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Veneto launches pilot project using drones and artificial intelligence to modernize agricultural management

New technology aims to improve disaster response, reduce bureaucracy, and speed up aid for farmers in the region

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In Veneto, a new pilot project is underway that aims to modernize agricultural management through the use of drones and artificial intelligence. The initiative, launched by Agea and Avepa—the regional agency responsible for agricultural payments—has the support of the Joint Research Center of the European Commission. The project introduces advanced drone technology to monitor crops, with the goal of improving efficiency in managing catastrophic events and streamlining administrative processes for farmers.

The announcement came from Luca Zaia, president of the Veneto Region, who emphasized the need for less bureaucracy and faster aid for farmers. According to Zaia, the collaboration between Agea and Avepa represents a significant step forward for Italian agriculture. The project uses drones equipped with high-resolution cameras and multispectral sensors to create 3D reconstructions of cultivated areas. These drones can capture images from multiple angles, allowing them to cover specific zones that are often inaccessible to satellites.

This technological upgrade is expected to enhance the accuracy of crop monitoring and damage assessment. By integrating artificial intelligence, the system can precisely map and quantify damage caused by catastrophic events such as floods or hailstorms. This allows for more objective evaluations and fairer compensation for affected farmers. The use of drones also significantly reduces operational times compared to traditional methods, which often rely on manual inspections or satellite data that may not provide sufficient detail.

The project addresses long-standing concerns among farmers about complex administrative procedures and delays in receiving financial support after disasters. With automated data collection and analysis, the new system aims to simplify aid applications and speed up fund disbursement. Zaia highlighted that this innovation will reduce the administrative burden on farmers, making it easier for them to access support when needed.

The pilot phase is currently being implemented across selected agricultural areas in Veneto. If successful, it could serve as a model for other regions in Italy and potentially across Europe. The integration of cutting-edge technology into traditional farming

practices reflects a broader trend toward digital transformation in agriculture, where efficiency and sustainability are increasingly prioritized.

Officials from Agea and Avepa have expressed optimism about the potential impact of the project. They believe that combining drone surveillance with artificial intelligence will not only improve disaster response but also contribute to better overall management of agricultural resources. The initiative is part of a wider effort to ensure that Italian agriculture remains competitive while maintaining its commitment to quality.

As the project moves forward, local authorities will monitor its effectiveness in reducing bureaucracy and expediting aid delivery. Farmers participating in the pilot are expected to be among the first to benefit from these changes, gaining access to a faster, more reliable support system during times of crisis. The hope is that this approach will set a new standard for agricultural management in Italy, balancing innovation with respect for traditional practices.