

Collaboration sees launch of end-to-end farm mechanisation solution in Nigeria

Springfield Agro Limited, a Kewalram Chanrai Group company, in partnerships with Mahindra & Mahindra Ltd. has announced its collaboration with the Katsina State Government in the launch of the Farm-To-Folk initiative - and end-to-end farm mechanisation solution to develop agriculture and a farming ecosystem in Nigeria as well provide customised farming solutions to meet the needs of the farming community.



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Empowering farmers with knowledge

Under the aegis of this initiative, the company will not only provide tractors and farm equipment solutions but also be a key enabler in knowledge dissemination. Springfield Agro and Mahindra will setup agri-centres across the state - Chibiyar Chi Gaban Manoma Gromost Centre. The Gromost Centre will be a one-stop-shop to empower farmers with the knowledge of soil, seeds, micro-irrigation, and harvesting as well as the relevant method for caring for crops.

Farmers from every region and capacity will benefit from these Gromost Centres. This, in turn, will drive farm tech prosperity and contribute immensely to the growth of agriculture and farming in Nigeria.

Boosting production with adequate farm machinery and mechanisation

The launch agenda will also include the commissioning of 225 tractors by the Katsina State Governor, Aminu Masari, in line with the government's effort to encourage farming and increase support for the growth of farmers' unions and other agro-based associations.

The Executive Governor, Katsina State, Alhaji Aminu Masari, represented by the Deputy Governor, Alhaji Mannir Yakubu at the launch said: "Our intention is to deploy adequate farm machinery and mechanisation to a level that will boost agricultural productivity to at least 50 percent of international standards."

Partnering with the growth story of Africa and its smallholder farmers

Speaking on the Farm-To-Folk initiative, Ashok Thakur, vice president and head of operations - Africa Business, Mahindra & Mahindra Ltd., said: "At Mahindra, our core belief is that an informed farmer is an empowered farmer and we are

delighted to provide them with resources to reap the most from what they sow. In fact, we have moved beyond just selling tractors and the idea is to enrich the farmers' knowledge and ultimately drive farm tech prosperity and help them rise. The launch of the Gromost Centre in Katsina state is in line with this philosophy."

Thakur further added: "For decades now, Mahindra has been partnering in the growth story of Africa. The idea behind launching Gromost Centres is to further boost local employment, aid local sourcing, disseminate knowledge, enhance skill sets and offer custom made solutions."

Tarun Kumar Das, managing director, Springfield Agro said: "Private sector investment in agriculture is the panacea to diversifying Nigeria's economy. We need to deepen alliances and invest in new solutions. More importantly, we want to be part of the smallholder farmer's story by helping them rise. Given the proper support, the smallholder farmers can feed the future of the country and the continent."

Bridging the tech gap

Speaking at the media briefing announcing this initiative, representative of the Katsina state government, Dr. Abba Abdullah, special advisor to the Governor on Agriculture said: "The small window available for sowing and harvesting enhances the need for mechanisation in agriculture. There is stagnation in productivity because of the low mechanisation level and low permeation of technology and this is the gap we hope to bridge."

Speaking further on this collaboration, Das added: "The Katsina State Government, along with institutional partners like TOOAN, NIRSAL and Access Bank, deserve commendation and we appeal to other states to emulate their actions."

Mahindra and Mahindra has a tractor assembly plant commissioned by Springfield Agro in Nigeria, which has a manufacturing capacity of 5,000 tractors. It produces various ranges of tractors from 25Hp to 80Hp to cater to a wide spectrum of customers' needs. Over the years, it has created thousands of satisfied customers in Nigeria and millions across the world.

The Katsina State Government with its current leadership is keen to increase food production and food security for its teeming population. The administration is making all efforts to ensure sustainable development while improving income and quality of life for its resource-poor population in villages, with special emphasis on farm tech prosperity.