

Special Issue

Advances in Automation and Controls of Agri-Food Systems

Message from the Guest Editors

The agri-food sector is undergoing a huge change in automation and control, increasingly bridging the technological gap compared to other sectors, such as the manufacturing industry, which are typically leading. This is due to the enormous effort that research has and is continuing to make to identify new technologies that can be applied in contexts that often appear to be complex and uncontrolled. The opposite is often true. The environments in which we operate are often unstructured and subject to significant variability both in space and time. Even the food processing industry, which operates in more controlled environments, suffers the difficulty of working with products that are never uniform in shape, color, and composition, unlike mechanical or electronic products. To this end, it is necessary to continue to focus on designing, testing, and validating new devices and models for optimized and sustainable management of the numerous processes involved in the agri-food sector. Some applications involve using technologies for site-specific crop management, machine vision systems for outdoor and indoor robots, and new management strategies for resource use and energy efficiency.

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As the world of science becomes ever more specialized, researchers may lose themselves in the deep forest of the ever increasing number of subfields being created. This open access journal *Applied Sciences* has been started to link these subfields, so researchers can cut through the forest and see the surrounding, or quite distant fields and subfields to help develop his/her own research even further with the aid of this multi-dimensional network.

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