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**ROAD TEST
JMC Landwind SUV**

A tractor for the price of a quad bike

A wine grape grower has found that smaller tractors can perform most of the tasks normally carried out by much larger machines. **Joe Spencer** reports.

Pieter Beukes of De Doorns in the Western Cape was convinced that he could replace his fleet of normal-sized tractors with smaller, more fuel-efficient ones. He asked Kubota, amongst others, for a demonstration, and was soon watching the B2420 at work in his vineyards.

The first thing that struck him was its power, despite its diminutive size.

"I hitched it to my heaviest grape trailer and towed the loaded trailer from the river at the bottom of the farm

to the shed at the top. I had to change down only when we got to the last hill before the shed," he recalls.

Two more tests were carried out, the first of which was tackling powdery mildew with a sulphur duster. Here the small size of the B2420 proved its worth – it fitted comfortably between the rows and could be easily manoeuvred at the row ends. Additionally, the small wheels helped to prevent damage to low-hanging grapes. All these factors earned it full marks from the driver. The next test was hauling



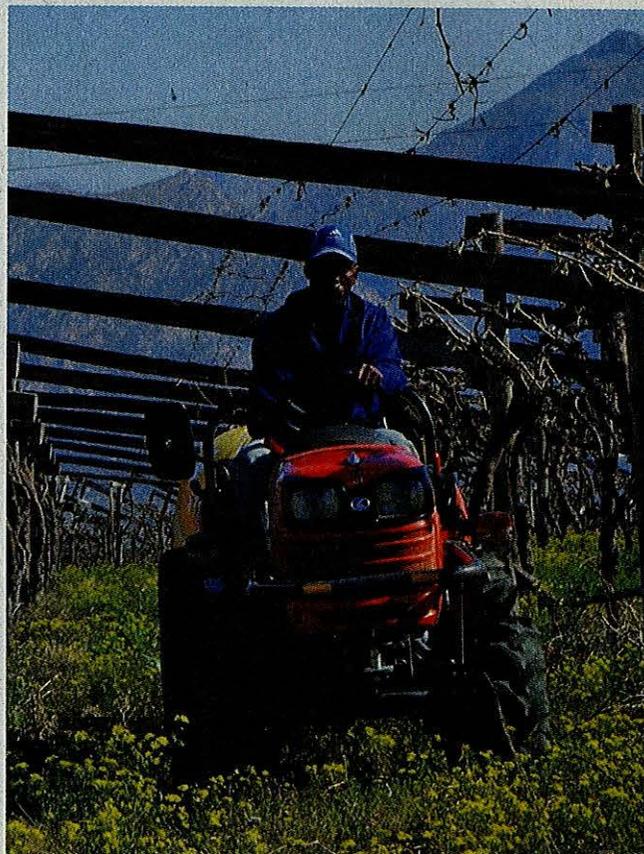
Made to measure

Pieter Beukes thought that using the Kubota B2420 for spraying would be a challenge as it meant finding a sprayer that could be towed and powered by the 17,9kW tractor.

After some research, he found a sprayer in the Martignani series that would work with a few adjustments.

"The sprayer company adapted the pulley sizes to achieve the same air speed from the blowers using lower tractor power," explains farm manager Jaco Lötter.

Beukes purchased two Martignani sprayer units to carry out all spray work in the vineyards.



ABOVE: De Doorns employee, Welile Botha, on the Kubota B2420.
PHOTOS: SMITH POWER

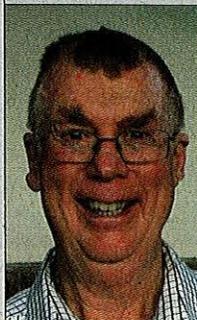
a full load of grapes in soft sand, which the tractor easily handled with 4WD engaged.

The final hurdle, of course, was fuel consumption. This could not be gauged accurately in a series of short tests, but it was obvious that it would be significantly lower than with the full-sized tractors.

Beukes ended up buying six Kubota B2420s, with the low price making the decision far easier.

"I've got a tractor here that works unbelievably well – at the price of a quad bike," he says.

• *Joe Spencer is Farmer's Weekly's mechanisation editor. Email him at farmersweekly@caxton.co.za. Subject line: Equipment. ■FW*



JOE SPENCER

A Kubota for every job

The six B2420s purchased by Pieter Beukes are not the first Kubotas he has bought; he already has several other Kubota vehicles on the farm.

These include the larger M7040 tractor (right) to spray his vineyards. The diesel consumption of the 53kW Kubota averages 4,4ℓ/h, compared with other tractor brands which average between 6,8ℓ/h and 10,2ℓ/h.

The RTV 900 (below right) is used for getting around the farm, while a Kubota L39 TLB is used for excavations, loading soil and lifting tasks. (The L39 has since been superseded by the Kubota L45 TLB, shown below.)

Farm manager Jaco Lötter says the larger tractors are used for heavier loads and in the vineyards high up against the mountain.



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