

# Ground-breaking project teaches children to farm using Minecraft

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In a first for South African media, the multi-award-winning agriculture news publication *Food For Mzansi* now invites avid gamers, including farmers, to play along on its own virtual farm called *Food For Mzansi* Minecraft World.



From Johannesburg to Jagersfontein, gamers from all ages are already participating in the trial version that went live late last year. Now the crop and livestock farming game is opened up to all South Africans with access to a smartphone, laptop, Xbox or PlayStation.

Ronelle Louwrens, a senior executive at the *Food For Mzansi* Group, says Minecraft World was developed following a notable shift towards gamification and edutainment. No prior gaming experience is required. Only a basic internet connection and a willingness to learn a thing or two about agriculture is required.

“There is a growing need for South Africa’s children, especially, to be exposed to the origin of their food and understanding the food value chain,” says Louwrens. “With food security expected to worsen, Africa will need passionate and skilled youth to enter the agricultural space and to be the next generation of food growers and processors.”

Louwrens adds that it has always been a key priority of *Food For Mzansi* to highlight the connection between agriculture and the consumer while showcasing the exciting opportunities in the agricultural field to students who might not have had exposure or grown up on a farm.

Games offer a unique solution, offering necessary life skills and teaching critical thinking, while actively engaging and interesting young people. Minecraft, the world’s most popular game, has become an all-time favourite offering great learning opportunities while being firmly rooted in agriculture.

Earlier, Windows Central gaming expert Zachary Boddy described Minecraft as “the greatest game ever made”. Now, with the element of sustainability incorporated, Minecraft just got 10 times better!

The mastermind behind the *Food For Mzansi* Minecraft World is Gareth Davies, who is not only a gamer himself but is also the head of creative and development at the publication. He says in being a gamer himself, he noticed similarities between farming and Minecraft.

“The goal is to engage learners, from primary to high school and everyone else who is young at heart. By playing the game, they will get to know more about agricultural automation, mechanisation and agritech,” Davies says.

*Food For Mzansi* co-founder and editor-in-chief Ivor Price says the Minecraft project links closely with the publication’s AgriCareers project. The AgriCareers project brings together 20,000 learners across South Africa every year, to introduce them to the A to Z of career opportunities and studies in the agricultural industry.

Access to the *Food For Mzansi* Minecraft is free as long as you have your own copy of Minecraft, which can be on your smartphone, laptop, PlayStation and even Xbox. Follow the link below to register to play and join the *Food For Mzansi* Minecraft World. Once applications have been reviewed, accepted applicants will be invited to join the Discord server to play, meet other enthusiasts and ask questions.

- Apply now to join the World: <https://www.foodformzansi.co.za/minecraft/>
- For inquiries, please contact Ronelle Louwrens at [ronelle@yehbaby.co.za](mailto:ronelle@yehbaby.co.za).

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