

TECHNOLOGY

Improving Lives

Growing More Food for Less

(NAPSA)—The next time you enjoy a meal, thank a farmer. U.S. farmers are more productive than ever. They each feed an average of 155 people. In addition, they're more efficient, using less land with fewer resources to produce 40 percent of the world's corn on only 20 percent of the total area of corn acres harvested. The result is that American farmers produce enough food to feed Americans and ship more than \$100 billion worth of products to nations around the world.

For example, in 42 years of raising corn and soybeans on his family's 2,000-acre Midwest farm, Charlie Hinkebein has experienced a revolution in how he grows crops and delivers them to the market. Between computer-aided combines, no-till farming practices and high-tech seed, his farm produces about twice the yield per acre than when he started in 1968.

When he thinks back on how farming has changed from his father's days, it's overwhelming. "If my dad could see how we farm today, he wouldn't believe it," Hinkebein said. "About the only thing that hasn't changed is sunlight and rain. Everything else has improved so much."

The high yields Hinkebein produces are what the growing population of the planet demands. Many more farmers may be able to produce higher yields, thanks to the remarkable changes in the agricultural industry.

"Technology has created a revolution in how American farmers grow crops," said John Raines, vice president of customer advo-



cacy for Monsanto Company, a leading agricultural products provider. "All of us are the beneficiaries of improvements that take place at all levels of farming, from planting seeds to the final product in the stores."

The increase in yield from agriculture is coming at an important time. Experts project that to keep up with the Earth's expanding population, farmers will have to produce more food in the next 40 years than the past 10,000 years combined.

"They are using technology to help plant, harvest and manage their farms, and that's helping reduce risk and improve profitability and productivity," Raines added. "For instance, today's technology allows farmers to manage pests like weeds and bugs from the seed, address soil fertility by the square foot, and harvest top yields and superior-quality grain and fiber from combines that run off Global Positioning Systems."

For Hinkebein, his farm operates as a sophisticated company. "Farming is my life, and I would not want to do anything else," he said, and predicted: "The next generation of farmers will see even greater improvements."