

NEW HOLLAND AGRICULTURE: DEVELOPMENT OF A SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE

By **Franco Fusignani**, President, New Holland Agriculture



Climate change represents one of the greatest challenges of our age, but it can also be seen as an opportunity to catalyse a transition to a low-carbon, resource efficient, sustainable agriculture.

Agriculture around the world is being affected by climate change. While this is a global phenomenon, it is having particularly devastating effects in developing and high growth markets. New Holland Agriculture believes that, as an agricultural equipment manufacturer, it has a role to play in supporting local farming communities through a smooth transition to sustainable development while protecting natural resources for future generations.

New Holland has been working in agricultural projects around the world to ease countries' transition to sustainable mechanised farming, integrating innovations and good practices and offering efficient farming solutions that optimise the use of resources and increase productivity while cutting down costs, fuel consumption and emissions.

That is not just good for the environment – it makes business sense. When agriculture is approached with a long-term vision of sustainable growth that aims to protect from the damaging effects of inappropriate agricultural practices that could contribute to desertification or soil degradation, such a healthy agriculture is good for our business, good for the environment, and good for the local community. It uses natural resources efficiently, contributing to their preservation, is cost effective and productive, and it can be open to further development.

MAKING GOOD USE OF SCARCE RESOURCES WITH MECHANISATION

The correct use of the appropriate machinery is key in making the most of scarce resources, and New Holland has the widest product offering in the industry, supported by a global manufacturing and R&D network in order to tailor its machines

– from basic specification, easy to maintain machines, to the most advanced, high productivity technologies – to the different conditions around the world.

“We offer the widest range of Tier 4A compliant products in the industry.”

Our machinery has contributed to the transition from manual to mechanised harvesting in several countries with evident benefits. The cutting of grain losses is a case in point. Our experience tells us that grain loss can be dramatically reduced with a modern combine harvester. For every hectare farmed with modern mechanised harvesting a farmer can bring home in a day almost 700 kg of grains more than with an older machine, and 2,700 kg more than with manual harvesting.

Transitioning to a mechanised agriculture is not just a matter of putting machinery in the field. Mechanisation, combined with the appropriate farming techniques, can make a huge difference in obtaining the most from scarce resources, optimising the use of land, water and fertiliser. It enables the farmer to complete the harvest in the short window of time when the crop is at its best in terms of yield, quality and moisture, maximising the quality and quantity of their harvest. It also minimises the lag between harvesting and sowing, increasing the land's productivity.

Sustainable no-till farming practices, which have spread fast in North and South America, are beginning to gain traction in other parts of the world – every year the no-till world increases by around 6 million hectares. When performed correctly, with the right equipment,

no-till practices can improve a farm's profitability while reducing the need for irrigation. Yields improve because of higher water infiltration and storage capacity, as well as less erosion. Lower CO₂ emissions from the soil and lower fuel consumption from the tractors are added benefits.

LOCAL SUPPORT FOR MECHANISATION

A sustainable agriculture requires the involvement of expertise in complementary specialties, such as irrigation and cultivation techniques, as New Holland did for example in Africa with specialists in water-retention farming techniques to fight desertification. The ability to implement large-scale projects, coordinating government agencies and international organisations is also vital.

New Holland has long been involved in such projects, leveraging on our broad expertise, local knowledge and the field support of our distributors and dealers, providing a wide range of equipment. Our dealer network is a fundamental element in the success of such projects.

THE IMPORTANCE OF KNOWLEDGE TRANSFER

Once the machines are in the field, skilled operators and service technicians are critical to a successful transition to mechanisation. That is why at New Holland Agriculture we see training as essential when we supply agricultural equipment. Its importance was particularly evident during the implementation of a large-scale international aid project aimed at restoring Iraq's fleet of tractors and kick-starting its agriculture in 2008.

Involved by the USAID and the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, New Holland Agriculture participated in a massive programme to bring back into service 3,200 tractors and subsequently supplied 1,250 New Holland knockdown kits for local assembly at a factory in Iskandariyah. At the same time, we provided training to 200 technicians from the Iraqi Ministry of Agriculture and Industry. We have developed a training programme at our facilities in Turkey to improve and update the skills of operators in the country's agricultural equipment sector. This large-scale project looked beyond the immediate concern of making agricultural equipment available as quickly as possible, and created the conditions necessary to re-starting local production and transferring the technical know-how the Iraqi machinery industry needed to regain self-sufficiency.



MODERN AGRICULTURE AND THE ENVIRONMENT

New Holland's commitment to the environment has led to its pioneering Clean Energy Strategy; this was launched in 2006 to look for practical and accessible ways to reconcile the needs of the agricultural industry with increasingly urgent calls for action to protect the environment. We invested heavily in our own low emissions engine technology and today we offer the widest range of Tier 4A compliant products in the industry with 30 tractors and 18 harvesting products.

This has also led New Holland to become involved in the biomass industry in Europe, North America, Brazil and India, working with industry-leading biomass operations. In India, a 150-strong fleet of New Holland tractors and balers, rakes and mowers is at work in the fields of Punjab to harvest, collect and transport straw from paddy fields, cotton, maize and oilseed rape, to be turned into electricity delivered to the national grid. We also opened the first Crop Solution dealership to provide full services in the country's agricultural mechanisation process. New Holland has recently received the 2012 Agriculture Leadership Award in recognition for its work in India and its outstanding contributions in defining a new framework for a sustainable approach to agriculture.

CLIMATE CHANGE: AN OPPORTUNITY TO CREATE A SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE

The challenges of our time are daunting, but they provide us with an exceptional opportunity to create a sustainable agriculture through the introduction of good mechanisation and farming practices. Innovate for a sustainable future. ■

New Holland Agriculture
 Email: media.international@cnh.com
 Web: www.newholland.com