*Press release no. 19/2021*

**Trade show landscape: EIMA immediately competitive**

***In the panorama of exhibition events, EIMA in Bologna shows very positive results, even in the edition that reopens operations after the Covid emergency. In the face of a drop in exhibitors and areas recorded for other trade show events - explains Simona Rapastella - EIMA maintains better percentages and is on track towards a rapid recovery of pre-Covid levels. Virtual exhibition platforms do not replace in-person events, but can act as effective "pre" and "post" supports.***

In the post-Covid exhibition landscape, EIMA International presents itself with excellent credentials. In a context that has seen the cancellation of hundreds of exhibition events and that even in the current recovery phase shows figures far removed from those seen in previous editions, the exhibition of agricultural machinery stands out for the high number of participating industries (1,350) and for its impact on the Bologna exhibition centre, with all its pavilions occupied as well as various external exhibition areas, for a total area of almost 100 thousand square metres net.

A comparison between the average results achieved by other trade shows and those announced for EIMA International 2021 - made by FederUnacoma general manager Simona Rapastella during the presentation press conference this afternoon in Bologna - demonstrates the excellent resilience of the agricultural machinery exhibition. "According to the data released by UFI at the beginning of September," said Rapastella, "the exhibition sector as a whole lost 73% of the exhibition areas rented in 2019 due to Covid, dropping from 106 million square metres in 2019 to just under 30 million, while revenues are down by an average of 70%; the presence of exhibitors, according to a sector analysis carried out by GRS, dropped by an average of 50%, and that of visitors has fallen sharply, with percentages of between 40 and 60%, above all due to the defection of buyers from those countries (Asian and American) for which travel restrictions are still in force". EIMA International immediately presents itself with very good credentials, since the expected drop in exhibition space does not exceed 25%, the number of exhibitors is reduced by 30%, which are premises for an edition that should also bring results that exceed expectations in terms of visitors. The closing balance of the exhibition," added Rapastella, "will also have to be considered in qualitative terms, since the post-Covid landscape is producing a selection among operators, offering events that are less crowded but more qualified for business purposes. It is precisely the travel restrictions and the complexity of some travel procedures - this emerges from the GRS surveys - that has discouraged that component of the public that is less motivated by stringent business needs, and has left the field open to a group of professionals for whose activity the trade show event is fundamental. The last salient aspect to emerge from the survey is the relationship between virtual shows and in-person events. A review of the experiences on digital platforms, and the current relaunch of in-person events, shows that traditional trade shows maintain a clearly pre-eminent role compared to virtual ones. "As EIMA, we tried to be present also in 2020 with an event developed on a virtual platform - concluded Rapastella - but there is no doubt that the physical exhibition has a clearly superior strength and attractiveness. For the future of EIMA, a mixed system is on the horizon, in which the digital platform does not replace the in-person event, but flanks it, constituting a valuable support especially in the ‘pre’ and ‘post’ exhibition”.

**Bologna, 18 October 2021**