

The power of e-agriculture to attract youth to the farming industry

According to reports the average age of farmers in South Africa is 62 which has translated into many high-level discussions around how to entice the youth to farm, ensuring sustainability and long term growth.

Industry experts are proposing themes and ideas that are centred around attractiveness, however, the importance of value and opportunity needs to be prioritised and act as the pillars of this discussion.



Image source: [Gallo/Getty](#)

Newly developed technology and the rapidly advancing e-agricultural industry will undoubtedly be an influential factor.

Agri Online's social media platforms have more than 20,000 followers collectively, across many African farming locations, and with more than 50% of that demographic made up of people under the age of 34 the interest is certainly there.

These insights show that mobile internet access is readily available, even in the most remote locations, from Mozambique to Namibia, Zambia and South Africa. The geographic spread is vast and intriguing, often showing that our engaged followers hail from very secluded regions.

By compiling this information, it is important to note that the youth are engaged in agricultural activities online and there is a demand for growth in this sector, what private sector and government need to do is create an environment conducive to job

creation and new entrants.

"There needs to be an almost singular focus on technology and education-based information dissemination to agricultural communities aimed at youth development. If we are consistently educating and advising our youth on the possibilities within this sector entrepreneurship and evolutionary practices will surely follow," says Dieter Steyn, Agri Online's managing director.

"We need to change the perception that there is limited land available, that it is a difficult sector to enter into and that finance options are not available. We can only do this by changing our communications strategy to include the demographics of the youth."

"It is imperative that the message of agriculture goes beyond farming and includes all the elements of this exciting industry. That way we will ensure our pool of interested people grows dramatically which in turn will stimulate interest and demand," concludes Steyn.

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