The 2018 edition consolidates DATAGRI as the reference forum in Spain for the promotion of digital transformation in the agri-food sector

The European Union will invest in "digital agricultural integration platforms" to accelerate the process of digital transformation of the sector. This was announced by the Commissioner of Agriculture and Rural Development, Phil Hogan, during the opening ceremony of # DATAGRI2018, the reference forum for the promotion of digital transformation in the agri-food sector, which on 26 and 27 November has brought together Córdoba to more than 1,600 professionals in the sector. These platforms, said the European Commissioner, will make the data accessible and allow third parties to develop applications and connect different users and applications to developers. Equipped with appropriate business models, digital agricultural platforms can, ultimately, "be instrumental in creating open digital innovation ecosystems."

For its part, the Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food, Luis Planas, stressed the important role that innovation and digitization should play as indispensable tools for agriculture of the future, which should be smarter, sustainable and competitive, to fight against climate change and contribute to the preservation of the environment and the achievement of the objectives of the 2030 Agenda. As an example, he cited the advantage of the application of technology and digitalization in the modernization of Spanish irrigation, which has managed to reduce water consumption by 16% between 2004 and 2015. In this line, the Agroclimatic Information System for Irrigation (SIAR) has been valued, which turns 20 years, providing real-time weather information for the

management of irrigation needs in every moment.

Towards the Spanish leadership in agrarian digital transformation. Regarding the position of our country in the global context, the Director of the ETSIAM of the University of Córdoba, Rosa Gallardo, highlighted several essential aspects. "The first of these would be for the development and competitive positioning of our sector, which would clearly benefit Spanish agricultural and agri-food companies.

The second, and no less important for society as a whole, this leadership would allow us to better respond to the main demands: food in the right amount and quality, fight against climate change, better water management, brake depopulation ... And Thirdly, the leadership would help us to have a better impact on politics with the aim of directing our efforts towards the real needs of our sector, "said Gallardo. Regarding the Spanish leadership, José Luis Molina, CEO of Hispatec, affirmed that being in positions of technological leadership, both in the development of technologies and in their practical application, is always positive. "Especially when we are talking about a sector as globalized as the agri-food sector. The advantages are multiple and we have the opportunity to become a technological reference worldwide, based on production and exporting realities that are already very powerful, such as fruits and vegetables, pork, olive oil or wine. Our productive reality and position in the world can lead us to be world leaders in digital technology for high-value agriculture in warm-warm or warm areas. "

In relation to the vision of the farmers, the general secretary of COAG, Miguel Blanco, said that it is not expected that the process of digital transformation in the agricultural sector will have appreciable effects in the next two or three years, but in a decade its consequences they will be very deep and, without a doubt, will affect the productivity and quality of farm products, production costs and also other variables of the production process, such as environmental impact. "In this sense, having a good starting position, a leadership, is important, but it is more important that we get to reach the vast majority of professional farmers who produce our food so that they are prepared and adapted for this intense change," he said. responsible for COAG, to which he added: "it is essential that technology be put at the service of farmers and not the other way around".

The vice-president of Cooperativas Agro-alimentarias of Spain, Juan Rafael Leal, pointed out that quantitatively, an annual growth of the digital transformation market in the agri-food sector is expected very fast. "For example, in the agricultural robotics market of 24%, in drones of 18% and in that of devices for precision agriculture of 17%. Spain should take advantage of this opportunity to create value, business and employment because our country has great advantages, as a very diverse and internationalized agricultural and livestock sector and could be a laboratory of digital technologies with great potential for transfer to other countries, "said Leal, time that stressed that cooperatives gather the basic ingredients to lead this process.