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John Deere To Exit Walk-behind Rotary Mower Business

Selling SABO subsidiary

6 July 2020



John Deere announced last week that it has signed an agreement to sell its SABO Maschinenfabrik lawnmower subsidiary to another German company, Mutares SE & Co, subject to regulatory approval.

This move will see John Deere exit the walk-behind rotary lawnmower business.

Alongside the end of production of the SABO-built, John Deere branded walk-behind rotary mowers (both commerical and domestic models), will be an end of manufacture of both John Deere Tango and SABO brand robotic mowers.

The company will however, continue to sell its full range of Deere manufactured lawn tractors and zero-turn mowers to both domestic and commercial customers, as well as its walk-behind cylinder greens mowers in the worldwide golf and sports turf markets.

Any remaining John Deere dealer inventory of these SABO-built products in the UK & Ireland will be available for sale, and John Deere say they will continue to provide parts for 10 years. Deere's dealer network will also continue to provide parts and service in any areas where SABO branded machines have been sold.

SABO, based in Gummersbach, Germany, has been a subsidiary of Deere & Company since 1991 and has approximately 125 employees.

Mutares, based in Munich, is a private equity firm that currently owns 13 companies in the automotive and mobility, engineering and technology, and goods and services industries.

SABO will maintain ownership of its brand assets and its operations in Gummersbach. The company will continue to produce walk-behind lawnmowers and handheld outdoor power products, marketing those machines through its existing network of more than 1100 dealers in Germany, Austria, Belgium, the Netherlands, Slovakia and Switzerland.

According to Deere and Mutares, employees, customers, suppliers, dealers and distributors should notice little change in daily operations.

Tim Merrett, John Deere's vice president, Turf and Compact Utility platform, said, "SABO is a leading brand for high quality walk-behind mowers and handheld power products in Europe, and the company is well positioned for growth with its line of battery-powered machines.

"However, Deere is shifting its focus to key production systems that will allow our machine technology to be a differentiator. Further investment in walk-behind lawnmowers was no longer a strategic fit for our global business.

"Deere is not exiting the turf care business. John Deere will continue to produce a wide range of lawn and grounds care equipment for residential, commercial and golf course maintenance use."

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