

# Design and Implementation of Smart EV Tractor for Sustainable Farming

**Janardhan L K<sup>1</sup>, Lokanathan M S<sup>2</sup>, Yashoda D S<sup>3</sup>**

Assistant Professors, Department of Electrical and Electronics Engineering (EEE),

Channabasaveshwara Institute of Technology (CIT), Gubbi, Sri Siddhartha School of Engineering Tumakuru,

Karnataka, India<sup>1,2,3</sup>

**Abstract:** Existing farming practices rely mainly on diesel-powered tractors, resulting in high operational costs, health impacts from pollution, carbon emissions, and a dependence on fossil fuels. Even though electric tractors are used, they have limited battery range, high upfront costs, lack of charging infrastructure, and this slows down the widespread adoption of electric tractors in remote areas and as well as rural areas. These technical and socioeconomic obstacles must be considered and design Smart Electric Vehicle (EV) Tractor for sustainable agricultural practices. The primary objective of this research is to design a model a zero-emission electric tractor tailored for sustainable farming, aiming to reduce carbon footprints with same endurance. This study encompasses the integration of a high-torque electric power-train, a modular battery architecture, and an IoT-driven sensor framework designed for real-time field telemetry, automated path planning, and remote monitoring. Comparative field operational trials were conducted against standard diesel/ petrol tractors across typical farming operations, including tillage, seeding, and crop transport. Smart electric tractors offer a viable, cost-effective, and environmentally sustainable compared to traditional internal combustion engine tractors. The integration of autonomous navigation and real-time soil sensing reduced field overlap. Smart electric tractors serve as a superior alternative to traditional diesel tractors. By eliminating diesel exhaust and also minimize environmental pollution while significantly lowering operational expenses. Integrating electric power with advanced precision technology allows farmers to optimize resource use and substantially cut down overall farming costs.

**Index terms:** Smart EV Tractor, Sustainable Farming, Photovoltaic Solar Charging, Internet of Things (IoT), Embedded Microcontrollers, Precision Agriculture, Motor Drivers, Zero-Emission Machinery.

## I. INTRODUCTION

Traditional agricultural mechanization relies heavily on internal combustion engine (ICE) tractors powered by diesel fuel. Although diesel tractors provide high torque for heavy field operations such as ploughing, tilling, and harvesting, they pose substantial environmental and economic challenges. ICE machinery generates major quantities of greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, toxic exhaust pollutants (NO<sub>x</sub>, particulate matter), and severe acoustic noise. Furthermore, rising global fossil fuel prices and frequent mechanical maintenance requirements increase the financial burden on small and medium-scale farmers, particularly in developing economies such as India.

To mitigate climate change and promote sustainable agriculture, electrifying farm machinery has emerged as an imperative technical path. Electric Vehicle (EV) tractors eliminate tailpipe emissions, operate quietly, and offer significantly higher energy efficiency compared to thermal engines. Coupled with advancements in lithium-ion battery technology, power electronics, and localized renewable energy (photovoltaic solar energy), electric tractors can achieve operational self-sufficiency on farms.

In addition to zero-emission propulsion, modern agriculture demands 'smart' features—incorporating Internet of Things (IoT) sensors, real-time wireless telemetry, and computer vision to enable precision farming. This paper details the complete engineering design, architectural layout, hardware implementation, and operational evaluation of a Smart EV Tractor prototype equipped with solar PV charging, dual-micro-controller embedded control, ultrasonic safety sensing, and real-time camera streaming.

## II. LITERATURE SURVEY

The transition towards electrified and intelligent agricultural machinery has been extensively investigated in recent academic literature. Scolaro et al. [1] provided a comprehensive review on agricultural machinery electrification, categorizing pure battery electric (BET) and hybrid electric tractor (HET) architectures. Their findings highlighted that

while high-power field applications require dense energy storage, auxiliary and low-to-medium power operations gain massive efficiency boosts from direct electric motor drives.

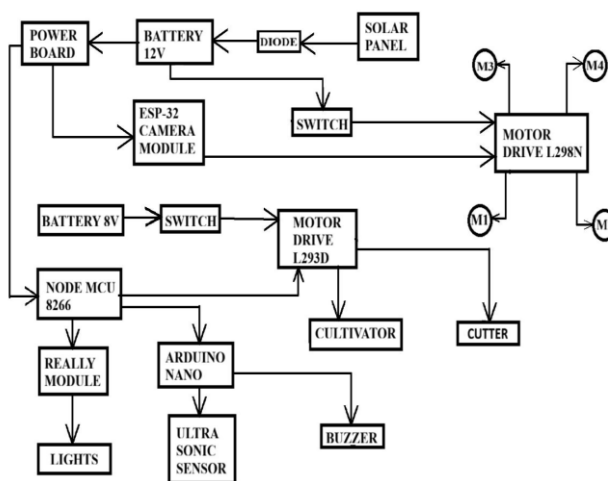
Moreda et al. [2] analyzed high-voltage tractor electrification topologies, emphasizing the superior control dynamics of electric propulsion over conventional hydraulic and mechanical power take-off (PTO) systems. Their research demonstrated that electric drives deliver instant peak torque at zero rotational speed, which is ideally suited for heavy agricultural draught loads.

