"We must act now and ask rural women what they need"

Montse Cortiñas, is vice general secretary of UPA, a position that involves making important decisions for the Spanish agrarian and livestock sector.

By Marga López, agrifood journalist

She is a woman who inspires us in AGRO Woman for the position she represents and for the forcefulness with which she defends the role of women in rural areas.

Do you think that in trade union decision-making bodies there should be more presence of women, are we well represented?

Agriculture and livestock in Spain would not be understood without the work of women. So if we are present in the workplace, we also have to be represented in union material. Of course there must be more women in the decision-making bodies and how many more, the agrarian sector in this country will be better represented. And it is that women can contribute points of view that until now have not been taken into account as they are for example the necessary development of the rural environment as a key element to avoid their depopulation.

What actions do you consider that must be carried out more urgently to encourage and support rural women's entrepreneurship?

As women, if we do not have a life project in rural areas, we leave, and if we leave, the people die. It is therefore fundamental that women see the rural environment and the agrarian / livestock sector as a place to live and a way of life, without sacrifices and with total normality. On the most urgent actions, I believe that the Spanish rural territory is very diverse and as such we must analyze its idiosyncrasies in order to be effective with these measures. There are areas where it is necessary to promote the development of innovative agriculture and to involve women in them; others where the problem is the lack of social services and we can not condemn women to live in a medium in which they have to assume the full burden of family care; we must improve transport, communications, the arrival of new technologies, ... In short, we must act now and, above all, ask women who are in rural areas what they need and why they leave.

One of your demands is that the future PAC include the gender perspective, with concrete measures that strongly support rural women. Do you think it will be a reality?

I hope so, and besides, as always happens with policies directed at women, it arises because of a real need, when the situation is already quite limited. There are problems of depopulation, not only in Spain, but also in France, so the CAP must be increasingly a rural policy: we must count on the people of this medium and women have to be present in it, with measures specific to them and to boost their life projects. Otherwise, it will be a good Law to achieve food, but not to draw the Europe we want. Therefore, I hope it goes beyond a declaration of intentions, and addresses the need for training, new technologies, that involve women, who are in contact with them to define what will be the agricultural sector of the future. And is that women are taking forward incredible projects against all odds, so with a little support and visibility, will have an unstoppable force.

The impulse to Shared Ownership is one of the demands of rural women this March 8, because it believes that after 8 years since the Law was approved, only a few hundred farms have registered in this regime, what is failing ?

I believe that communication has failed, the lack of an important publicity campaign, that this figure is known and, of course, that all administrations are involved. What can not be is that a woman will be interested in this project and the officials themselves will tell you that it is very complicated, that there is a lot of bureaucracy. That is a nonsense. We must disclose the law, make it known and

count the advantages it has, which are many.