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THE WIGGILLS OPTIMISE THEIR FAMILY FARM WITH MASSEY FERGUSON TRACTORS AND TECHNOLOGY

The Wiggill family has come a long way with Massey Ferguson, from their first MF 135 used to transport tomatoes to now where it has several of the red power house machines on the farm between Vivo and Alldays in the far north of Limpopo province in South Africa. Cliffed Wiggill and father Clive farm with potatoes and butternuts, which they supply to two large chain stores. Keeping it in the family, Cliffed's wife Theressa handles the farm's finances. Clive and his wife Marietjie bought the farm in 1992. What started out as a cattle operation slowly expanded into crops, as well as a wildlife section. There are three generations proudly living on the farm at the moment. Now in his 70s, Clive is contemplating retirement and handing the baton to his son. "Age has started to catch up with me now. I am just a helping hand, giving my son advice." "I am privileged to have grown up on the farm and be close to nature," says Cliffed. The Wiggill farm has about 300 ha of potatoes under irrigation three times a year. Butternuts are planted in summer from December to March. The potatoes are alternated with sorghum every four to five years. Such an intricate setup depends on reliable tractors, with the Wiggills mainly using its two MF 8737s for tilling. These 370 hp tractor have plenty of power and torque to prepare the fields with a ripper, while the other is fitted with a high-speed disc cultivator. A MF 7720 is optimised for seedbed formation for the potatoes while a MF 6711R plants the potatoes and butternuts.

"The MF tractors have advanced telemetry technology like MF Connect to help me save money by doing preventive maintenance or notifying me of any problems," notes Cliffed. MF Connect is an equipment-management solution that enables remote and real-time monitoring of the tractors to any device be it a computer or mobile device. It allows machine data to be used to make informed operational decisions about equipment performance, ensuring that preventative maintenance is carried out on time.

"In my day we did not have all this technology," recalls Clive. "But the younger generation grew up with it. One should not be left behind in farming; you must keep up with technological developments because it only makes farming management easier."

The steady advance in MF technology is apparent in how farming practice has transformed the Wiggill farm. "The MF tractor range is being expanded all the time and new technology is constantly being developed," says Cliffed. The Wiggill farm is serviced by Tractor Field Services (TFS), the northernmost MF tractor dealer in South Africa, based in Louis Trichardt. At present it has four fully qualified mechanics and offers extensive operator training. Owner George Fogwell Snr. has come a long way with the Wiggill farm, servicing Clive's tractors even before TFS was established. "When Clive still had MF 165 and 135 tractors, I went out and fixed them for him. That was in 1994," says George Senior. Meanwhile, George Fogwell has now taken the lead role in the dealership. "My father taught me that service is everything, not tractor sales. Service brings respect from the customer. If he sees you work hard to keep his equipment in good condition, it makes him happy and saves him money. Then he will continue to use your service. The effort you put in builds that relationship." TFS not only offers back-up and aftersales to the Wiggills, but also serves a large customer base in the Limpopo province. They sell the popular MF 200 Xtra series (26 kW to 60 kW) tractor, which boasts a leading heritage of nearly 50 years and is trusted by many customers, especially in the emerging sector. For medium-sized farming operations there is the option of the MF Global series.

This range of tractors (61 kW to 98 kW) offers long service intervals of up to 500 hours and has reliable and affordable parts and services supported by AGCO not only in Limpopo, but all round the world. Finally, the cream of MF tractors is the high horsepower range for large farming operations such as the Wiggills, where their needs are bigger in terms of economy of scale and ensuring their operation runs as efficiently as possible. Cliffed concurs and says the Wiggill farm has established a mutually beneficial partnership with TFS. "The aftersales service is always top notch. George is very responsive; you can even call him on a Saturday, and he will answer his cellphone." As for the future, Cliffed plans to modernise the Wiggill farm even further with the assistance of TFS and Massey Ferguson, keeping the family farm red for future generations.

In 2022, Massey Ferguson, a worldwide brand of AGCO (NYSE:AGCO), was excited to announce a fresh look for its iconic Triple Triangle logo and its new 'Born to Farm' brand identity in celebration of its 175th anniversary. MF has offered farmers around the world straightforward and dependable machines since its inception. Few global brands can claim such a lasting impact in the agricultural industry. In support of the farming community, Massey Ferguson has an extensive network of over 35 dealers covering the whole of South Africa, catering for parts, service, aftersales and new sales. Potential customers interested in the MF range can obtain all information from www.masseyferguson.co.za. Upon completing the contact form, potential customers will have the video, brochure and dealer contact details sent to their WhatsApp and email within 30 seconds.