

Press Release No 1.

FruitCREWS' First Annual Meeting Cultivates Sustainable Water Management in Fruit Production

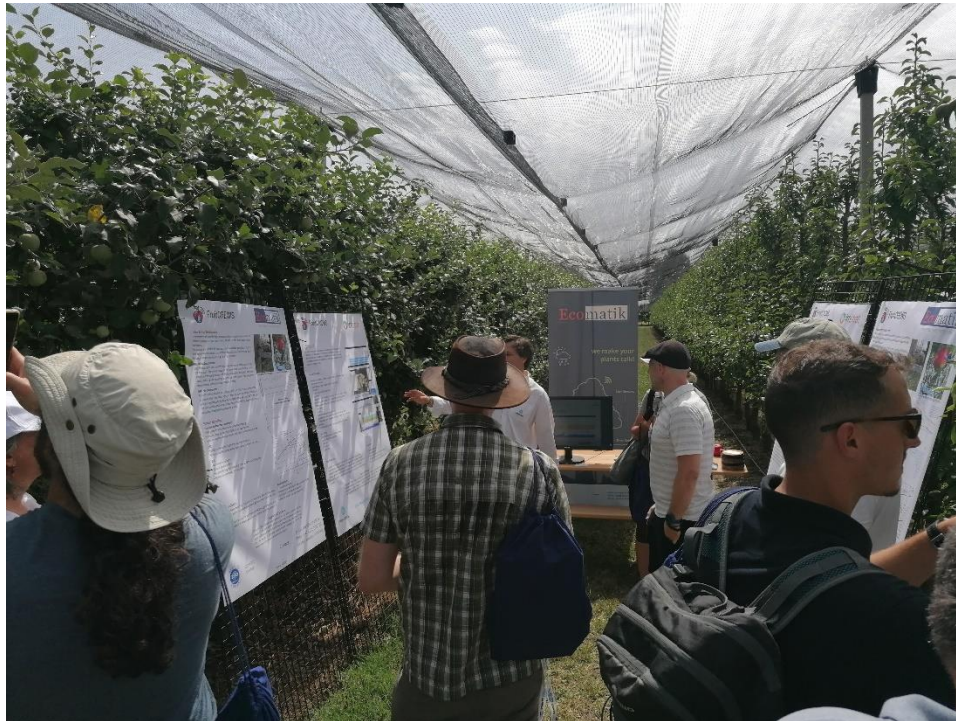
FruitCREWS, a leading initiative in sustainable fruit production, hosted its 1st annual meeting from 10th to 11th at the historic University of Bologna Residential Centre (CEUB), Bertinoro (Italy). The event brought together over 70 participants, including key stakeholders such as industry experts, researchers, and international members from 23 EU and EXTRA EU countries.



The 2-day meeting featured a dynamic blend of plenary discussions and a field trip. Working groups delved into various topics, including the assessment of physiological datasets for irrigation sensitivity, sustainable irrigation models based on physiological parameters, irrigation strategies, the advantages and constraints of decision support systems, and the best ways to generate guidelines for policymakers. Over 25 speakers presented their cases, fostering in-depth discussions and knowledge exchange.



Additionally, a workshop held on the 12th of July showcased cutting-edge sensors and decision support systems from 8 companies (IRRIFRAME, NETAFIM, DELTA-T, FLORAPULSE, TREETOSCOPE, SENTEK, HYDROSOPH/ECOMATIK, SYSMAN/NETSENS) representing different countries, facilitating a valuable exchange of ideas and best practices.



To conclude the annual meeting and workshop on a high note, participants gathered at the regional Department of Agriculture of Emiliano Romagna Region where distinguished experts such as Valtiero Mazzotti, Head of the Regional Department of Agriculture, Giuseppina Felice, Dirigente Settore Competitività delle imprese e sviluppo dell'innovazione, and Adriano Battilani ANBi e Irriganti d'Europa, among others, enriched the debate with their valuable points of view. In addition, an interesting round table was organized where researchers from the United States, Egypt, South Africa, Israel, Turkey and Portugal presented the situation of their countries in relation to the topic "Sustainable technologies and innovation for water management: current situation and solutions adopted in different fruit producing regions around the world".



According to Brunella Morandi and Virginia Hernandez Santana, Chair and vice Chair of FruitCREWS, "The success of this inaugural meeting is a testament to the global collaboration and dedication towards sustainable water management in the fruit production industry. We are thrilled with the enthusiastic participation and the impactful discussions held during the event."



The 1st annual FruitCREWS meeting not only served as a platform for knowledge sharing but also laid the groundwork for future collaborations and advancements in sustainable fruit production. It united global stakeholders in the fruit industry to address the critical challenge of sustainable water management. The event demonstrated the power of collaboration, as experts and participants from diverse backgrounds came together to share their knowledge, experiences, and cutting-edge technologies. The emphasis on physiological datasets and models reinforced the significance of data-driven decision-making for effective irrigation strategies, ensuring that water resources are used efficiently. FruitCREWS also intends to advocate for sustainable water management practices through engagement with policymakers, influencing regulations, and promoting incentives for adopting sustainable water use techniques. The showcased sensors and decision support systems highlighted the role of innovative technology in precision irrigation, enabling farmers to optimize water usage and minimize environmental impacts. With collaboration, FruitCREWS remains at the forefront of driving transformative change in the fruit industry's approach to water management.

Editor notes

Short Description: This Action aims at understanding the physiological behaviour of fruit tree crops in response to drought stress, in different environments, and identifying the best tools to monitor plant water status in real time while allowing growers to precisely schedule irrigation through the adoption of new technologies. Activities will focus on 1) identifying the most useful physiological parameters to quantify drought stress using cost-effective and user-friendly sensor tools; 2) comparing and assessing the performance of existing models to quantify plant water needs under drought, for possible implementation in decision support systems (DSSs); 3) defining the most effective (deficit) irrigation strategies for different crops and environments and 4) identifying gaps for improving existing DSSs based on the knowledge generated by the network, while taking actions to facilitate their diffusion among stakeholders and adoption by end-users.

Starting Date: October 2022
Duration: Duration: 48 months

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