

CNN explores the impact of new tech on ag

With the World Economic Forum on Africa taking place in Durban, South Africa, CNN International is airing a special series, *Africa Looks Forward*. The week-long series will explore the creation of opportunities for all segments of the population and highlights South African projects that could lead a way forward for the continent.



Image Source: [John Deere](#), 9RX

In Wednesday, 3 May's segment (10pm during 'Quest Means Business') Eleni Giokos reports on the innovations in farming through utilising new technology and data alongside the emergence of precision agriculture in Africa. These new initiatives are giving African farmers a way forward in agriculture, and the programme speaks to Jason Brantley, managing director of John Deere sub-Saharan Africa.

CNN examines the largest John Deere tractor available in South Africa, the 9Rx, which can drive itself and can be accurate down to two centimeters. Brantley explains the benefits of the technology and the insightful information that it provides: "People are trying to manage everything, manage their inputs to very small amounts, managing what they plant where and the days ... but a lot of our customers are seeing 5 to 10% or more efficiency by integrating new equipment plus the technology. A lot of what is happening is back in the cloud with how data and technology are being used to be more productive."

Control entire operation

John Deere has started rolling out their operations center platform in Africa and CNN meets Joe du Plessis, farm manager of Rossgro Farms, who is using John Deere's technology. This allows him to use data gathered from his compatible equipment to control his entire operation through the cloud and make money-saving decisions.

Tavonga Siyavora, technology specialist of John Deere, says: “Some of the technology that we are trying to bring to the small farming space... in essence, it would be a telematic unit that would be installed on this tractor and through cellular, it would be sending machine and job information to the customer and would go to your smartphone... it allows for a vehicle owner to know the current location, how their machine is being used and helps to optimise their operation.”

Africa Looks Forward will feature during Quest Means Business which airs on Monday, 1 May to Friday, 5 May at 10pm SAST on CNN International. A special 30-minute programme on this year's World Economic Forum airs on Saturday, 6 May from 12pm to 2pm SAST on CNN International.

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