



JCB machines seal the deal for Drakensberg Agricultural Services

"We don't think there is a better Backhoe Loader or Loadall on the market than those made by JCB, and we would have said that even if we weren't the official JCB Agriculture and Bell Forestry & Agriculture dealer in this area."

These are the words of Sven Röhrs, who along with his father Leon, owns and operates Drakensberg Agricultural Services in picturesque Winterton, in the foothills of the KwaZulu-Natal Drakensberg. Leon Röhrs had farmed dairy, beef, and crops in this area until 2004 when he sold his farm and worked in the agricultural chemical field for a while. He opened his business Drakensberg Agricultural Services in 2008.

Sven had worked in agriculture in the USA for three years after

finishing school. He gained valuable experience of agricultural methods before returning to South Africa and qualifying as a diesel mechanic after joining his father in the business.

"When Bell Equipment's Forestry and Agriculture Business Development Manager, Charles Inggs, approached us in the second half of 2022 about becoming a dealer for Bell and JCB branded equipment, it was the option to sell JCB equipment like the Backhoe Loaders and

Loadalls that attracted us," Sven says. "Our appointment was formalised in the fourth quarter of that year, and we haven't looked back since."

Drakensberg Agricultural Services serves a vast geographical area that stretches as far as Warden in the Free State, Kokstad in southern KwaZulu-Natal and Colenso, Weenen and even Greytown towards the east of the province. Five mechanics are kept very busy with more work being allocated to field service than in the company's

well-appointed workshop in Winterton. Sven mentions that they are well-equipped with modern diagnostic equipment, which does not detract from level heads applying common sense when needed.

"Many of our existing customers have older JCB machines and it's pleasing to note their relief when they realise they no longer need to battle to find essential replacement parts as our parts stock-holding of especially JCB parts, consumables and service kits is comprehensive, to say the least," Sven adds. "Our mechanics and personnel working in parts are enjoying ongoing training in what makes the newer JCB models work, and this information is available online and around the clock."

Human nature lends itself to curiosity and it's no different when people want to see what new JCB Backhoe Loaders and Loadalls look like, as Sven explains: "From the day we were appointed as Bell Forestry and Agriculture and JCB Agriculture dealers, we've had either a JCB 3DX Backhoe Loader or one of the popular Loadalls on display at our premises and this has piqued many an existing and new customer's interest. This has led to many enquiries and happily so, some sales."

Drakensberg Agricultural Services recently sold a JCB 531-70 Loadall to a feedlot in the area and a JCB 3DX Backhoe Loader to a local farmer.

"We are keen to tap into an alternative market. When a

farmer is not buying an agricultural tractor or new implement, we'd like to sell him a JCB machine, which in turn gives us a longer benefit with the machine's lifetime revenue like servicing and parts," Sven says. "The irony is that many farmers freely admit they don't know how they had managed before they had either a JCB Backhoe Loader or Loadall, as when they have this equipment respective tasks for the machines seem to appear out of nowhere."

In addition to selling equipment and providing mechanical support, Drakensberg Agricultural Services also does contract harvesting of wheat, maize and soya as well as contract planting of summer crops like maize and soya.



The father and son team of Sven (left) and Leon Röhrs.

