

Belgian/Dutch Focus Group Interview to get insights into the future implementation of the WeLASER technique

Belgian/Dutch Focus Group Interview (FGI) Workshop

The FGI workshop was held on the 10th of February 2022 gathering 13 participants from Belgium and the Netherlands including farmers, representatives of farmers associations, agricultural machinery dealers, consultants, and researchers. Valuable information for the successful implementation of the WeLASER technique was obtained during the workshop. After the focus group discussion, a SWOT analysis was conducted in order to identify the main factors that impact the implementation of the WeLASER technique.

Main findings of discussion:

- The current main problems related to weed control are (1) herbicide resistancy, (2) difficulties with in-row weeding when using conventional mechanical weeding methods (3) very labour-intensive methods, and (4) stricter policies regarding the use of chemicals.
- In order for farmers to implement innovative weeding technologies, the technology should be profitable, user-friendly and have sufficient capacity.



Practical conclusions

- The WeLASER technique has many opportunities and possibly a huge market potential due to increasingly stricter policies regarding chemicals, the rising demand for agri-food systems to become more sustainable and the potential to improve the public image of agriculture.
- Cost-effectiveness, user-friendliness, sufficient capacity, and the possibility of multifunctional usage are crucial factors for the future implementation of the WeLASER technique.

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