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**Agrilevante, the 2023 edition starts from Ciheam in Bari**

***During the press conference presenting the event, Ciheam director Maurizio Raeli stressed the strategic role of mechanisation for food safety. Bari's deputy mayor Di Sciascio highlighted the importance of the event for the entire city of Bari, while regional councillor Pentassuglia reiterated the importance of innovation for the renewal and evolution of agricultural economies. FederUnacoma president and director general Alessandro Malavolti and Simona Rapastella also spoke.***

The race towards the 2023 edition of Agrilevante starts from Bari's Ciheam - the international structure specialising in advanced agronomic training. This morning the Bari training centre hosted the press conference launching the international exhibition of machinery and technologies for Mediterranean agriculture, which will be staged at the Bari exhibition centre from 5 to 8 October. In front of the attending journalists, and in streaming connection from the countries of the Basin, the Director of Ciheam Maurizio Raeli noted not only the central role played by the institute in the development of agricultural knowledge and technology, but reiterated the importance of the partnership with FederUnacoma. "Today we are renewing, for the third time, the signing of the Memorandum of Understanding between Federunacoma and Ciheam Bari, with the aim of promoting Italian know-how in mechanisation and technologies related also to the irrigation and precision agriculture sectors in third countries, where," Raeli explained, "food safety and Italian innovation can provide opportunities for development and employment".

In this perspective, the exhibition is part of a very complex but also very promising context for the development of mechanisation. This was pointed out in his speech by the president of FederUnacoma, Alessandro Malavolti, who highlighted both the criticalities caused by the reduction in water resources and the fragmentation of land ownership, and the potential for growth in the Mediterranean agricultural economies.

The Bari exhibition was structured precisely to respond to the demand for specific technologies for all the main supply chains in the area - explained FederUnacoma General Manager Simona Rapastella - with particular reference to the grain, livestock, wine, olive oil, and above all, fruit and vegetable sectors, and to show the new technological scenarios created by the most advanced electronic and robotic applications.

An event such as Agrilevante involves not only the Fiera del Levante Authority but the entire capital city. The great Mediterranean exhibition is a great challenge not only from an organisational point of view, but also on a cultural level - said the deputy mayor of Bari Eugenio Di Sciascio - because in this historical moment, with a war on Europe's doorstep, the issue of food safety and production models takes on a new centrality.

For an agricultural sector that must constantly progress, innovation is a natural process of evolution and renewal, for which it is necessary to propose a new approach. In this perspective - regional councillor for agriculture Donato Pentassuglia said at the end of the press conference - the Agrilevante exhibition must strengthen the role of agriculture as a lever for human development and as a factor for peace and solidarity among peoples.

**Bari, 13 April 2023**