

Press Release

Topic: Digitization
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How can digital applications support farmers

Digitization: The focus must be on working conditions of farmers and time saving

- **Which issues do farmers have to address and in which areas can digital solutions help**
- **What do farmers expect from digitization: mobility, automated documentation, meet cross compliance obligations, visual evaluations**
- **Broad range of applications**
- **Compatibility of different applications is difficult**
- **Interfaces offer opportunities to network data and provide cross-segmental manufacturer-independent interoperability: less data entry and better database**

Smart farming, farming 4.0, digital farming. The issue of digitization is a matter of intense debate in the agricultural industry and in politics. But alongside all these buzzwords farmers are wondering: What is the advantage of digitization and how can each individual farmer benefit? How can digitization make the work of farmers easier and better?

Various very different digital programs for different operational management aspects are available. There are solutions for individual areas, i.e. for biogas plants, mere accounting programs, applications for managing animal populations or programs using satellite data for the application of fertilizers. Additionally, a number of farm management information systems (FMIS) are available that aim at digitizing the entire operational management.

In the context of digital solutions the focus should be on challenges and working conditions of farmers and how to solve these problems digitally. The topics: fulfilment of conditions and documentation are at the top of the list

- Meeting cross compliance obligations and other requirements
- Complete and time-efficient documentation directly during or after the operation with the lowest amount of time and effort possible
- Make reliable decisions on high, regular investments on the basis of an abundant data pool
- Planning reliability when it comes to regulatory requirements and if necessary, information on compliance issues
- Transparent settlement of contract work and service providers
- Generation change (transmission of data, know-how and information)

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With regard to many of these aspects digitization is able to make the work of farmers more easy and efficient. User surveys of 365FarmNet show that above all farmers require four digitization functions:

- Automated documentation
- Data entry and information by mobile device
- Organizing fertilizer ordinance and cross compliance
- Visualizing evaluations

Digitization and technical progress open up a number of opportunities to farmers. Farmers are open to modern innovations and have recognized the potential and sphere of action. However, the wide range of options and applications are not always favorable for individual digital development, especially when users find it difficult to distinguish between helpful and unnecessary offers for their requirements. But there are also many other obstacles and concerns when entering into the digital age, for example:

- Digital applications are complicated
- Documentation consisting of piles of paper is sufficient
- Data collection & processing are time-consuming
- Digitization is expensive
- Data from different farms are generated in varying formats and from various machine manufacturers
- Individual applications are not compatible with each other
- Many different interfaces that must be standardized.

But not all of these concerns are justified and some solutions already exist. Along with technical progress – many activities such as banking, procurement, price comparisons, research etc. are carried out digitally now – digital expertise of the population has improved as well as the operability of programs. This applies particularly to importing data (such as field boundaries from agricultural applications) and therefore starting work immediately is becoming easier. There are programs that are able to record data through various channels and provide an automated documentation. Examples include technologies such as ISOBUS, beacon systems, Apps or interfaces. Obstacles for instance reading data from different sources are continually removed by means of EU-wide and global initiatives.

Also cost-efficient programs are available that enable users to try out digital possibilities by means of transparent pricing models and runtime models adopting a playful and low-risk approach. Clever and uniform interfaces ensure that data recorded once can be networked and used in various cross-segmental applications. For example, a properly maintained cultivation

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and variety planning can be the basis for an application in the field of fertilization planning, harvest planning as well as a marketing tool. Due to the graphical representation of data – i.e. analyzing machine times or biomass density in satellite images – some smart decisions regarding investments and measures can be made.

For farmers it is worthwhile to analyze their own requirements and matching them with offers of various applications. 365FarmNet provides farmers with a tool making their work better, safer and more time-effective. Therefore, the platform focuses on essential requirements and major challenges particularly with regard to a complete documentation and meeting requirements. Only when these day-to-day challenges are mastered digitally – better and more quickly compared to previous methods - farmers will look into further digitization possibilities.

For more information on 365FarmNet please refer to: www.365farmnet.com

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