



For Immediate Release:
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Farmer Organizations File “Right-To-Repair” Complaint Against Deere, Urging FTC to Investigate and Stop Abusive Restrictions on Farm Equipment Repair

Today, National Farmers Union, which represents nearly 200,000 American farm families, filed a complaint against Deere & Company with the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) requesting an investigation into the company’s abusive restrictions on tractor and other farm equipment repair. Additional petitioners on the complaint include Farm Action, six state Farmers Unions, and several advocate organizations including the U.S. Public Interest Research Group.

The [43-page complaint](#) prepared by Fairmark Partners details the measures Deere has taken to force farmers to only purchase repair services from overpriced Deere-authorized repair technicians in violation of federal antitrust and consumer protection laws. Deere’s tight control of the repair market costs farmers millions of dollars in overcharges and lost crops every year. These practices harm farmers, drive independent repair shops out of business, and increase costs for consumers.

“Manufacturers have far too much control over what farmers are allowed to do with their own equipment,” said National Farmers Union President Rob Larew. “These restrictions are costly in terms of time and money. The Federal Trade Commission should take action to ensure that farmers and independent mechanics have the freedom to fix their equipment in a timely and cost-effective way.”

Fairmark Managing Partner Jamie Crooks, Montana Farm Union President Walter Schweitzer, Farm Action President Joe Maxwell, the U.S. Public Interest Group’s Kevin O’Reilly, and Missouri Farmer Jared Wilson hosted a panel on the filing that is available here: <https://youtu.be/htqaT4yw2cq>

Deere, which accounts for more than 50% of all sales of large tractors and combines in North America and made \$6 billion in profits last year, retains strict control over the proprietary software needed to diagnose and repair issues on its equipment, allowing full access only to its authorized technicians. While Deere dominates the sales markets for new agricultural equipment and tractors, sales of its repair services are three to six times more profitable than its equipment sales.

Often, when a Deere tractor experiences an issue, the machine will go “limp” and be unusable until Deere-owned software is used to reactivate the machine. Thus, farmers whose equipment breaks down must wait for, and work around the schedule of, an authorized Deere technician and pay any amount they decide to charge. Waiting long periods of time for a technician to repair a tractor or combine can be devastating to a farmer’s business, which relies on precise timelines.

"John Deere found out that by controlling the who, what, where, and when of tractor repair, they can squeeze three to six times more profit out of farmers than they can with new equipment sales," said Joe Maxwell, President of Farm Action. "Farmers are at the mercy of these manufacturers, and can lose tens or hundreds of thousands of dollars when a tractor sits useless in a field at harvest time."

The FTC complaint was prepared by Fairmark Partners, LLP of Washington, DC and filed by: National Farmers Union, Iowa Farmers Union, Missouri Farmers Union, Montana Farmers Union, Nebraska Farmers Union, Ohio Farmers Union, Wisconsin Farmers Union, Farm Action, U.S. Public Interest Research Group, Illinois Public Interest Research Group, Digital Right to Repair Coalition, and iFIXIT.

The full text of the FTC complaint is available here: <https://bit.ly/3CaDgVz>

The panel on the filing is available here: <https://youtu.be/htqaT4yw2cq>