

Demonstration of the WeLASER system in Denmark

Field day

On August 18, 2023, the WeLASER autonomous vehicle equipped with the laser system was demonstrated at the research facility Højbakkegaard, Taastrup, belonging to the University of Copenhagen. Stakeholders from all over Denmark were invited to the demonstration. About 45 people from seed and horticultural industries, farm advisory services, agricultural innovators, farmers, and researchers finally attended the event.

Program

The host, Associate Prof. Christian Andreasen, welcomed the guests at the auditorium and presented the program. Then the project coordinator gave an overview of the WeLASER project. Afterward, the attendees went to the field, where the WP5 leader introduced what the audience would see. The autonomous vehicle started controlling the weeds in the sugar beet and maize fields. The guests could walk out in the field to see how the laser beam has hit and damaged the weeds. Much discussion was going on in the area between the WeLASER staff and stakeholders. After the demonstration, the University of Bologna presented the IoT equipment developed to support farmers in collecting field data and decision-making concerning laser weeding. WeLASER staff and stakeholders returned to the auditorium to discuss the concept and future work.



Conclusion

Attendees were very interested in knowing how the WeLASER group would follow up on the activities with field experiments and commercialization of the autonomous vehicle after the project ended. People were very optimistic about the project, and the WeLASER staff were encouraged by many stakeholders to continue the research and get the laser robot commercialized as soon as possible due to the great need to replace herbicides with new eco-friendly weed control methods.

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Date: August 2023

