Dear Editor,

We would like to submit the following manuscript entitled **“Machine learning models to predict daily actual evapotranspiration of citrus orchards”** to be considered for publication in the Biosystems Engineering.

The authors believe that this research is an original work dealing with the estimation of actual evapotranspiration (ETa) using machine-learning models. According to the authors’ opinion, these estimation models could help understand and reduce the impact of climate change and water scarcity in the global environmental equilibrium, with the aim to choose the best irrigation strategies for sustainable water management in citrus orchards.

Although there have been previous works on evapotranspiration prediction, we believe that our paper is original and differs for two main reasons:

* Most existing works focus only on the reference evapotranspiration (ETo) or standard evapotranspiration (ETc), while in this paper we predict actual evapotranspiration (ETa).
* Most of the existing papers propose models to predict evapotranspiration in herbaceous crops, while we focus the use of such models on tree orchards.

We chose this Journal because we believe that Biosystems Engineering can drive the application of advanced techniques for sustainable developments in the agricultural field. With data available from various sensors, a thorough analysis was performed to select 12 promising feature combinations which, given in input to Multi-Layer Perceptron (MLP) and Random Forest (RF) estimators, allow accurate prediction of daily actual evapotranspiration (ETa) values of a Mediterranean citrus orchard.

Sincerely yours

The authors