



# Lezmin Landini excited to represent market leading backhoe loader brand

*When you hear the vernacular reference to any make of backhoe loader as being a 'JCB', then you know that is a brand that will almost sell itself due to that most effective form of advertising, word of mouth.*

So says Riaan Pretorius, one half of Lezmin Landini, a newly appointed dealer for Bell Equipment Forestry & Agriculture and JCB Agriculture. Lezmin Landini is situated in Kirkwood, a neat and leafy town at the top end of the citrus-filled Sundays River Valley in the Eastern Cape.

Riaan and his business partner, Kenneth Thatcher, started Lezmin Landini in 2000. Riaan hails from George while Kenneth is from Uitenhage, and both are qualified diesel mechanics.

"We became agents for Landini tractors in 2008 after another Italian manufacturer, Same, withdrew from South Africa," Riaan says. "We also run a successful transport company called Sun Valley Transport which sees our many tautliner trucks hauling general cargo from Gqeberha to Gauteng as well as a variety of citrus produce from our valley to destinations all over the country."

Lezmin Landini imports specialised agricultural sprayers from Spain, which are used in the citrus,

macadamia and pecan nut industries across South Africa.

"Another branch of our business is that of land preparation services and we run dozers, excavators and tractors hauling mulchers for these purposes," Riaan adds. "Working in a wide radius of up to 80km from our base in Kirkwood, we've come to notice that there are many JCB Backhoe Loaders on farms that are used for many different tasks, and we've been asked to service and repair them from time to time."

Earlier, Riaan had become familiar with JCB during the 1990s when he worked for a contractor who had run JCB machines, and he is thus familiar with both the mechanical and operational virtues of the brand.

"That is why, despite entertaining an offer from another supplier at one point, when it was offered to us, we jumped at the chance of representing Bell Equipment Forestry & Agriculture and JCB Agriculture. We're aware of the large number of JCB machines around and as mentioned, with the JCB name being synonymous with any backhoe loader means it really is the market-leading brand. We believe this, together with Bell Equipment's wider product offering and reputation, will add value to our portfolio of services."

Riaan goes on to mention that within the immediate needs of the bulk of the farmers in their area, they foresee that the demand will

be the greatest for JCB Skid Steers and 3DX Pro Backhoe Loaders. "We're aware that the physical space in the citrus orchards is tight with only 1,2 to 1,5 metres of free space down the rows of trees and this will make it ideal for the wheel-driven Skid Steer Loaders with forks to operate there loading and unloading crates with fruit. The high flotation tyres on the JCB Skid Steers have a low ground impact even when turning."

As to the viability of JCB Backhoe Loaders, Riaan says: "We hear from farmers who already have these machines that they prefer the JCB 3DX Pro model due to the joystick controls on the backhoe which operate like an excavator. This was echoed by the farmer to whom we sold our first JCB 3DX Pro machine in November 2023.

"Also, as many production units are fragmented, meaning not all the land belonging to a given farmer is in one place, the mobility

of the machine allows it to simply be driven to where it is needed next without the need of a rollback truck or lowbed rig."

Lezmin Landini employs 20 people of which six are qualified mechanics, with two apprentices and two experienced employees in the parts department. Field servicing is done with three fully-equipped bakkies.

"To say that we're excited at the prospect of having access to Bell Equipment's full range of forestry and agricultural machines would be an understatement as we've already started planning intensive marketing campaigns," Riaan concludes. "One of our aims is to target farming study groups where small groups of farmers discuss farming methods, challenges, and solutions. We believe that by finding support for our products amongst these opinion leaders who talk to other farmers would be a recipe for success."



**Riaan Pretorius, Managing Partner at Lezmin Landini in Kirkwood.**

