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**Mexico and the United States, two countries at the heart of EDP**

***In addition to business meetings with foreign delegations, the internationalization activity carried out at the EDP virtual exhibition also includes a focus on the most important markets for Italian manufacturers of agricultural machinery. Focus on Mexico and the USA during the first two days of the digital exhibition.***

The internationalization activity of EIMA Digital Preview, the first virtual exhibition of agricultural machinery, organized by the Italian association of manufacturers FederUnacoma, continues. In addition to business-to-business meetings between exhibiting companies and foreign delegations from 37 countries, the manufacturers' association and ICE Agency, in collaboration with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, are organizing specific focuses on some of the most important foreign markets for agricultural machinery. On the opening day of the review, the spotlight was aimed at Mexico, with a webinar attended by the Italian ambassador, Luigi De Chiara, the director of the ICE office in Mexico City, Giovanni Luca Atena, and Fabio Ricci, deputy general manager of FederUnacoma. Fourteenth world economy and signatory of numerous free trade treaties (including the T-MEC, the so-called "NAFTA 2"), the Central American country is the ninth world producer of foodstuffs, the first for white corn, as well as the leading exporter of tomatoes and avocados. Italy and Mexico - it was underlined during the meeting - are linked by a solid tradition of commercial relations. In 2019, the total value of Italian exports (especially machinery) exceeded 5 billion euros, while exports of tractors and agricultural machinery touched 42 million euros. Despite the decline recorded in the first seven months of 2020 (-22%) - a decline mainly due to the health emergency - Mexico continues to offer Italian manufacturers many business opportunities. The country does not have a real specialization in the production of agricultural machinery, so it must resort to foreign producers to satisfy its technology needs. The interchange is also facilitated by the lack of tariff barriers with the European Union.

North America was at the centre of another "focus" organized by ICE Agency yesterday. The US market was at the centre of the meeting, which was attended by the director of ICE in Huston Antonietta Baccanari. For agricultural machinery - explained Baccanari - the United States of America is the leading nation in terms of quality of technologies, and it represents one of the reference markets in terms of sales value. In 2019 - underlined the director of the ICE in Houston - the sales of tractors and self-propelled vehicles reached 11.9 billion dollars, with a growth of 5% compared to 2018, while the equipment reached 5.1 billion (-1.8%) for a total value of 17 billion dollars. Also in 2019, the average investment in agricultural machinery exceeded $ 8,400 per farm. 2020 should see further growth. According to the data from the AEM (the US association of agricultural machinery manufacturers), between January and October 2020 sales of tractors exceeded 247 thousand units (+15% on the same period last year) while combines totalled 4,333 units (+5.5%). These are substantial increases, which matured during a period in which the health emergency has greatly affected economic activities. In these months of crisis - said Baccanari - the US market has benefited from federal aid for 37 billion dollars (+68% on 2019), which has increased the spending capacity of farms. The flywheel effect should also continue in 2021. According to the vast majority of US dealers (the sentiment of sellers represents a reliable indicator of industry trends), the value of sales should remain stable or grow further compared to 2020. Tractors, one of the strengths of the American market, are particularly highlighted, but the range of technologies required by farmers is very broad. Italian industry can leverage the demand for specific technologies for the various American production settings. Moreover, Italian manufacturers are already present in the USA with significant export volumes (with 486 million euros in 2019 alone, the United States is the third destination market for the national exports of agricultural machinery). However, leveraging the promotional campaigns of the ICE Agency, they can aim to further increase the share in this important country.

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