

## Viewpoint: Activist 'armchair' farmers keep life-saving technology out of Africa

Farmers in more developed climates use sophisticated technologies such as robots, temperature and moisture sensors, aerial images, drones and GPS technology. These advanced devices, precision agriculture and robotic systems allow farming to be more profitable, efficient, safe and environmentally-friendly. Yet, in Africa, smallholder farmers are faced with the ambivalence of using or not using the technological devices.

'Portfolio farmers' (those who claim to be farmers but actually do not own farms) who always speak on television or radio about what the rural farmer should or not do, have been doing everything possible to discourage [Africa's] farmers from accessing what could change their fortune.

On the other hand .... researchers across the agricultural production value chain are, in most cases, too busy in the laboratory or in the fields to argue with this group of arm-chair critics.

As a result, people are pressured to accept the numerous lies being peddled by anti-technology critics as truth. Some of those lies include messages that .... farmers will be dependent on owners of technologies for life and technologies are meant to enslave farmers, among others.

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Already, farmers in Nigeria have tasted the benefits of technological interventions with the commercial release of SAMPEA 20-T, the Pod Borer Resistant (PBR) Cowpea that has been described by some farmers as the greatest development to have happened to beans farming.

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