

## **PODCAST precision agriculture**

**Voice 1: Brian**

**Voice 2: Sarah**

JINGLE to open podcast

VOICE 1

You're listening to the European Parliamentary Research Service podcast on precision agriculture.

VOICE 2 (to introduce the topic)

What do you have if you apply information technology, satellite positioning and remote sensors to farm management?

VOICE 1

You have precision agriculture! A new approach to farming that allows to produce more food with less resources. Want to know more? Stay with us!

JINGLE to recognise the start of the podcast content part

VOICE 2

With a third more mouths to feed by 2050... food production will need to increase by more than 70% ! But can we do this without further damaging our environment and protecting jobs?

VOICE 1

The answer may lie in precision agriculture, which uses technology to optimize returns on inputs while reducing environmental impacts. So, how does it work?

VOICE 2

By using sensors to monitor crops or livestock, farmers can better identify their needs, and target their action to maximise the productivity of each plant and animal. For example, if the soil in one area can better retain water, crops can be planted more densely and irrigation can be less intensive.

VOICE 1

Precision farming reduces the amount of agricultural input, such as land, energy, water, fertilisers and even pesticides, making agriculture more sustainable and climate-friendly. So what are the technologies behind this new farming revolution?

VOICE 2

Next to remote sensing, which is already being used to collect data to evaluate soil and crop health, there are also automated steering systems which can take over specific tasks such as overhead turning (from the end of one row of crops to the next) or geo-mapping (to identify soil properties and nutrients' levels) ...

VOICE 1

... and let's not forget the robots! which are already assisting in tasks such as tilling, sowing and harvesting of crops.

VOICE 2

The potential is certainly huge! But let's look at some of the concrete impacts it could have on the EU's agricultural sector... MUSIC JINGLE

VOICE 1

Well, first of all, it can definitely increase food security and safety, by improving yield forecasts as well as tracking and tracing. By optimizing chemical spraying, farmers will also spend less on pesticides and fertilisers, while reducing the impact on the environment.

VOICE 2

Precision agriculture will also require farmers to learn new skills, which can boost education levels in rural levels and draw more young people into farming. Moreover, the introduction of modern farming technologies could spur the development of new services and products in rural areas, making them more attractive to citizens.

## VOICE 1

But agriculture production in Europe is extremely diverse... with different business models, production sectors, farming practices, outputs and employment rates co-existing. So there is no one-size-fits-all approach to this new technological revolution!

## VOICE 2

The challenge for European policy-makers will be to ensure that its introduction is tailored to the needs and opportunities of every member state.

## VOICE 1

What's clear is that with less farming land available and ever more mouths to feed... innovation and investment in cutting-edge technologies will be an important part of the solution, and will shape tomorrow's jobs in the agriculture sector.

## VOICE 2

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