Olaluwoye [3] evaluated real-world deployments of solar-powered electric tractors at Wheelbarrow Farm in Ontario, Canada. The empirical data confirmed that integrating on-farm photovoltaic solar arrays drastically reduces operating costs, achieves net-zero greenhouse gas emissions, and decouples farming economics from volatile petroleum supply chains.

Gade et al. [4] conducted a state-of-the-art review on powertrain component selection, comparing Induction Motors (IM), Permanent Magnet Synchronous Motors (PMSM), and Switched Reluctance Motors (SRM). They emphasized that combining smart charging algorithms, modular battery swapping, and IoT sensing represents the most viable pathway for smallholder farmer adoption.

Shamshiri [5] explored the integration of electric tractors within autonomous and robotic farming frameworks. The author demonstrated that low-noise, zero-emission e-tractors are uniquely suited for greenhouse environments, livestock proximity, and autonomous swarm farming applications, where toxic exhaust gases and engine vibration are prohibited.

### III. PROPOSED METHODOLOGY

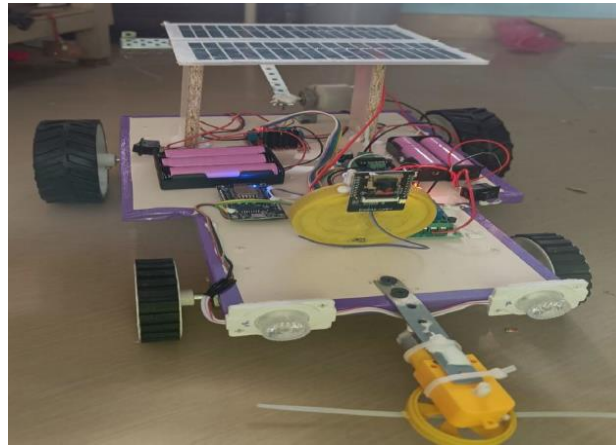


The methodology adopted in this project follows a modular system design framework, structured into four core sub-systems: (a) Renewable Power Generation & Energy Storage, (b) Dual Micro-controller Embedded Control, (c) Power Electronics & Motor Drives, and (d) Smart Sensing & Telemetry.

The overall power and signal flow diagram is illustrated conceptually. Solar photovoltaic panels collect solar radiation and convert it into DC electricity, passing through a reverse blocking diode to recharge onboard lithium batteries. Regulated power supply modules step down and stabilize voltages (12V and 8V buses) to power electronic drivers, micro-controllers, and auxiliary actuators.

The primary propulsion system utilizes four main wheel drive motors (M1, M2, M3, M4) controlled via an L298N dual H-bridge driver interfaced with an ESP32-CAM module. Dedicated implement motors (cultivator tool and cutter blade) are powered via an auxiliary L293D motor driver controlled by a NodeMCU ESP8266 Wi-Fi micro controller. Safety and localized feedback loops are managed independently by an Arduino Nano interfaced with an HC-SR04 ultrasonic distance sensor, warning buzzer, and relay-controlled LED headlights.

#### IV.HARDWARE IMPLEMENTATION & COMPONENTS



The hardware execution of the smart EV tractor prototype comprises carefully selected industrial and embedded components, detailed below:

1) Photovoltaic Solar Panel (12V):

Compact high-efficiency solar module delivering 12V output voltage at 1.3A peak current under full sunlight conditions, enabling off-grid battery replenishment.

2) Lithium Battery Array:

Rechargeable High-Density Lithium-Ion (18650 format) cell packs configured to provide a steady 12V main bus and an 8V sub-bus, offering >95% charge efficiency and long cycle life.

3) Regulated Power Board (12V-15V Regulator):

Power management board featuring switching buck converters, thermal protection, and overcurrent cutoff to supply stable regulated logic supply voltages to control modules.

4) Microcontrollers (Arduino Nano & NodeMCU ESP8266):

Arduino Nano (ATmega328P) executes deterministic sensor routines (ultrasonic timing, buzzer control). NodeMCU (ESP8266 Wi-Fi SoC) hosts a local web server for wireless user commands and remote actuation.

5) Vision Module (ESP32-CAM):

Wi-Fi + Bluetooth microcontroller with an OV2640 camera sensor providing real-time video streaming over IP, essential for crop inspection and remote navigation.

6) Motor Drivers (L298N & L293D):

L298N dual full-bridge driver manages main wheel traction motors up to 2A per channel. L293D driver handles lower power auxiliary implement motors (cultivator and cutter blade).

7) Safety & Sensory Components:

HC-SR04 Ultrasonic sensor detects obstacles from 2 cm to 400 cm. Active piezo buzzer provides audible proximity alerts. 2-channel 5V relay module switches high-intensity LED headlights.

