



# Digital AgriTech

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## Excerpts from an interview with **Mateusz Ciasnocha** | Farmer and Chief Executive Officer | European Carbon Farmers

### What is the future of AgTech by 2050?

The future of AgTech by 2050 is very much in the making as we speak and all of you are invited to shape it.

The future in which I would like us to arrive in by 2050 and ideally much sooner is two-folded. Firstly, I would like us to live in a net-zero emissions world with ambitions for drawback, which will put us in the negative emissions world. Secondly, I would like us to move towards and by 2050 (and ideally much sooner) embrace regenerative agriculture as the model for food production globally. I see AgTech as one of the key enablers supporting those ambitions. Specifically, I hope stark differences between regions of the world in the difficulties in food production and access will be eliminated by 2050. Technology by itself will not get us there completely, but it does play a key role in enabling this process.

### What steps need to be taken to encourage future generations in agriculture business? If not, what are the drawbacks?

First and foremost, agriculture has to be marketed and presented as a viable career option for not only making a living but also having a meaningful career with positive local and global impact. Farmers are heroes and it is up to the industry, as well as policymakers to get this message across to the youth.

Simultaneously, strategic assessments of what support mechanisms are needed for providing entry points for youth into the agricultural industry. From my experience, the greatest challenge is access to land, as this is highly capital intensive. I already see a lot of innovation in this area and I am expecting to see much, much more happening in the near future.

### What are the greatest benefits and risks of embracing advanced technologies on farming?

If advanced technologies are embraced after economic analysis and are rooted in running the farm as a business, I see no immediate major risks in embracing advanced technologies in farming. Maybe one exception here is the risk that technology providers will get too big to move away from using their services.

However, if embracing a certain technology happens because "our neighbours are doing this", those scenarios rarely end well.

### What it takes to adapt to precision farming from current agriculture practices?

From my perspective precision farming is a subset and an enabler of the best agricultural practices. In farming, the focus should always be on understanding biological processes and analysing those using economic tools, so that individual farms are both profitable and operated in an environmentally regenerative way. Technology, including precision farming, is only an enabler and/or catalyst in this never-ending process of being a good farmer.

### With the unprecedented climate change, what can farmers do now to preserve health and build resilience in the agriculture ecosystem?

The answer to this question is really simple and it is: embrace regenerative agriculture practices and carbon-farming practices in particular. Two key practices to start with are: keeping ground covered all-year-round and move towards minimum-tillage practices. Agriculture starts, revolves and ends with soil health. Soil is the key - and really the only - asset of a farmer. In the world of climate change taking care of your soil, as it always was, is the best mitigation and preparation strategy of any farmer.