

**Subject:** Farming Automatically

**Story summary:** Agriculture has evolved from an occupation done by a majority of Americans to an occupation done by a thin slice of the population. Now agriculture may keep going at top productivity through the use of robotics.

**TRT:** 1:46

**Suggested lead:** Computer and satellite technology may soon help farmers do their fieldwork. Tom Steever reports.

**Suggested supers:** William "Red" Whittaker

Robotics designer

@ :14

Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania

@ :28

John Bares

Robotics engineer

@ :43

Steve DiAntonio

Robotics business developer

@ 1:04

Tom Steever reporting

@ 1:27

**Farming Automatically**  
**Producer: Tom Steever**  
**April 20, 2000**

<p>Old b/w corn picking</p> <p>Hay bale loading</p> <p>Big tractor</p>	<p>VO/          THE SMALL HOMESTEADS OF THE EARLY 1900'S GAVE WAY TO MUCH LARGER FARMS AND FEWER PEOPLE WORKING THE LAND. THE LOGIC OF DOING THAT WORK WITH HEAVIER IRON IS ALSO GIVING WAY TO OTHER IDEAS.</p>
<p><b>William "Red" Whittaker</b>  <b>Robotics designer</b>          Demeter working</p>	<p>SOT/          "I see a class of machines that sense and plan and work, machines that till for us, sow for us, reap for us, that transform the way we farm today."</p>
<p>NREC building          Engineer in Demeter          Exits machine          Machine moves  <b>Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania</b></p>	<p>VO/          THE FUTURE IS NOT DISTANT. CARNEGIE MELLON UNIVERSITY'S NATIONAL ROBOTICS ENGINEERING CONSORTIUM IS WORKING WITH THE CASE NEW HOLLAND COMPANY DEVELOPING A ROBOTIC HAY HARVESTER NAMED FOR THE GREEK GODDESS OF AGRICULTURE, DEMETER.</p>
<p><b>John Bares</b>  <b>Robotics engineer</b></p> <p>Z-in to Demeter</p> <p>Demeter mowing</p>	<p>SOT/          "The Demeter is an automated system that is used to increase productivity of alfalfa harvesting. The way we do that is through GPS-based guidance. And then we're automating the machine to, very optimally, harvest the field."</p>
<p>DiAntonio at desk</p>	<p>VO/          ROBOTICS MAY ALSO ADDRESS PROBLEMS OF NOT ENOUGH HELP.</p>
<p><b>Steve DiAntonio</b>  <b>Robotics business developer</b></p> <p>Strawberry picking</p> <p>Celery harvest</p>	<p>SOT/          "Because there is this shortage of labor, we think there is a tremendous opportunity to add this robotics automation technology to give them the tools to be much more productive than what they currently are."</p>

<p>Whittaker</p> <p>Demeter working</p>	<p>SOT/          “So, in the course of the day, while operators are distracted by the practicalities of other living, robots can be at work for them and with them, in their absence.”</p>
<p>Demeter in alfalfa  <b>Tom Steever reporting</b></p>	<p>VO/          ROBOTIC FARM LABOR IS ONLY PART OF THE TECHNOLOGY ARRIVING IN AGRICULTURE, BUT IT MIGHT ALLOW FARMING WHERE IT MAY NOT OTHERWISE BE POSSIBLE.</p>
<p>Whittaker</p>	<p>SOT/          “It’s an example of the type of equipment that might revolutionize a future that we do not yet see.”</p>
	<p>VO/          IN PITTSBURGH, PENNSYLVANIA,          I’M TOM STEEVER</p>