TABLE  
HARDWARE SPECIFICATIONS AND SYSTEM ROLE

| Component Name  | Key Technical Specifications      | System Functional Role           |
|-----------------|-----------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Solar Panel     | 12V, 1.3A Output, Monocrystalline | Renewable energy harvesting      |
| Lithium Battery | 12V / 8V dual bus, Li-ion 18650   | Primary DC energy storage        |
| NodeMCU ESP8266 | 2.4 GHz Wi-Fi, 3.3V Logic, PWM    | Wireless web remote control      |
| Arduino Nano    | ATmega328P, 16MHz, 8-bit MCU      | Ultrasonic & safety controller   |
| ESP32-CAM       | OV2640 Sensor, Video IP Stream    | Real-time navigation & vision    |
| Motor Drivers   | L298N (2A Dual) & L293D (600mA)   | Traction & implement motor drive |

## V. WORKING PRINCIPLE AND OPERATIONAL DESIGN

The operational workflow of the smart EV tractor integrates automated power distribution, safety routines, and telemetry loops:

### A. Power Distribution & Solar Trickle Charging

During sunlight exposure, photovoltaic energy generated by the 12V solar panel flows through a reverse-blocking diode into the primary 12V lithium battery pack. The diode prevents battery back-discharge through the solar cells during shadowed or nighttime conditions. The 12V main bus powers the high-torque L298N drive driver and ESP32-CAM module, while a secondary buck-regulated 8V bus feeds the L293D implement driver and auxiliary microcontrollers.

### B. Traction and Implement Control Strategy

Traction speed and directional movement (Forward, Reverse, Differential Left/Right Turning) are controlled by sending Pulse Width Modulation (PWM) signals from the ESP32-CAM / NodeMCU controllers to the L298N H-Bridge terminals. Concurrently, independent control signals sent to the L293D driver engage or disengage agricultural attachments—specifically driving a miniature cultivator for soil loosening and a rotary cutter blade for weed clearing.

### C. Obstacle Detection and Safety Interlock Routine

The Arduino Nano continuously pulses the HC-SR04 ultrasonic sensor trigger pin and measures echo flight time to compute distance to frontal obstacles in real time. If an obstruction is detected within a threshold distance of 20 cm, the Arduino Nano triggers an audible alert via the piezo buzzer, illuminates warning LED lights, and communicates an immediate emergency stop signal to interrupt motor driver PWM outputs.

### D. Wireless Telemetry & Vision Streaming

The NodeMCU ESP8266 acts as a Wi-Fi Access Point / Client hosting an HTTP web interface, enabling farm operators to issue movement commands wirelessly from any smartphone or tablet. Simulators and live video from the ESP32-CAM allow operators to steer the tractor precisely along crop rows without physical intervention.

## VI. RESULTS, EVALUATION & ECONOMIC FEASIBILITY

A physical functional prototype was constructed and tested under simulated farm field environments. The comparative operational analysis between standard ICE diesel tractors and the proposed Smart EV Tractor is summarized in Table II.

TABLE II  
COMPARATIVE PERFORMANCE ANALYSIS

| Parameter Metric     | Conventional Diesel Tractor                    | Proposed Smart EV Tractor |
|----------------------|------------------------------------------------|---------------------------|
| Tailpipe Emissions   | High CO <sub>2</sub> , NO <sub>x</sub> , Smoke | Zero Exhaust Emissions    |
| Acoustic Noise Level | 85 – 95 dB (High)                              | < 45 dB (Ultra-Quiet)     |
| Energy Efficiency    | 20% – 35% (Thermal)                            | > 85% (Electric Drive)    |
| Operating Fuel Cost  | High (Diesel Dependent)                        | Minimal (Solar / Grid)    |
| IoT & Automation     | Requires Retrofit                              | Native IoT & Live Camera  |

**Project Recognition:** The physical prototype developed in this research project received prestigious recognition, being awarded Third Prize at the national ‘Driving India’s Techade Hands-on Prototype Expo’ organized by The Institution of Engineers (India) – IEI Karnataka State Centre on Engineers’ Day 2025.

## **VII. CONCLUSION AND FUTURE SCOPE**

This paper presented a complete design and implementation of a Smart EV Tractor optimized for sustainable agricultural practices. By integrating photovoltaic solar charging, lithium storage, dual microcontroller embedded logic (Arduino Nano + NodeMCU ESP8266), ESP32-CAM video streaming, and dual motor drivers (L298N + L293D), the developed prototype achieves clean, low-noise, highly controllable farm mechanization. Experimental testing confirms zero local tailpipe emissions, reduced operational costs, robust obstacle detection, and responsive remote wireless control.

Future directions for this project include: (a) Integrating advanced solid-state or LiFePO<sub>4</sub> battery chemistries to increase energy density and cycle endurance; (b) Implementing machine-learning algorithms on edge-AI processors for autonomous row-following and precision weed detection; (c) Integrating maximum power point tracking (MPPT) solar charge controllers; and (d) Developing automated battery-swapping trailers for non-stop field work during peak harvest seasons.

## **ACKNOWLEDGMENT**

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