

TECHNOLOGY

Improving Lives

Tracking Tractor Ease For Farmers To Lower Costs For You

(NAPSA)—How much and what kind of food is at the store—and how much the store has to charge for it—depends on how well America's farmers can do their work.

That can depend on how comfortable and efficient our great growers can be on the job. After all, the modern farmer spends much of the 1,200 to 3,100 hours a year it takes to run a farm in the seat of a tractor. In fact, farmers are often in the tractor for 12 hours or more at a stretch during busy planting and harvesting seasons.

Tractors today not only have to be rugged and dependable, they have to be as comfortable as possible to keep farmers safe and productive. Many have air conditioning, stereo, on-board computers, GPS tracking, automatic transmission and a way to smooth out shocks from rocks in the ground or rough soil. The "torsional vibration dampers" once exclusive to the most expensive tractors are now available in more kinds of tractors, including less expensive ones. That's because one of the world's largest producers of the dampers, Voith Turbo, discovered how to eliminate much of the costly metal-cutting that went into the devices.

While better tractors can help cut costs at the grocery store, you can save even more if you heed a few hints available from the United States Department of Agriculture:

- Check newspaper ads for coupons and specials.
- Eat something before you go shopping and try to avoid shop-



America's 321 million acres of cropland can produce good, inexpensive food if consumers shop wisely and farmers work easily.

ping when tired or rushed.

- Go it alone. You'll probably spend more if you are distracted by your kids, your spouse or your friends.

- Read labels so you know what you're paying for.

- Use unit pricing and food labels to compare cost of similar food items.

- Use coupons wisely. If you don't need it, you won't save anything by buying it.

- Stick to your list. Studies show that without a list, you can spend almost twice as much. If you see something on sale, however, that you know you use, buy it even if it's not on your list.

- Stock up on sale items you use often and can store safely.

- Don't go down every aisle.

You can find more about smart shopping at www.usda.gov and more about tractors at www.voith.com.