

CNN Marketplace Africa exploring the sustainable future of farming in Africa

Despite having access to 60% of the world's uncultivated arable land and 70% of Africa's workforce made up of farmers, the continent still imports much of its food. *CNN Marketplace Africa* correspondent Eleni Giokos and anchor Zain Asher explores the future of farming and sustainability in Africa on this week's *CNN Marketplace Africa*.



Image Supplied

Training the next generation of farmers

Giokos heads to Delmas, South Africa, to learn more about the Buhle Farmers' Academy, a new facility which aims to tackle this problem and train the next generation of farmers.

Nyiko Maluleke, chief operating officer of Buhle, explains why the training the academy provides is essential for progress in Africa: "We need to ensure that generations to come understand that it's not just about doing what's good now, it's about doing things that will be good in the future."

Maluleke describes the academy's ambitions: "The commercial farming sector is growing, and needs to grow... Many African people who were in agriculture, and were farming for many years, weren't focusing on profitable farming. They were just producing for themselves to eat. But we want to bridge the gap that exists between small-scale farmers and commercial farmers."

Khalid Bomba, chief executive officer of the Ethiopian Agricultural Transformation Agency, explains why farming needs to be marketed as an enticing career choice if academies like Buhle are going to be successful. He tells the programme: "What we're trying to do in terms of the next generation is explain to them that the agricultural industry is not the farming of their fathers and grandfathers where you were using a hoe and sickle. Farming, in many countries, is a business. It is a viable, profitable business and there are new technologies that they could be using."

Impact that access to new technologies will have on the future of farming

Giokos also meets Jason Brantley, managing director of John Deere Sub-Saharan Africa, to discover why the manufacturer is funding the Buhle Farmers' Academy. Brantley explains that it is important that not only are individuals receiving training but that they have access to machinery which will work efficiently in their environment.

He tells the programme that John Deere is “giving people robust solutions to help them improve yields, reduce input costs and improve the resilience of their farming system.” Buhle Academy student Tumelo Nchiyane agrees with the impact new technologies will have on the future of farming: “Having access to technology makes it so much easier for you to ensure production goes on.”



Image Supplied

Investing in the future of sustainable farming in Africa

In the ‘Facetime’ segment of the programme, Zain Asher meets Krysta Harden, vice president of public policy and chief sustainability officer of DuPont, to further explore the future of sustainable farming in Africa.

DuPont has established many projects across the continent which work to help farmers succeed in the industry. Harden explains: “We’ve been on the continent for about 30 years, a long-term investment, and we’re here to stay. We’re there to work with African farmers to talk about productivity, yield, and the solutions that they need to deal with pests, diseases and a changing climate.”

Harden tells the programme about a recent project: “One thing I am most excited about is a new innovation centre that opened in South Africa, where we’re doing field research. It’s a R100m project investment and it’s just one of the lasting investments we’re making in South Africa to deal with the problems farmers are having there.”

DuPont is investing so much because, ultimately, they want more business. Harden explains: “We’re investing because we want customers. We want customers on the continent and we want successful farmers. We want them to be profitable and productive.”

CNN Marketplace Africa airs Friday, 25 August at 1715 SAT on CNN International

The programme also airs at the following times:

Saturday, 26 August at 1715 SAT

Sunday, 27 August at 0200 SAT and 0815 SAT

Monday, 28 August at 0300 SAT and 1845 SAT

For more, visit: <https://www.bizcommunity.com>