



Huge scope for JCB's agriculture range for Trophy Tractors in Letsitele

The small farming town of Letsitele in the Limpopo Province, close to Tzaneen, has a name derived from the Northern Sotho phrase meaning "valley of death", believed to refer to the many deaths that malaria caused in this area in bygone times.

In modern times though, the rich farming area surrounding the town creates much activity making it very much alive as we visit Trophy Tractors, one of many thriving businesses in the town.

Trophy Tractors is owned by the father-and-son team of Jon and Ryan Hyde and is one of many outlets they own in the retail motor, tyre, fuel, and agricultural sectors. At Trophy Tractors in Letsitele we chat to the energetic Manager, Gavin Dorfling, about the outlet's recent appointment as a dealer Bell Equipment Forestry & Agriculture and JCB Agriculture.

"I studied IT at tertiary level and worked in the retail motor industry before joining Trophy Tractors in 2022," Gavin says.

"It's been an exciting learning curve for me personally learning about agriculture, the equipment and the people but I fortunately have a strong and experienced sales team backing me in Hannes van Deventer and Garreth Spaumer, plus the mentorship of Jon and Ryan Hyde."

"The farming area that surrounds our town stretching away to Tzaneen as well is riddled with successful commercial producers growing large percentages of all types of citrus fruit, avocados, macadamia nuts, potatoes and tomatoes and they all seem to own a backhoe loader for its versatility. This is the market that we'll be targeting primarily as well as looking further afield with the broad range of equipment that both Bell and JCB have on offer."

Trophy Tractors has for some time been the official distributor in the area for Massey Ferguson tractors and this has created a firm client



**Gavin Dorfling,
Manager of
Trophy Tractors.**

base which Gavin predicts could be a springboard for creating the need for the types of equipment that Bell and JCB offer.

"We became part of the Bell and JCB dealer network in December 2023 and even though it is very recent we've had massive interest shown from existing and potential owners of equipment in the JCB Backhoe Loader and Loadall ranges," Gavin adds. "To date we've sold two JCB530-70 Loadalls and have ordered two JCB 3DX Pro Backhoe Loaders to have on display here in Letsitele as we believe once customers get to see them, they'll be sold soon enough."

Gavin is of the opinion that with many older backhoe loaders of varied brands in the area, having a dedicated dealer on their doorstep with trained mechanics and a fully stocked facility for parts and service kits, will stand them in good stead when it's time to replace older equipment.

"JCB in itself is a very strong brand and, once the first three machines have been delivered, we'd be keen to keep our own stock



Donovan van Zyl (left) Parts Assistant and Etienne Janse van Vuuren, Parts Manager at Trophy Tractors.

machines on display as such a machine is normally much easier to sell when it can be seen," he says. "The same can be said of the JCB Skid Steer range.

We believe these will work well in the poultry industry in our area as the JCB Skid Steer is nimble enough to work in henhouses clearing out chicken manure."

Trophy Tractors currently has two qualified mechanics mentoring two apprentices and the bulk of their work sees them doing field servicing within a radius of 150km

from Letsitele. Gavin feels that with both Bell Equipment and JCB offering so much training online, it will be an advantage for their mechanics, apprentices and personnel working in parts to be able to learn online and benefit from the vast amount of information there is with remote learning.

"We're excited and at the same time a little nervous as there is a lot to learn for all of us but we're confident that with the solid backing that Bell Equipment and JCB are known for, we'll soon see many more of those distinctive new yellow machines dotted around this beautiful farming area that we have the privilege of working in."

