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Bayer Launches Regenerative Agriculture Project to Transform Italian Winemaking

Initiative partners with leading wineries to boost sustainability, restore biodiversity, and help vineyards adapt to climate change

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Bayer hosted the “Regenerate to Grow” event today at the San Patrignano Auditorium in northern Italy, near Rimini, to present its ongoing regenerative agriculture project focused on the winemaking industry. The initiative aims to promote a model of

viticulture that balances innovation, environmental protection, and the socioeconomic well-being of farmers and local communities. Bayer’s approach is designed to help the sector adapt to climate change, evolving plant diseases, regulatory pressures, and increasing market demand for sustainable production.

The event brought together agricultural companies and partners who are working with Bayer to accelerate the adoption of regenerative practices in vineyards. The first year of the project, which began with the 2025 viticultural campaign, was reviewed during the meeting. Participants also discussed objectives for 2026 as the wine industry faces mounting challenges from shifting weather patterns, new pathogens and pests, altered vine growth cycles, and stricter regulations.

Bayer’s “Regenerate to Grow” project involves partner wineries in Piedmont, Tuscany, and Veneto. The program integrates advanced agronomic techniques, innovative crop protection products, and digital decision support systems. These efforts are supported by biodiversity monitoring and communication campaigns aimed at spreading knowledge throughout the supply chain.

Greta Pignata, Communications & Regenerative Agriculture Expert at Bayer Crop Science Italia, explained that regenerative agriculture for Bayer means achieving measurable results: higher yields and productivity, improved well-being for farmers and communities, healthier soils, better adaptation to climate change, restored biodiversity, and water conservation. The project is structured around these goals.

Representatives from four leading Italian wineries—San Felice, Marcello del Majno, Fontanafredda, and Montaribaldi—shared their experiences from 2025. They described how regenerative practices are being implemented in their vineyards through permanent grass cover between vines, reduced tillage to prevent soil compaction, preservation of wooded areas on estates, use of sustainable crop protection methods, digital forecasting tools for disease management, and a focus on community engagement.

Carlo De Biasi, General Manager of San Felice in Tuscany, highlighted his company’s long-standing commitment to restoring soil fertility and protecting biodiversity. He said that “Regenerate to Grow” has provided a concrete path for measuring progress in

these areas.

Alberto Fregonese, Technical Director at Marcello del Majno in Piedmont, emphasized the importance of local community ties. He noted that integrating innovative crop protection products with digital tools has helped increase biodiversity while maintaining grape quality and improving economic efficiency.

Alberto Grasso of Casa Emanuele di Mirafiore - Fontanafredda explained that using pheromone-based pest control for Lobesia botrana has maintained production quality while reducing soil disturbance and water use for insecticide treatments. This approach supports beneficial insects and brings tangible benefits for both soil health and the environment.

Sergio Belmonte from Montaribaldi described how digital disease monitoring has improved downy mildew management amid climate change. Optimizing treatments has reduced environmental impacts and unnecessary vineyard interventions while lowering costs and boosting efficiency.

The event also focused on biodiversity. Since 2025, Bayer Crop Science has partnered with 3Bee—a nature technology company specializing in biodiversity measurement—to monitor pollinators using eight IoT Spectrum sensors across the four participating wineries. These non-invasive bioacoustic devices collect satellite data and environmental parameters to guide site-specific Biodiversity Action Plans. Early results show that all participating vineyards have better ecological conditions than market benchmarks.

Daniele Valiante of 3Bee said that monitoring local biodiversity helps protect both the land’s integrity and the unique identity of wines produced there. He stressed that scientific measurement is essential as agriculture faces climate change and habitat loss.

Looking ahead to 2026, Bayer plans to expand “Regenerate to Grow” to more wineries interested in regenerative viticulture. The company will strengthen strategies for managing major vine threats using regenerative principles tied to specific performance indicators (KPIs) and will increase training activities. The goal is to make regenerative viticulture an accessible model that can be measured and replicated on a larger scale

while supporting natural resource protection and competitiveness throughout the wine supply chain.