

ANVE brings Italy's nursery sector together to focus on generational renewal



AIPH member ANVE has brought Italy's nursery sector together for a timely discussion on one of the defining questions facing family horticultural businesses: how to prepare the next generation while protecting continuity, knowledge and enterprise value.

The XVIII Giornata Nazionale del Vivaismo Mediterraneo— the 18th National Day of Mediterranean Nursery Production — was held on 30 May 2026 in Monopoli, Puglia. Organised by ANVE – Associazione Nazionale Vivaisti Esportatori – in collaboration with Vivai Capitanio and promoted by Myplant & Garden, the event brought together entrepreneurs, growers, technicians, professionals, students and young operators from across Italy.

A forum for a shared challenge



Moreno Pinto, newly elected President of ANVE, made his first public appearance in the role at the XVIII Giornata Nazionale del Vivaismo Mediterraneo, where Italy's nursery sector gathered to discuss generational renewal.

Its strong attendance showed that generational renewal is resonating strongly with Italian nursery businesses. The question is not only who inherits a company, but also how knowledge is passed on, how leadership is shared, and how businesses remain strong enough to keep investing, adapting, and employing people into the future.

By choosing this theme, ANVE created a forum for a conversation that many family businesses recognise but do not always have the space to address openly. The event considered succession both as a practical business process and as a human and cultural transition involving trust, responsibility, identity, and long-term planning.

Speakers explored the legal, fiscal and corporate dimensions of generational transition, including the tools available to protect family and business assets. Particular attention was given to the realities of agricultural and nursery enterprises, where land, production infrastructure, specialist knowledge and family ownership are often closely connected.

The programme also gave young entrepreneurs the opportunity to speak directly about their experience of entering, returning to or taking greater responsibility within family businesses. Their reflections showed that renewal rarely happens in a single moment. It is built through gradual learning, experience outside the company, shared decision-making and the confidence to move from one generation's leadership style to another.

The event also marked the first public appearance of newly elected ANVE President Moreno Pinto, who used the occasion to thank his predecessor, Luigi Pagliani, as well as the ANVE Board of Directors.

This balance between heritage and future was especially fitting at Vivai Capitanio, a fifth-generation nursery business rooted in Puglia's horticultural landscape. The setting gave the discussion added authenticity: generational transition was not treated as an abstract policy theme but as a lived reality for many of the companies represented in the room.

Supporting young horticultural talent



Piergiorgio Catalfamo of the University of Perugia and Igor Cessario of the University of Turin received the Stefano Capitanio Prize 2026, recognising young research talent contributing to the future of ornamental horticulture.

The event also celebrated young talent through the Stefano Capitanio Prize 2026, which recognises research, innovation and the contribution of new generations to ornamental horticulture. The prize carries family significance for Vivai Capitanio while also looking outward to the wider sector, motivating students and young researchers whose work can support the future of nursery production and urban greening.

In the Master's Degree category, Piergiorgio Catalfamo of the University of Perugia was recognised for his thesis, *"Risk Management in the Nursery Sector"*. His work examined risk management, insurance tools, and business resilience in the nursery sector, with particular attention to the challenges posed by climate change.

In the Bachelor's Degree category, Igor Cessario of the University of Turin was recognised for his thesis on *"The Role of green corridors as nature-based solutions in urban ecosystems"*. His research explored the contribution of green infrastructure to more sustainable contemporary cities.

A view of Italian horticulture led by ANVE



Leonardo Capitanio, host of the Monopoli event and a fifth-generation nurseryman at Vivai Capitanio, speaks during the Stefano Capitanio Prize session at the XVIII Giornata Nazionale del Vivaismo Mediterraneo.

The day concluded with the first official meeting of ANVE Lab, a project for young professionals under 40. Created to give younger people in the sector space a place to connect, exchange ideas, and develop their roles in the industry, ANVE Lab focused on innovation, skills, leadership, and the future of work.

Closing the Monopoli event, Leonardo Capitanio spoke as a host, nurseryman, and business leader, reflecting that the generational transition has much in common with a grower's work: preparing the roots, supporting growth, and investing patiently in the future. His message captured the broader lesson of the day: the future of horticulture depends not only on transferring assets but also on creating the conditions for strong businesses, skilled people, and new leadership to flourish.

The event is a strong example of how national grower associations can support their members beyond representation alone. By bringing together business owners, advisers, students and emerging professionals, ANVE helped turn a sensitive long-term matter into a shared industry conversation.

Italian horticulture in focus this September

Capitanio also serves as President of AIPH, and the themes examined in Monopoli for the XVIII Giornata Nazionale del Vivaismo Mediterraneo also offered a valuable glimpse of the depth and ambition of Italian horticulture ahead of the 78th AIPH Annual Congress, which will be taking place in Bari, Puglia, from 13–17 September 2026 with the support of ANVE.

The Congress will place delegates in one of Italy's most productive and distinctive horticultural regions. Organised with the support of ANVE, the programme includes the International Horticultural Expo Conference, the Horticultural Industry Conference and professional visits to nurseries in the Puglia region.

Additional professional visits to producers near Pistoia in Tuscany are also available on 18–19 September, giving delegates the opportunity to experience another of Italy's leading nursery regions.

[Registration for the 78th AIPH Annual Congress is now open.](#)