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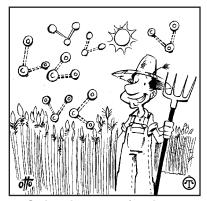
CO₂ And You

(NAPSA)—Here's good news, for a change, about our environment: Results from controlled studies around the world show how a doubling of carbon dioxide (CO₂) in the atmosphere, which is expected to occur over the next century, will increase crop yields by 30 to 40 percent, double the water-use efficiency of most of earth's vegetation and could triple the productivity of forests.

The level of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere is increasing from about 270 parts per million before 1800, to about 365 now, to an estimated doubling to 720 or more within the next 100 years.

Only about twenty-five food crops stand between humans worldwide and starvation. Increasing the CO₂ level from the current level to two times what we have today would basically increase plant yields.

"Increased levels of CO2 have another consequence," says Park S. Nobel, the head of the Department of Biology at the University of California—Los Angeles. "In particular they can improve the water-use efficiency of plants." That is, the amount of water that's used by plants to produce the same amount of growth actually decreases with increased CO_2 . "When we have the elevated CO₂, the higher atmospheric CO₂



Only about 25 food crops stand between humans worldwide and starvation.

level makes it easier for CO2 to go into the plants so the porescalled stomates-don't have to open as widely. When the pores aren't open as widely, it's more difficult for water to come out." There's actually less water loss per unit of carbon that's being taken up into the plant. As a result of that, water-use efficiency goes up.

You can learn more about CO₂ in our atmosphere and what it may mean for our food and our future from the experts at the Greening Earth Society, a not-forprofit, grass roots organization of people who believe humans are a part of nature, not apart from nature. It can be found online at www.greeningearthsociety.org or you can call 800-529-4503.