EU: Andalucía commitment to adapting agriculture to climate change

The LIFE + ClimAgri project, with the participation of ASAJA-Seville and is led by the Spanish Association for Conservation Agriculture-Soil Living, researches on farms of Spain, Portugal, Italy and Greece with the aim of developing strategies agronomic management future field crops that contribute to climate change mitigation and adaptation of crops to weather conditions for the future.

Despite all the technological advances and all technological innovations, farmers and ranchers continue today as 10,000 years ago, the sky slopes. Rain, drought and frost are crucial to the development of any crop year. So in exercises like this, where rainfall has decreased by 70% in provinces such as Seville, farmers will also suffer a reduction in cereal harvest and sunflower over 15% with respect to last season.

The weather and climate have been very present in the XXXII Conference arable ASAJA-Seville in which presented the project LIFE + ClimAgri and analyzed the evolution of cereal and sunflower campaigns in Andalusia, among other issues .

As explained by the director of the Spanish Association of Agriculture Soil Conservation-Alive, Emilio Gonzalez, the agricultural sector is one that may be most affected by climate change, which could adversely affect crop yields. It is therefore necessary to carry out an adaptation to time and take measures to mitigate the effects of climate and their economic, social and environmental consequences, considering the important role of agriculture as a provider of food, environmental goods and services .

To this end, said Emilio Gonzalez, born ClimAgri LIFE + project, which aims to develop strategies agronomic management of field crops in the Mediterranean basin which together enable the mitigation of climate change and adaptation of crops to weather conditions both present and future, and serve for the promotion and development of environmental policies in Spain and the rest of the EU on climate change.

The scope of the project is confined to the Mediterranean basin, being one of the most vulnerable to the effects of climate in Europe, and irrigated crops, very demanding in energy consumption areas. Andalusia is the main place of development, although the project has established a total of twelve farms in Spain, Portugal, Italy and Greece, where a series of GFP selected by experts, included in a Decalogue that Gonzalez has presented will continue to farmers and particularly stressed that maintaining a vegetative cover on the floor, the minimum mechanical soil disturbance and establishing crop rotations.

The project, with a duration of 4 years and 7 months (June 2014-diciembe 2018), is led by the Spanish Association for Conservation Agriculture-Soil Living and has ASAJA-Seville, the European Federation of Agriculture Conservation Institute Andalusian Agricultural Research and Training, Fisheries and Food and the University of Cordoba as participating partners. It has a total budget of 2.24 million euros, of which 1.12 million euros are funded by the European Commission through the LIFE program.

Also, Emilio Gonzalez summarized the conclusions after four years of study field Agricarbon LIFE + project, which over four years has shown the effectiveness of sustainable systems such as conservation agriculture with great potential in reducing the concentration of CO_2 in the atmosphere. This model of agriculture is based on the total or partial reduction of soil tillage, keeping it protected with permanent vegetation cover combined with ancient techniques such as crop rotation and more innovative as precision agriculture, which it makes a more efficient use of inputs through the use of new technologies based on global positioning systems and site-specific inputs application.

Source: ASAJA-Almería