

Continental Survey Shows: Farmers Want A Sustainable Transformation



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Study of farmers in five countries on four continents: Farmers deal with the consequences of climate change every day

- Sustainability is not only seen as a key success factor for their own business, but is also deeply rooted in their personal convictions

- Mario Branco, Head of Off-Highway at Continental:

Farmers have the right attitude towards sustainable change. It is the task of politics and the economy to facilitate and support this change

Hanover, Germany, February 5, 2024. Farmers want to work on sustainable farms and are committed to using resource-saving solutions. These are the findings of the “Agriculture in Transition” study conducted by Continental together with the market research institute Innofact AG in the fall of 2023. 503 farmers from five countries were asked about their daily work, their concerns and challenges. The first results of the study were published at Agritechnica 2023. An analysis of the overall results shows that farmers around the world are not only open to sustainable change but consider it to be the most important task of all.

Climate impacts affect farmers' daily work

Respondents rank environmentally friendly agriculture as the number one factor that will determine the medium-term success of their business, ahead of safety and digitalization. That farmers are concerned about the effects of climate change is hardly surprising, given the accelerating pace of global climate change. However, the fact that almost two-thirds of respondents (around 63 percent) experience climate change and its effects, such as changes in weather and environmental conditions, on a daily basis illustrates the urgent

need for action. Issues that are only indirectly related to climate change are also a pressing concern. For example, more than two-thirds of the farmers surveyed (around 69 percent) consider soil quality – a critical factor not only for sustainable agriculture, but also for the economic success of a farm – to be essential to their daily work.

“We see the remarkably high level of value farmers place on sustainability in our study as a call to action. It is not enough to simply respond to farmers' demand. As a technology company, we want to lead the way. By actively developing and delivering innovative and environmentally friendly technologies. It is our responsibility to equip farmers with the solutions and knowledge they need to manage this change. Through the development of sustainable and advanced technologies, we can help lead agriculture into a future where environmental sustainability and economic profitability go hand in hand,” says Mario Branco, Head of Off-Highway at Continental.

Farmers have a positive attitude towards sustainability

The study shows that farmers are ready to embrace change. The key finding is that this is driven by a personal interest: around eight out of ten farmers (79 percent) consider it important to work for a farm that is committed to the environment and proactively addresses the issue of sustainability. For almost nine out of ten farmers (around 87 percent), it is important that the machinery and equipment used on the farm contribute to sustainability.

But farmers are also moving from attitude to action: the majority of farmers are committed to managing their farmland in an environmentally responsible way. Around 78 percent of farmers use more sustainable alternatives to conventional pesticides. They are also motivated to make their use of machinery more sustainable and environmentally friendly. 82 percent of farmers say it is important to use energy-efficient technologies and agricultural machinery, such as vehicles with sustainable drive systems or particularly lightweight machinery. Also important in this context is the predictive maintenance of the machinery used, which one in two farmers (around 50 percent) considers important. The environmentally friendly use of agricultural machinery is also very popular, with around 53 percent of farmers giving it high priority.

Technology manufacturers under obligation

Despite these ambitions, the sustainable transformation of agriculture is still too often stalled and needs the support of technology manufacturers. This is also the conclusion of the Continental study. More than one in three farmers (around 37 percent) would like to see a focus on upgrading existing machinery to use more environmentally friendly technologies, while avoiding expensive new purchases.

Around 34 percent of respondents stress the need for more sustainable technologies. Durability of equipment is the most important issue for about 62 percent of farmers. This underlines farmers' efforts to use resources efficiently and sustainably. When it comes to new investments, the environmental impact of the equipment used also plays a key role. 35 percent of the decision-makers surveyed take this factor into account when planning their investments.

Farmers around the world are facing increasing challenges: growing demand for food, increasing regulations, and visible effects of climate change. In addition to politicians, who can set the framework conditions, it is also up to manufacturers to meet these demands with durable and environmentally friendly technologies,

Media Spokesperson Smart Mobility

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