunity to establish a direct line with Italian companies. The following day, March 22, involved participants in several visits to some important importers and distributors of agricultural machinery, giving them an insight into the characteristics of the distribution network for the agricultural machinery sector in the country. The two-day event in Kampala was therefore an important opportunity to strengthen cooperation between Italy and the African country also in the agricultural mechanics sector. “Never before, in recent years, characterised by the global health crisis, tensions in the Red Sea and the multiplication of international conflicts, has agriculture emerged as a highly strategic sector, fundamental not only for food security but also for the management of natural resources and for the economic and political stability of each country. Cooperation in the agricultural field between Uganda and Italy – said the Italian Ambassador to Kampala Mauro Massoni opening the meeting on 21 March – is today a priority, a central theme on the political agenda of the two countries, also reiterated by Prime Minister Meloni during the Italy-Africa Summit”.

In Uganda, the demand for agricultural technologies is met mainly through the instrument of imports, which – it was pointed out by FederUnacoma Deputy Director Fabio Ricci – in 2022 increased by 20% compared to the previous year, reaching a total value of 35 million euros. An important part of these imports was guaranteed by Made in Italy. “In 2022 Italy was the eighth largest supplier of agricultural machinery to Uganda, with a market share of 4.2%, which is still far from that of its main competitors but which is still recovering positions. Between 2018 and 2021 - Fabio Ricci explained - the value of our exports increased by 126%. The incremental trend seems to be confirmed also in 2023 that, after the downturn in 2022, has seen a recovery of our export (+16.6% between January and November)". Estimates provided by research institute ExportPlanning indicate that imports of Ugandan agricultural machinery from the rest of the world are expected to continue to grow over the next four years at an average annual rate of 8%. The short and medium-term scenario therefore seems to be particularly favourable to a consolidation of trade relations between Italy and the African country. “Italian manufacturers mainly export machinery for the livestock sector (46%) and technology for sowing, transplanting and fertilising (8%). But – added Ricci – the goal is to extend and strengthen trade to other market segments.”

In this perspective, the 46th edition of EIMA International - the world exhibition of agricultural mechanics to be held in Bologna from 6 to 10 November and organised by FederUnacoma - represents an important platform for Italian-Ugandan cooperation. In the 14 sectors of specialisation and in the 5 thematic exhibitions of the event (Components, Digital, Energy, Green, Idrotech), where more than 50 thousand models of machines, equipment and components for agriculture and green care are exhibited, buyers from the African country will be able to find the most suitable solutions for every type of activity, from seeding to plant protection treatments to harvesting. Of particular of interest to Ugandan agriculture is, among others, the Idrotech exhibition where the most innovative irrigation technologies are exhibited; systems capable of optimising and making the consumption of water resources more sustainable. In addition to Ugandan farmers, technicians and operators, an official delegation is also expected at EIMA International, whose incoming, organised by ICE Agency, is being planned. "I believe that, especially in Uganda, a country in which agriculture plays a predominant role in the economy, there is a need to develop local agricultural enterprises, whether large or small, with adequate agricultural mechanisation, able - said the director of the ICE Office of Addis Ababa Riccardo Zucconi speaking at the two-day event in Kampala - to make local crops productive, ecological and quality, for the necessary food self-sufficiency and for export. I am convinced that the Bologna event can contribute to the strengthening of the agricultural economy of the African country”.

During his speech, the director of ICE in Addis Ababa (also responsible for Uganda) stressed the importance of collaboration between the Agency and FederUnacoma. “The Agency, which has always supported the international promotion of the EIMA Fair in Bologna, which since 1969 - added Zucconi - helped to promote the internationalisation of Italian companies, promoted and disseminated the excellence of the Italian agricultural mechanisation sector and helped the development of the agricultural sector in many countries”. It was also thanks to the valuable support of ICE that the last 2022 edition of the event was able to register record numbers. “Our Agency has made a fundamental contribution to this success decreed by 327,000 visitors, 57 thousand of whom are foreign. In particular, the ICE Agency encouraged and organised the participation of 400 delegates from all over the world. The Addis Ababa office alone – Director Zucconi recalled – selected and invited to EIMA International 27 operators from Ethiopia, Kenya, Tanzania, Uganda and Somalia. Also for the next November edition, the Agency will be directly involved, through its network of 70 offices worldwide, in the selection of economic operators to be invited to the Fair”.

Wide range and specialisation are not the only strengths of an event like EIMA International, which has always been characterised by high-innovation content and focus on the main issues of interest to agriculture worldwide. “In addition to the traditional exhibition of the models that have won the ‘Technical Innovation 2024’ competition, the next EIMA provides a busy calendar of meetings that – concluded the deputy director of FederUnacoma - is still being defined but that promises, as always, to be rich and interesting.” Outside the pavilions, in the outdoor areas, dynamic tests will be staged, such as the Tractor of the Year finalist tractor show, demonstrations of vehicles for bioenergy supply chains, trials of gardening and landscaping machines. One of the most anticipated innovations is the space called REAL, dedicated to robots, drones and all these highly automated systems that allow to increase production yields, improve crop sustainability, optimise the use of production inputs.

**Kampala, 22 March 2024**

[**Photos**](https://we.tl/t-qGN6TslvSH)