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"The total absence of humor makes life impossible" (Sidonie Gabrielle Colette)

Technology at a glance

If there is one thing there is no doubt about, it is that innovation is the best tool for navigating today's world, which has gone from being VUCA (volatile, uncertain, complex and ambiguous) to a BANI (brittle, anxious, non-linear and incomprehensible) world. The agricultural sector is no stranger to this dynamic.

Differentiating ourselves from our competitors, connecting with and delighting consumers, generating value for the sector... is only possible through innovation. **Innovation is the way to solve problems and prepare for challenges.** The lemon and grapefruit sector has already identified those problems and challenges of the future, which is the first task.

Some examples to apply in the production process in the field are advanced sensorization technologies, mechanization of processes and robotization, artificial intelligence, use of drones and satellites. Without forgetting the application of algorithms for decision making and demand forecasting. Or blockchain applied to traceability to certify the origin and quality of citrus fruits. Gene editing or CRISPR can open up a revolutionary scenario to adapt our products to consumer tastes or circumvent the difficulties of new pests or the effects of climate change on crops. Some of these technologies may seem alien to our sector or out of our reach but this is not the case, they are already available, we just have to make the decision to use them. Besides... **let's remember that reality always surpasses fiction.**



SPANISH AGRIBUSINESS ON WAR FOOTING

Thousands of farmers from all sectors take to the streets and demonstrate in Spain demanding solutions to some endemic problems of the sector that threaten their profitability and business viability. **The sharp increase in production costs in recent months in the latest episode that shakes the patience and especially the financial resources of farmers.** The agricultural sector has made a titanic effort during the COVID-19 pandemic, functioning as an essential sector and guaranteeing food and supply to the entire population. However, it is under double pressure: firstly, rising costs and the inflationary environment. Undoubtedly, the generalized increase in costs, and in particular that due to the disproportionate rise in the price of electricity, added to that of fuels such as diesel, as well as that of other inputs necessary for the normal development of the activity (fertilizers), has as a consequence the loss of competitiveness.

But the pressure is also felt on the demand side, perceiving very low sales prices. The result is the **"sandwich effect"** that puts the whole sector in a very difficult situation, starting with the traditionally weakest link in the supply chain, which is the producer. The Spanish agri-food sector is complex and, above all, very varied, with a multitude of products and sectoral particularities. But no product is free from this situation, and neither are citrus fruits. That is the reason why the agricultural and livestock clamor is general.

Getting out of this situation is not easy; there is no recipe or magic solution. But some measures that need to be adopted have been identified. Some are the responsibility of the Spanish Government, while others are the responsibility of the EU authorities. By way of example, a range of proposals include the application of the Law on the Food Chain, the adequate control of imports of agricultural products from third countries, the implementation of a shock plan to deal with the increase in production costs, the design of a tax policy of positive discrimination with agriculture, the reduction of electricity tariffs in the agricultural sector, or more funding and commitment to support agricultural insurance.

EU agricultural policy must aim at sustainable and profitable agriculture, and it is very important to connect this policy with civil society and consumers. Not only because of the environmental effect of agriculture as a CO2 fixer or its landscape value. It is also because it is an activity that provides us with food. And **food, in addition to allowing us to live, is part of the culture and heritage of a society.**

