

## **"GROWER OF THE YEAR 2013": THE PRESTIGIOUS UK AWARD GOES TO TWO FARMERS WHO HAVE CHOSEN VALAGRO TECHNOLOGY AND PRODUCTS**

### **Grower of the Year Awards 2013**

Thanks to its use of Valagro group technology and products, the British farm F&T Schembri has won this year's prestigious "Grower of the Year 2013" award in no fewer than two categories, "vegetables (salads)" and "fruit and vegetables (edibles)" – the latter being the most important award of the entire category. This recognition, which rewards the best operators in the United Kingdom's fruit and vegetable industry, is awarded to companies and professionals in the agricultural sector for the important results achieved in the past 18 months in terms of customer satisfaction, innovation, cost containment, the use of innovative technologies, variety and the quality of production, etc.

For the judges of the award, established in Britain by *Horticulture Week*, the British reference magazine for the agricultural sector, in association with the Asda supermarket chain and the National Farmers' Union, Tino and Filippo Schembri have shown themselves to be at the forefront of managing their business. In addition to the modernisation of the greenhouse to improve the energy efficiency and air-conditioning of their nursery, their resourcefulness in experimenting with new Valagro technologies and products for the development and care of plants was also rewarded.

Find out more at:

<http://www.groweroftheyear.co.uk/2013-results>

### **Research & Development in Valagro: Geapower technology**

The Valagro Group is constantly involved in research and development activities, drawing on international collaborations with leading scientific institutions and universities, and by investing more than 4% of its turnover every year, a figure in excess of €4 million.

To satisfy the nutritional needs of different crops throughout the world and pursue the goal of minimum environmental impact: with these objectives, Valagro has always invested in research and development, creating highly innovative processes and products. The best ideas resulting from Valagro's research become prototypes, are formulated in the laboratory and tested through careful experimentation and stringent field testing at many different latitudes and in very diverse environmental conditions.

Thanks to the agronomic know-how acquired in 30 years of experience, Valagro's research has created an innovative system of technologies, namely [Geapower](#), which is capable of enhancing natural plant growth.

Raw vegetable materials of excellence are selected for identifying and extracting natural active ingredients, which are then skilfully combined in specific products for crop nutrition. The use of selective surveys and cutting-edge technologies, combined with the responsible and targeted application of genomics, proteomics and phenomics, make the development of innovative solutions for plant growth processes of different crops possible.

Find out more at: [http://www.valagro.com/it/corporate/chi-siamo/rd\\_ricerca\\_e\\_sviluppo](http://www.valagro.com/it/corporate/chi-siamo/rd_ricerca_e_sviluppo)

### **The Valagro Group: a leader rooted in Italy**

Valagro, based in Atessa, in the province of Chieti, is an international leader in the production and marketing of fertilisers with low environmental impact. The Group, which achieved a turnover of €



87 million in 2011, employs a total of 330 people, of these 190 work in Italy and 140 in its 11 branches around the world. In addition to its production site in Atessa, the company also operates four other facilities, three in Norway and one in France.

The steady growth of the company has led to a significant diversification of the business, which today is divided into four major areas: Farm, for agriculture (with the offer of Biostimulants, Micronutrients and Fertirrigants); Turf and Ornamentals, for lawns and ornamental plants; Garden, for gardening and Industrials, for industrial sales to companies operating in the fertiliser, cosmetics, food and feed sectors.

For more information: <http://www.valagro.com/it/corporate/chi-siamo/benvenuti-in-valagro>

### **The Valagro Group's core business: biostimulants**

Agricultural biostimulants include different formulations of substances that are applied to plants or soil to adjust and improve the physiological processes of crops, thus rendering them more efficient. Compared to nutrients, they act on the physiology of plants through different channels, improving their vigour, yield and quality, as well as contributing to the conservation of the land after farming. Increasingly used in agricultural production worldwide, biostimulants can contribute effectively to overcoming the challenge posed by the increasing demand for food from a constantly growing world population. If, initially, biostimulants were used in the main in organic farming and for horticultural and fruit crops with the highest added value, today they also play an increasingly important role in traditional agriculture, to complement fertilisers and pesticides as well as agronomic practices in general. They are in fact perfectly compatible with the most advanced farming techniques that characterise integrated crop management (ICM), which is the cornerstone of sustainable agriculture.

The value of the biostimulants market in Italy is €35 million; in the European Union, however, it is estimated to be around €500 million, with an annual growth of more than 10% and average annual investments in research and development of around 6% of turnover. At a global level, the figure is around €650 million.

For more information about bio-stimulants and their market in Europe:

<http://www.biostimulants.eu/about/what-are-biostimulants/>

For more information:

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