

South African wines go green with solar

Taking advantage of the South African climate, three wine estates have blended vintage with innovation to enhance their power requirements.



De Grendel dairy and wine farm in the Durbanville Wine Valley along with Leopard's Leap Family Vineyards and La Motte, both based in Franschoek Valley, all turned to renewable energy specialist, Emergent Energy, to provide them with a green solution to answer their escalating cost of electricity concerns.

Working closely with Schneider Electric, specialist in energy management and automation, Emergent Energy selected solar products from the Schneider Electric range to offset a large portion of the farms' electrical requirements.

De Grendel's solar photovoltaic (PV) system consists of a 21kWp roof mounted structure on its cowshed, using Trina modules to offset its dairy operation's electrical requirements. An 189kWp ground-mounted system by Schneider Electric is installed along the highway adjacent to the farm and further offsets a large portion of the entire farm's electrical requirements. Schneider Electric solutions offering 54.9kWp and 104kWp of solar power to Leopard's Leap and La Motte respectively were also installed using Trina modules.

"The projects are boasting exciting returns on investment with a measurable reduction in electricity bills. In addition, the lower carbon footprints of the farms and green focus have enhanced their reputations as being innovative companies that adhere to sustainable practices and run eco-friendly operations," says Leon Hailstones, channel manager for Schneider

Electric's rooftop and off-grid solar products in southern Africa.

Yoann Joyeux, managing director at Emergent Energy, adds: "This support is critical to us because Emergent Energy works on projects throughout the country and we are able to rely on Schneider Electric in each province, as illustrated by the recent successful implementation of the Schneider Electric 41kWp solar PV solution at the Corner Office Park in Johannesburg."

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