

RIGHT TO REPAIR

Most modern farm equipment is technologically advanced, containing computers and sensors that collect and transmit data. As a result, specific software tools are often necessary to address mechanical failures and other issues. However, most companies refuse to make those tools available to customers or independent mechanics, leaving farmers essentially no choice but to take their broken equipment to a licensed dealership.

This isn't cheap; a farmer might spend thousands of dollars on a simple adjustment they could have done themselves with the appropriate resources. On top of that, repairs can cost precious time. Tasks like planting and harvesting must be done within a window of just a few days when the moisture content, ripeness, or weather conditions are just right. If machinery breaks during that window time and a dealership can't make an appointment immediately, the wait can cut severely into the farmers' annual yields and income.

There's also the issue of privacy. Equipment manufacturers collect data about soil, weather, yields, and other factors, which they may then share with or sell to "affiliates and suppliers." This intentional data sharing is worrying for farmers' privacy, but even worse is the possibility of hackers accessing that information.

Unfortunately, there aren't a lot of alternatives for farmers who want to buy equipment they can fix. About 95 percent of large farm tractors are made by just three companies, all of which engage in the kind of resource restriction that prevents on-farm repairs. Instead, some farmers have resorted to buying decades-old tractors that don't require copyrighted software to repair.

There has been important progress in fixing this issue. In July 2021, President Biden issued an executive order on competition that encourages the Federal Trade Commission to limit equipment manufacturers from restricting farmers' right to repair their own equipment.

For Deere and Company, parts and repairs are up to **6 times more profitable** than selling equipment.

~95%

of large farm tractors are made by just three companies: Deere, CNH Industrial, and AgCo.

WHAT WE CAN DO:

-  Urge lawmakers and administration officials to crack down on restrictions that prevent farmers and independent mechanics from making repairs.