

Editorial

Taking stock to look ahead

Around 2017, CREA and SIDEA embarked on the relaunch of REA, redefining its place within the context of Italian academic publishing while simultaneously strengthening its international profile. From the outset, both the objectives and the strategic direction of this process were clearly defined. A primary goal was to secure a distinctive position among the many journals, both established and newly founded, that had chosen to align themselves fully with the standards and practices of contemporary international scientific publishing. While firmly situated within this broader scholarly framework – also thanks to the composition of its successive Editorial Boards and International Scientific Committees – the journal has consistently preserved a dedicated space for an informed national debate on the implementation of European, national, and local policies, always grounded in rigorous scientific standards.

The expansion of the International Scientific Committee to include scholars from new countries and disciplines in dialogue with agricultural economics and policy analysis has further strengthened the journal's international standing. Such development has enabled a younger generation of researchers, trained in diverse academic and geographical contexts, to engage with a publication capable of ensuring both high scientific quality and broad dissemination of research findings. At the same time, the journal has deliberately sought to provide increasing visibility to the work of early-career scholars, encouraging the circulation of new ideas, methodological innovations, and emerging research perspectives within our academic community.

Thanks also to the fruitful collaboration with SIDEA working groups and the wide range of research activities promoted by CREA, the journal has progressively embraced new themes and interdisciplinary approaches. Its scope has expanded to include food systems and food policies, territorial and local development policies, environmental sustainability and climate change, as well as the evolving relationships among agri-food systems, food production and consumption, urban contexts, and rural areas. These are only a few examples

of the issues that have broadened the journal's scope and that reflect the growing complexity of the challenges facing agricultural economics and the analysis of agricultural and rural policies today.

Above all, REA has become a meeting point between agricultural economics and the neighbouring fields of knowledge that broaden its horizons and enrich its analytical perspectives. Equally important, and increasingly distinctive of the journal's identity, has been the central role assigned to the involvement of stakeholders within the Italian and European agri-food systems. The journal has consistently promoted open and constructive dialogue with practitioners, institutions, and interest groups. This dimension is essential for a journal that seeks to make policy analysis, and the territorial impacts of policy, one of the defining features of its scientific identity.

All these ambitions are reflected in the journal's current title, the *Italian Review of Agricultural Economics* (REA), which preserves a connection with its distinguished history – dating back to 1945 – while projecting it toward a new phase characterised by openness to emerging and highly relevant issues, with particular attention to the national academic and public debate. It is along this deeply rooted and strongly identity-driven path that the outgoing Editorial Board has worked, and to its members we extend our sincere gratitude for the commitment, expertise, and sense of responsibility they have shown in serving both the journal and its wider scientific and professional community.

With this issue, the new Editorial Board inherits not merely the legacy of the past, but also a vivid responsibility toward the future of the journal. This awareness inspires a renewed commitment to exploring new topics, perspectives, interlocutors, and scientific collaborations capable of further enriching the journal's outlook and its role within an ever-evolving contemporary debate. Building upon the quality standards already achieved, we also hope to secure the journal's inclusion in the Web of Science, thereby strengthening REA's position among the leading journals in agricultural economics and agri-

cultural policy, while at the same time fostering dialogue with other disciplinary fields with which engagement is both necessary and desirable.

We hope that the journal will continue to serve as a meeting place for the national and international scientific community, hosting contributions developed within robust scholarly contexts: European research projects, SIDEA working groups and other relevant scientific associations, as well as the many scientific and institutional initiatives promoted by CREA. This ongoing endeavour is made possible by the support of CREA and SIDEA, by the commitment and continued closeness of our publisher and support staff, and by the contributions of researchers, institutions, professionals, and stakeholders to whom the journal is addressed and upon whom the Editorial Board relies in pursuing its mission with rigour and dedication: to disseminate knowledge, foster critical debate, and preserve while renewing a scientific tradition placed at the service of society.

The Editorial Board

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