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**Agrilevante: a bridge between Italy and the United Arab Emirates**

***The eighth annual exhibition dedicated to technologies for use specifically in Mediterranean agriculture was presented in Dubai. 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. The Bari exhibition is an event of interest also for the United Arab Emirates market which is experiencing a prolonged growth phase***

"Italy is proving itself to be a preferential partner to bolster the agricultural development of the United Arab Emirates,” said Valerio Soldani, director of the Italian Trade Agency (ICE) Office in Dubai, opening the press conference to present Agrilevante that was held this morning in Dubai. The event was attended by Director Soldani, Fabio Ricci, Deputy Director of FederUnacoma (the Italian association of agricultural machinery manufacturers) and Federica Tugnoli, Secretary of Comagarden (the organization that represents gardening machinery and equipment manufacturers within the Federation). “In an area like the Gulf, environmental conditions impose significant challenges, and the Emirati national strategy of massive investments in agricultural development, aimed at high-innovation capacity building, offers significant opportunities for Italian technologies, which stand out for their capacity for innovation, efficiency and sustainability. Agrilevante is an ideal platform to strengthen collaboration between Italian companies and Emirati operators, enhancing an already solid commercial relationship with many goals".

Moreover, the agricultural machinery market in the United Arab Emirates is experiencing a significant and prolonged growth phase, which has continued steadily for the past four years. "In this period, sales of technologies for the primary sector have seen double-digit percentage increases, which, according to the findings of the research company Exportplanning, reached almost 35% in 2024. In just four years - explained Ricci - the value of agricultural machinery purchases has more than doubled, going from EUR 108 million in 2021 to approximately EUR 234 million in 2024". Analysts' forecasts indicate that the growth trend should continue in the short and medium term, albeit at a slower pace, but still on average of no less than 5% per year. "Currently, Italian agricultural machinery manufacturers are among the main suppliers of the country that overlooks the Persian Gulf. Last year – Ricci continued – our exports accounted for EUR 16 million, increasing the market share of Made in Italy products to 6.8%”. According to Istat, milk processing systems, seeding, transplanting and fertilizing solutions and livestock farming machinery are the main product categories of Italian companies export to the Emirates.

The market leaders are Chinese manufacturers (28%) who, however, offer machinery that is affordable but not very innovative and, therefore, not very suitable for the development needs of Emirati 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 – stated the Deputy Director of FederUnacoma – 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 United Arab Emirates 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 a high-profile international event. In addition to buyers, operators and technicians from the Mediterranean area, the Balkan and Middle Eastern regions, 120 foreign delegates representing 38 countries, including the United Arab Emirates, 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 Club of Bologna, 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 feature is that one 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 showcase represents an area of remarkable interest for Emirati operators, given the strong expansion that gardening is witnessing in that country. Over the last five years – said Tugnoli – we have in fact seen a surge in demand for high-quality gardening equipment, in the United Arab Emirates 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, the United Arab Emirates imported EUR 7 million worth of lawnmowers, an increase of 13% over 2023 and a whopping 121% compared to 2021, when imports accounted for just slightly more than EUR 3 million. “Today, Italy is the third largest supplier of gardening machinery and applications, but – concluded Tugnoli – the Emirati market offers Italian industries important growth opportunities, thanks to sectors that are rapidly expanding in the country, such as, for example, that of tourist greenery and sports fields.

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